



Security Council

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Letter dated 20 January 2021 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 Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, as well as the statements delivered by His Excellency Mr. Othman Jerandi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, and by the representatives of China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, the Niger, Norway, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam, in connection with the video-teleconference on “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security: League of Arab States” convened on Monday, 18 January 2021. A statement was also delivered by His Excellency Mr. Anwar bin Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates.

In accordance with the procedure set out in 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, these briefing and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tarek **Ladeb**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo**

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this discussion on cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States; it is an honour to be with you today. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, a valued partner of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General has made cooperation with regional organizations to prevent conflict and sustain peace a priority. We know that no organization or country alone can address the complex challenges our world faces today. The United Nations needs the cooperation of those groups and their members.

The challenges that we face today, including the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, remind us of the wisdom of the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations, who 75 years ago enshrined the potential role of regional arrangements in the maintenance of peace and security. Their vision has clearly taken hold.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has grown and evolved exponentially since 1945. Today it encompasses such areas as preventive diplomacy, mediation, countering terrorism, the prevention of violent extremism, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, human rights, climate change and, most recently, our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has served as a stress test for the global community. It has exacerbated strains on the multilateral system just as the need for solidarity and cooperation has never been more critical.

On 23 November 2020, the Secretary-General held a high-level interactive dialogue with the heads of 23 regional and subregional organizations, including Secretary-General Aboul Gheit. Participants agreed on the multidimensional impact of the pandemic, including on peace and security, and pledged to work together, especially in fragile settings, to address those concerns.

In the early days of the pandemic, Secretary-General Aboul Gheit and Secretary-General Guterres called for a global ceasefire to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and open space for diplomacy. Since then, both the League and the United Nations have worked to implement that call. Resolution 2532 (2020), in support of that call, reinforced the global commitment to change the calculations of conflict parties in order to end wars and crises in the region and beyond.

The Arab region has experienced much tumult over the past decade. Conflicts in Libya, Syria and Yemen, a stalled Middle East peace process and fissures among members of the League have exacerbated regional instability and hampered economic and social development. The close cooperation between the United Nations, including our special envoys and representatives, and the League has been crucial in augmenting our efforts to address various situations in the Arab world.

On Libya, the League has actively supported the efforts of the United Nations to broker the 23 October ceasefire and a return to the political process. An active member of the International Follow-up Committee to the Berlin Conference on Libya, the League co-chairs its political working group, together with Algeria and Germany. The League has also been an active member of the quartet on Libya, along with the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union.

In relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the United Nations and the League work to uphold the broad regional and international consensus on the two-State solution, promote intra-Palestinian reconciliation and focus on preventive diplomacy to avoid an escalation of tensions. We welcome the increased engagement of the League and its members, including through an expanded Middle East Quartet and the so-called Amman format. The two-State solution that realizes the legitimate national aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis in line with United Nations resolutions is the only way to lead to sustainable peace between the two peoples.

The financial situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) remains a serious concern. Adequate funding is essential for UNRWA to continue delivering its vital services to millions of Palestine refugees in the region and playing its critical stabilizing role.

Our two organizations are also active in the Friends of Sudan format, which supports the Sudan's transition to democratic governance. We are grateful for the League's generous pledge of support at the Sudan Partnership Conference, hosted by Germany last June.

Since the outbreak of the conflict in Syria, successive United Nations envoys have worked closely with the League in the search for a political solution. We are grateful for the League's support to Special Envoy Pedersen's efforts to facilitate the work of the Syrian Constitutional Committee and to broaden the political process to all aspects of resolution 2254 (2015).

On Yemen, the support of key Member States of the United Nations and the League is crucial to not only achieve progress on the political track but also to support the world's largest aid operation and urgently address the growing risk of famine before it is too late.

Despite our efforts, heightened tensions in the Persian Gulf region persist. The Secretary-General continues to call for restraint by all sides and stresses the need to avoid acts or rhetoric that may escalate tensions. We urge all concerned, in the region and beyond, to opt for dialogue to address their respective security concerns. The United Nations stands ready to support such measures.

We welcome the recent Al-Ula declaration, which recognizes the importance of unity among the Gulf Cooperation Council States, and hope it will strengthen regional security, stability and prosperity.

The United Nations and the League recognize the urgent need to include more women at all levels and aspects of peace processes. We have made important strides in that area. For example, 30 per cent of participants in the Syrian Constitutional Committee are women, as are 22 per cent of participants in the Libya Political Dialogue.

I commend the Arab Women Mediators Network, an entity established under the auspices of the League in collaboration with UN-Women, which will enable the region to increase women's participation in resolving conflicts and sustaining peace. We encourage expansion of that important initiative.

The United Nations and the Arab League have increased cooperation in recent years, conducting staff exchanges and workshops on mediation and peacebuilding, and capacity-building exercises on inclusive peacemaking, among other activities. The United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States, established in 2019, has strengthened our communication and cooperation. The Office has also facilitated regular contacts between United Nations Special Envoys and the League. We look forward to building on those contacts as we address regional crises. In December 2021, we will hold the fifteenth general cooperation meeting between the United

Nations and the League to advance a biennial framework that encompasses activities on peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian concerns.

Allow me to conclude by stressing the critical role of the Security Council in amplifying our collective efforts in the region. The impact of a united and actively engaged Security Council is incomparable. We look to the Council, as a principal steward of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, to continue to support the collaborative work of the United Nations with the League of Arab States to promote peace and prosperity in the Arab region.

Annex II**Briefing by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States,
Ahmed Aboul Gheit**

[Original: Arabic]

We congratulate you, Minister Jerandi, on the assumption by the Republic of Tunisia of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the role played by Tunisia in its capacity as the Arab member of the Council, and for its valuable initiative of holding this consultation meeting on means of enhancing partnership and complementarity between all Arab countries and the Council in order to address the crises and challenges that face our Arab region.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for working to strengthen the mechanisms of cooperation and institutional coordination between the League of Arab States and the United Nations. I would emphasize the League's commitment to developing that relationship to the fullest extent possible, in conjunction with both the Council and the other bodies of the United Nations system, in the service of our common objectives.

It has been a year and a half since I spoke to the Council about this matter in June 2019 (see S/PV.8548). That meeting was held as a result of an important presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/20) intended to advance our cooperation and coordination frameworks for the maintenance of peace and security in our Arab region and the Middle East in general, in accordance with the general framework governed by Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the agreement of cooperation signed by the League and the Organization in 1989 and the protocol of amendment of the text of that agreement, signed in 2016.

Since June 2019, the Arab region has witnessed a number of developments that have affected its security and stability. Some of those developments have been positive and have helped to resolve crises on our common agenda. Others have diminished and complicated our joint efforts to resolve those crises and address their root causes. We do not disagree, however, that the Arab region is now at a dangerous and delicate moment. Anxiety and fear are mixed with reasons for hope.

The region, like others, faces a pressing economic and social situation as a result of the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the resulting decline in economic activity and energy prices, which are an essential component of the exports of many countries in the region. The pandemic, with conflicts continuing on a number of fronts, has created a dangerous mix. It has exacted a terrible humanitarian price from the population. We are talking about 10 years of civil war in Syria, a war entering its seventh year in Yemen and a deep division in Libya.

Above all, there remains no prospect of the Palestinian question being settled; in fact, a settlement is unfortunately more remote than ever before. The two-State solution has been marginalized by the main mediator in the peace process. That has encouraged the Government of Israel to intensify its settlement activity and threaten to carry out such dangerous and destructive projects as the annexation of occupied territory. The international community, represented by the Council, continues by consensus to view the two-State solution as the only acceptable means of ending the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis.

In the next phase, much effort will be required from all parties involved in peace in the Middle East to reaffirm that solution, whose international terms of reference are well known and have been agreed upon. We hope that the new United States

Administration will correct those unhelpful measures and policies and work, with the support of influential regional and international actors, to get the political process back on track. That will give the Palestinian people renewed hope that the international community will do justice to its noble ambition of freedom and independence.

The Arab region continues to suffer from serious interventions in its domestic affairs by regional Powers. It has become clear to all that those interventions have increased instability in the region in general, including with regard to the security of international waterways, which are a major artery of international trade. It is also clear that the interventions have prolonged and further complicated existing conflicts.

In Syria, five countries are engaged in blatant military interventions. The security situation remains volatile and dangerous, particularly in the north-western, north-eastern and southern regions. These military and security conditions not only undermine the chances of a political settlement but also, and no less seriously, affect the humanitarian situation. About 90 per cent of Syrians have been living below the poverty line since the severe economic crisis, accompanied by the COVID-19 pandemic and United States sanctions, resulted in significant currency devaluation and unprecedented inflation.

The humanitarian, political and security consequences of the unresolved Syrian crisis have become too serious to be ignored. The crisis will have profound implications for the region and its interactions for many years to come. It is my conviction that the real solution begins with what has so far been lacking: a minimal international consensus on how to implement resolution 2254 (2015), in which the political prospects for a settlement in Syria are delineated. The solution also requires, of necessity, drawing back the influence of the regional parties that continue to view the Syrian arena in terms of their own advantage or the settling of scores. Syria is a major Arab country in terms of its history, geography, culture and language. I have no doubt that the parties seeking to separate it from its region will ultimately succeed only in increasing the suffering of the Syrian people.

The situation in Yemen is no less serious, especially in humanitarian terms. It is no secret that some areas of the country are on the brink of famine after years of conflict. A political solution, based on the three points of reference that the Yemenis themselves have accepted, remains the only way to end the conflict and address this deteriorating humanitarian situation, which could end in a disaster that no one wants.

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen has made a significant and welcome effort to arrive at a joint ceasefire declaration that includes humanitarian and economic confidence-building measures. It is important for Mr. Griffiths to receive the necessary support from all parties in the next phase, in order to build on the positive momentum achieved through the formation of a technocratic Government in accordance with the Riyadh agreement.

The formation of the Government, after months of negotiations sponsored by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was a positive sign of an end to fragmentation and division in preparation for negotiations on a comprehensive solution. That solution is possible because the Yemeni people want it and strive for it. It is not in the interests of any Yemeni to use the country as a platform to threaten its neighbours in the Gulf. The comprehensive and sustainable solution must therefore ensure the unity and sovereignty of Yemen, the independence of its national decision-making and good relations with all its neighbours in the region.

The situation in Libya has brought with it a series of significant developments that can perhaps bring us truly closer to healing the rift in this important Arab country. We have been able to support the Libyan parties on their journey towards a comprehensive political resolution of the crisis. The transitional period will culminate

in presidential and legislative elections that will result in the establishment of a permanent authority and institutions. We were most encouraged by the agreement reached by the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army on a permanent ceasefire, the launching of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum under the auspices of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the resumption of oil production and export operations throughout Libya and the other steps taken to address the economic challenges that caused the division and that continue to complicate efforts to find a settlement among the various parties.

We are now at a turning point that is essential to bringing Libya to safety, standing with our Libyan sisters and brothers, ensuring the success of the efforts of UNSMIL and the work done through the Berlin process, which brings us together, and fostering close cooperation with neighbouring countries. In doing so we can complete the political process and realize all the benefits that Libyans themselves agree upon and aspire to enjoy; it is particularly important to start to implement the ceasefire agreement, including the expulsion of all foreign Powers and mercenaries from Libya within the time frame stipulated therein. Also required is a radical, permanent solution to the threat posed by armed groups and militias; without such a solution, the country will enjoy no stability, and no agreements will survive the transitional period or the preparations for the elections.

In the past, the League has also stressed that none of these efforts can succeed without an end to foreign military intervention — which has been open and overt — in the Libyan crisis, and to the systematic, continuous flow of weapons, military equipment and foreign fighters into Libya, in violation of the Council's resolutions and in contradiction with everything that the parties involved in the Berlin process have agreed upon.

The League remains committed to continuing its support for United Nations efforts to resolve the crisis and to working with UNSMIL under the leadership of the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and with the new Special Envoy of the Secretary-General when he begins his duties, in order to help Libyans to implement the outcomes of the Political Dialogue Forum, realize and monitor the benefits of the ceasefire agreement on the ground and provide any legal and technical support that they need in order to prepare for and participate in the monitoring of the elections.

We look forward to optimizing the mechanisms of consultation and coordination with the Council and the United Nations system as a whole in relation to other issues and positions. We have a common commitment to standing with the Sudan and helping it to overcome the challenges of the transition, with all the accompanying difficulties, and to strengthening the Juba Agreement for Peace by giving it all the necessary funding and resources, an effort that I am confident will be strengthened through the formation and deployment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

We also look forward to enhancing the existing cooperation between the League and the United Nations to support Somalia, enabling the Somali Federal Government to consolidate security, stability and development throughout the country, containing the threat posed by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, and preparing for the planned elections in the country.

The League is also committed to supporting any effort to enhance security and stability in the Horn of Africa and promote cooperation and integration among its countries. It steadfastly supports the water rights of Egypt and the Sudan and the achievement, through negotiations, of a binding legal agreement on the rules for filling the reservoir behind the Renaissance Dam and operating the Dam, without

unilateral measures, taking into account the interests of all parties. We reiterate our solidarity with the Sahelo-Saharan States in the face of terrorist threats to their security and stability, and with all their efforts to combat Boko Haram and other extremist groups that are active in that important region adjoining the Arab world.

The League is seeking to establish good relations with our neighbours in the region on the basis of the Charter provisions related to respect for the sovereignty of States and non-intervention in their domestic affairs. We are striving to build trust with our neighbours on the basis of mutual appreciation of each party's security concerns so that a healthy and balanced relationship can be established.

For our part, we will continue to work with the Council and the Secretary-General to achieve those legitimate goals through all means, including political and diplomatic communication.

Annex III**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad of Tunisia, Othman Jerandi**

[Original: Arabic]

At the start of this meeting, which Tunisia convened to seek ways of further strengthening cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League, and Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, while noting the views and proposals that they put forward in their briefings to the Security Council.

Tunisia, as President of the Council and of the thirtieth Arab Summit, was keen for this meeting to be held, in the belief that regional organizations play an important role in maintaining international peace and security and in resolving regional conflicts, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and in implementation of the recommendations contained in the statement of 13 June 2019 by the President of the Council (S/PRST/2019/5).

The meeting is also being held in response to the determination of Arab States to strengthen the mechanisms of cooperation and coordination with the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, in implementation of the resolution adopted at the last session of the Council of Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs, held in September 2020.

We are convinced that the League of Arab States remains capable of contributing constructively to peace and security, not only in its immediate vicinity but also worldwide, particularly since the Arab States share with the international community an interest in addressing political and security issues, and delays in resolving those issues pose a constant threat to the international peace and security system.

This meeting is also important because the Arab States believe that the role of the League and other regional organizations should be integrated in support of the United Nations and the Council in maintaining peace and security. Such integration calls for the consolidation of efforts and the convergence of views in accordance with a unified, coordinated and complementary international approach.

In order to resolve the crises, tensions and conflicts in the Arab region, which have increased the security, economic, humanitarian and development challenges facing the region's States, we call upon the international community to consolidate its efforts and coordinate its regional and local action, while respecting the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of those States, ensuring security, stability and peace and preserving the resources of their peoples.

In that context, the failure to reach a just, comprehensive and permanent settlement of the long-standing Palestinian question poses a threat to international peace and security. Accordingly, Tunisia reiterates its support for the intensification of international efforts to resume negotiations on peace in the Middle East so that the Palestinian people can reclaim its legitimate rights to the establishment of an independent State based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

My country, which believes in peace as a strategic choice, supports the international community in accelerating the launch of serious, credible negotiations, in partnership with the Palestinians, on a limited time frame for the establishment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in accordance with legitimate international resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Tunisia, which hosted the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum under the auspices of the United Nations, has spared no effort in advancing a Libyan-Libyan political solution. Today, particularly following our Libyan sisters' and brothers' agreement on a political programme and a ceasefire, Tunisia hopes that the international community will consolidate its efforts to help Libyans to make progress in implementing the outcomes of the Forum, in order to reach a comprehensive, lasting political settlement in Libya. Tunisia reiterates its commitment to supporting the efforts of the United Nations and its Support Mission in Libya to lay the foundations of security and stability and set a course towards a political settlement free of foreign intervention.

We would like to take this opportunity to call for the strengthening of cooperation between the League and the United Nations to resolve the crises in Somalia, Syria and Yemen peacefully, in order to support security and stability in the Middle East and North Africa region and uphold international peace and security.

That cooperation should also be strengthened in order to address shared challenges, particularly terrorism and violent extremism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and matters related to illegal migration, and to address the repercussions of the coronavirus disease pandemic, in accordance with resolution 2532 (2020), which was unanimously adopted by the Council on 1 July 2020 on a proposal of the President of the Republic of Tunisia, Kaïs Saïed, with support from France. I should say that the League has endorsed this important resolution in the context of joint Arab action, and that the African Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have also endorsed it.

Strengthening and promoting cooperation between the United Nations and the League helps to enhance the common understanding of the deepest causes of the crises in our Arab region. It allows existing conflicts to be comprehensively and permanently settled and their causes to be effectively addressed, and thereby enhances the role of preventive diplomacy as a mechanism for maintaining international peace and security.

In order to confirm that trend and foster a relationship of constructive cooperation between these two noble organizations, I would like to bring the following proposals to the Council's attention.

Work should be done towards finding means and mechanisms to strengthen consultation and coordination between the League and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on matters related to the region, as a practical way of improving cooperation and coordination between the two organizations in conflict resolution and sustaining peace. Consideration should be given to organizing regular meetings, as necessary, between representatives of the Secretary-General in the Arab region and the Council of the League.

Consideration should also be given to the possibility of holding an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council at the leadership level, with the participation of the leaders of the Arab Summit troika and the Secretary-General of the League, to discuss the latest developments in Arab issues, on the margins of the General Assembly.

As well, consideration should be given to the possibility of holding a regular meeting on the margins of the Council of Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs with representatives of the Secretary-General in the Arab region.

There should be a call for the holding of a second informal meeting of representatives of members of the Security Council and of the Council of the League in the State that holds the presidency of the Arab Summit, in order to establish

an annual tradition of consultation between the two groups on salient recent developments in the Arab region.

There should also be a call for the promotion of the role of the United Nations Liaison Office to the League in order to help to strengthen consultation on matters of common interest and increase cooperation and coordination in the areas of early warning, the peaceful settlement of disputes and building and sustaining peace. Tunisia hopes that the vacancy at the head of the office will be filled as soon as possible to ensure that the benefit expected of the office is realized and calls for the office to be invited to provide a regular briefing on its activities.

The importance of holding such meetings regularly to exchange views on current affairs in the Arab region should be emphasized to ensure continuity in the dialogue between the two organizations on the challenges facing the Arab world and the role that Arab States can play in relation to other international questions on the Security Council's agenda.

Allow me to reiterate that Tunisia appreciates the Council's response to its proposal for the holding of this meeting, which is important to cooperation between the League and the United Nations.

Tunisia stands ready to strengthen the relations of cooperation, consultation and coordination between the League and the United Nations and to support all regional and international initiatives for the promotion of international peace and security.

Annex IV**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Dai Bing**

[Original: English and Chinese]

China thanks Tunisia for convening today's important meeting. China also welcomes His Excellency Foreign Minister Jerandi and thanks him for presiding over this meeting. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Secretary-General Aboul Gheit for their briefings. I welcome the presence of the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates.

China stands for strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, in order to better maintain peace and security at the regional and international levels. Over the decades, the United Nations and the Arab League have adopted multiple documents to scale up cooperation. Last November, during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, resolution 75/11, on strengthening United Nations-Arab League cooperation, was adopted by consensus, demonstrating a strong common understanding among Member States on the issue.

Under the current circumstances, the international community, including the Security Council and the Arab League, needs cooperation more than ever to address challenges and get through these difficult times. In that regard, I would like to make the following comments and proposals on the cooperation between the Council and the Arab League.

First, we must push forward the appeal for a global ceasefire and stabilize the security situation in the Middle East. Protracted conflicts in the Middle East have brought untold sufferings to the region. With coronavirus disease (COVID-19) still spreading, many countries in the region are facing insufficient capacity and resources in testing, quarantine and medical treatment. As all countries share a common destiny, our top priority is to achieve a ceasefire, stop violence and stay united to combat the pandemic and save lives.

The Council adopted a resolution in support of the Secretary-General's appeal for global ceasefire (resolution 2532 (2020)). It is our hope that United Nations agencies and the relevant Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General will enhance coordination with the Arab League to de-escalate conflicts, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure and advance humanitarian relief efforts. At the same time, we must prevent terrorists from taking advantage of the current situation and from moving within and outside of the Middle East and North Africa.

Secondly, we must seek political settlements for hotspot issues through dialogue and consultation. Many issues in the Middle East and North Africa are intertwined, the solutions to which cannot be found overnight. The countries and the peoples of the region are yearning for peace. The international community must therefore stay united, pursue the overarching goal of political settlement, remain committed to dialogue and consultation and manage the situation constructively. The Arab League, with its advantages in terms of geography, history, religion and culture, can play a unique role in conflict prevention, inter alia, through mediation and its good offices. Parties to conflict must show mutual respect, seek common ground and put aside differences, so as to build mutual understanding and trust. With regard to Libya, the Sudan, Syria and other hotspot issues in the Middle East, the respective Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General

can increase communication with the secretariat of the Arab League and brief the Council.

Thirdly, we must leverage multilateralism and build a dialogue platform for regional security. The State Councilor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, Mr. Wang Yi, has proposed to set up a multilateral dialogue platform for the Gulf region, with a view to upholding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. China stands ready to discuss it with like-minded countries in order to forge a new consensus on regional peace and stability. Such work must be in conformity with the principle of respecting the national sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of States and the norms of the rule of law, good-neighbourliness, justice and impartiality. China opposes the use or threat of use of force in international relations and opposes external interference, power politics and bullying. No country shall create conflicts or turmoil for the sake of selfish geopolitical interests. China looks forward to the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States playing a positive role in establishing a dialogue platform on regional security.

Fourthly, we must eradicate the root causes of conflicts and promote peace through development. A major root cause of instability in the region lies in underdevelopment, while the ultimate solution lies in sustainable development. Poverty eradication was the theme of the fourteenth sectoral meeting between the United Nations and the Arab League and their specialized agencies. In General Assembly resolution 75/11, adopted at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, Member States are asked to help Arab countries with poverty eradication and economic recovery. China fully concurs with those ideas. Economic reconstruction in the relevant countries should be encouraged and supported, and the pandemic should be effectively controlled. The international community must support Arab countries in exploring a development path that fits their national conditions, while establishing mutually beneficial and win-win partnerships and achieving socioeconomic progress.

The friendship between China and the Arab world is long, deep and solid. Cherishing the role of the Arab League, China supports the Arab response as coordinated by the League to overcome difficulties and challenges and achieve stability and development. Last July, the ninth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum was successfully held. President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory message to the Conference, noting that, in the face of COVID-19, China and Arab States have stood firmly together and demonstrated great solidarity through mutual support and close cooperation. That is a vivid example of how we can pursue our shared future. Both sides are committed to further consolidating the China-Arab community with a shared future. China will continue to join hands with Arab countries in deepening the Belt and Road cooperation, while supporting each other in national development and rejuvenation, fostering concrete cooperation in combating the pandemic and in other areas, and building a future of peace, security and shared prosperity.

Annex V**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson**

I first want to extend my gratitude to Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for his comprehensive overview on the situation in the Middle East and the Arab world. I also thank Under-Secretary DiCarlo for her remarks highlighting the current state of dialogue between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, as well as opportunities for increasing it.

As mentioned, despite numerous regional and global challenges, there is great potential to enhance cooperation between the two organizations. The coronavirus disease pandemic has reaffirmed the well-known truth — that global problems require multilateral action.

It is in that spirit of mutual cooperation that Estonia welcomes Saudi Arabia's recent announcement at the forty-first Gulf Cooperation Council Summit, held in Al-Ula, on the reopening of borders with Qatar. No single nation can address the complex issues of our world alone.

Estonia views positively the normalization of relations between Israel and certain Arab States, which will hopefully help revive the Middle East peace process, with the aim of achieving a two-State solution. To that end, we look forward to continued joint efforts alongside the new United Nations Special Coordinator, Mr. Tor Wennesland, and the relevant regional stakeholders, including the League of Arab States.

Improving multilateral diplomacy is at the core of our work. The Security Council and the League of Arab States stand out as they both seek to prevent conflict and resolve disputes through dialogue.

From the very start of the Libyan conflict, the Security Council and the League of Arab States have been united in their calls to end violence in Libya and adamant about the need to find a political solution to the conflict. It is clear that maintaining peace is not possible without regional support.

I thank the League of Arab States for its continued assistance to the Security Council in the implementation of the Libyan arms embargo under resolution 2526 (2020), which, first and foremost, aims to protect civilians.

The question of responding to the needs of vulnerable populations also remains crucial in other countries. In Yemen, the United Nations and members of the League of Arab States agree that there can only be a political solution. Unfortunately, the war in Yemen is far from over, and the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. I call for all parties to the conflict to fully respect international humanitarian law and to protect civilians.

In Syria, the only way forward is an inclusive and credible political process under resolution 2254 (2015) (2015). The active engagement of the international community, including the members of the League of Arab States — is essential to ensuring a final agreement between the Syrian regime and its legitimate opposition.

Estonia echoes the June 2019 presidential statement (S/PRST/2019/5) stressing the importance of intensifying cooperation between the United Nations and the Arab League. That can be achieved through ongoing dialogue between their respective special envoys, as well as the exchange of relevant information and joint action to address the underlying causes of conflicts.

I especially encourage United Nations agencies to seek ways to enhance coordination with the League of Arab States in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacebuilding, climate change and ensuring accountability for crimes against humanity.

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

[Original: English and French]

I thank Mr. Abul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and Ms. Dicarolo, Under Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, for their briefings. We are meeting 10 years after the start of the Arab Spring, and it is quite symbolic that our meeting is presided over by Tunisia. The aspirations for freedom, dignity and democracy expressed by the peoples of the region remain relevant, and it remains essential that those aspirations be met.

At the outset, I would like to recall the need for a ceasefire in all conflicts in the region, pursuant to resolution 2532 (2020), adopted in July on the initiative of Tunisia and France.

A ceasefire was concluded in Libya on 23 October under the auspices of the United Nations. We call for its provisions to be fully implemented. Strengthened international mobilization is necessary in that regard. In particular, full implementation will require the establishment of a credible monitoring mechanism. Regional organizations can contribute to that effort in order to support the United Nations. We welcome the role of the League of Arab States in that regard. It is also essential that the guns be silenced once and for all in Syria and Yemen.

Secondly, moving beyond ceasefires, political solutions are the only way to put an end to these conflicts. The support of the international community, and that of the members of the League of the Arab States in particular, for United Nations mediation efforts in Syria, Libya and Yemen is critical. In Syria, in the absence of a solid political solution in line with resolution 2254 (2015), France and its European Union partners will continue to oppose the rehabilitation of the Syrian regime and will refuse to finance reconstruction. In that connection, we welcome the firm stance taken by the League of Arab States with regard to Syria's reintegration.

In the Middle East, France welcomed the normalization of relations of several Arab States with Israel, which will contribute to regional stability. Within the framework of the Amman group, France is working to identify concrete avenues for rebuilding confidence and enabling dialogue between the parties, which is necessary for a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the framework of international law and agreed parameters.

Those challenges compound the existing nuclear proliferation and terrorism challenges in the region. Meeting them requires the Security Council's unity in ensuring respect for international law and compliance with commitments made.

In that regard, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015), which provide a concrete and effective solution to the Iranian proliferation crisis, must be fully implemented. Iran must return without delay to full compliance with its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA. The resumed production of uranium enriched to 20 per cent and the announcement that preparations were under way for the production of uranium metal are very concerning and represent negative developments with potentially serious military implications. Iran must therefore immediately put an end to those actions, which increase the risk of escalation, thereby squandering an opportunity to return to a diplomatic approach.

In this difficult context, the Al-Ula Declaration, announcing a reconciliation trend among the Arab States of the Gulf, is promising. Kuwait's contribution to that effort is commendable. France remains mobilized in order to ease tensions in the

Gulf through the European maritime surveillance mission in the Strait of Hormuz. We will also continue to fully support the Secretary-General's efforts to foster regional dialogue in the Arab Gulf.

The contribution of the League of Arab States is critical to making progress on these issues, and its cooperation with the Council must be enhanced, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States. Its work should further enhance concrete cooperation initiatives, particularly with regard to conflict prevention and the promotion of United Nations values in the League's member States.

On Iraq, I would like to reiterate the importance of responding to the Iraqi Government's requests for monitoring its elections. The United Nations will have a crucial role to play in that regard, in coordination with regional organizations, particularly the League of Arab States and the European Union. That endeavour is invaluable given that the success of the elections is essential to the stability of the region.

The humanitarian consequences of the crises in the region are significant. In that context, the League of Arab States can play a critical role in relaying to its member States United Nations appeals for contributions, particularly to Yemen, Syria and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

Finally, I wish to reiterate France's proposal to hold an annual meeting of the Security Council to address all those issues, to be attended by the relevant Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General and a representative of the League of Arab States. The Council's October meeting on security in the Gulf (see S/2020/1037) shows the benefit of a discussion that goes beyond addressing each crisis separately.

On all those issues, France stands ready to contribute.

Annex VII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations

I would like to begin by welcoming Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, to the Security Council. I thank him for his valuable insights on this important matter. I also thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing.

The Arab world is the cradle of civilization and the birthplace of three major religions. Given its strategic location, developments in the Arab world have shaped our common history and continue to have a profound impact globally. The challenges that the region is confronting today and how we address them collectively will have a bearing on our collective future.

India and the Arab world share a civilizational relationship, and our interaction with the region encompasses every aspect of human endeavour — from agriculture to high-technology and from clean energy to counter-terrorism — befitting its historical stature and benefiting both sides mutually.

For India, peace and stability in West Asia and North Africa is of vital interest. Arab countries host around 9 million Indians, making it the largest expatriate community in the Arab world. Its contributions to the economies of host countries and its nation-building efforts are greatly appreciated by both the people and the Governments of those countries. Indians from the Arab world send around \$48 billion in remittances to India annually.

I would like to take this opportunity to express Indian Government's gratitude for the assistance extended by Arab countries for the Vande Bharat Mission, the largest repatriation exercise undertaken by India and, probably, worldwide during the travel restrictions imposed due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Our excellent bilateral relations with the Arab world are also reflected in our institutional engagement under the framework of the Arab-India Cooperation Forum. I am pleased to convey that the Forum's third Senior Officials Meeting took place virtually earlier this month, and we look forward to hosting the next meeting in India.

Today's deliberations provide an opportunity to take a closer look at the challenges facing the region and the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, under the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The League of Arab States has an important role to play in the region in the areas of mediation, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The ongoing conflicts in the region go back a decade and have now become protracted in nature — be it in Syria, Libya or Yemen. The prolonged instability is affecting not only those countries but also the larger region. In that context, I would like to make some observations.

First, at the heart of those conflicts are human beings. Owing to unabated violence and displacement, these regrettable conflicts have brought untold misery to millions of people, mainly women, children and the elderly, who face shortages of food, medical care and basic facilities, including education. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated their suffering. We therefore call on all parties to the conflict — both in the region and outside of it — to focus on the centrality of the human being and to do all they can to alleviate the suffering of people, who are helpless when warring factions settle their scores and destroy lives.

Secondly, the entire purpose of regional and international involvement is to help countries and all parties concerned peacefully resolve their issues. We need to

seriously reflect upon whether our actions promote reconciliation or push parties further apart. That is an important touchstone for India, since we have always believed in internal country-led processes over externally imposed solutions.

Thirdly, attempts to delegitimize Governments and impose external solutions have pushed parties away from negotiations and made them sceptical of the political process. Such an approach emboldens regional players to support respective sides, both politically and militarily. The proxies, propped by their mentors, also aspire for a political role, without much support on the ground, which further complicates the pursuit of any meaningful solution.

Fourthly, the presence of foreign terrorist fighters in countries facing conflict poses a serious challenge to ongoing international efforts. Such fighters have enabled attacks by terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Shams. For example, it is well-known that the foreign terrorist fighters in Libya are radicalizing the entire region, thereby undermining our collective efforts to counter terrorism.

Fifthly, needless to say, any comprehensive and peaceful resolution to a conflict must be inclusive, driven by the aspirations of the people and arrived at through broader consultations and dialogue. The role of the international community should be limited to creating an enabling environment for such a process to unfold. Efforts undertaken without due regard for impartiality, fairness and equity will not succeed in achieving the goal of a lasting and durable peaceful solution.

The observations I have made are a partial list of shortcomings and limitations of international efforts undertaken in the region so far. In that context, cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States assumes greater significance. As a regional organization that predates the United Nations, the League of Arab States has contributed to international security and stability in the region, and its members are among the top troop- and police-contributing countries. Arab States are also among the largest donors of humanitarian assistance to countries facing armed conflict.

The United Nations and the League of Arab States have identified areas of cooperation and intensified their dialogue through capacity-building initiatives, sectoral meetings and biennial cooperation meetings. The opening of the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States, in Cairo, and the practice of annual briefings by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States to the Security Council are steps in the right direction, but more can be done to realize the true potential of such collaboration. In that regard, I would like to put forth the following suggestions.

First, there must be greater policy synergy between the two organizations. Any United Nations peace initiative in West Asia and North Africa should take into consideration the League of Arab States and other relevant stakeholders so that a unity of purpose and character is reached through common solutions.

Secondly, engagement between the two organizations should also focus on peacebuilding and development, especially in post-conflict scenarios. The League of Arab States has contributed, both as an organization and through its individual members, to reconstruction and economic development efforts of not only its members but also other United Nations Member States.

Thirdly, both organizations should strive to achieve comprehensive coordination at the field level. In that regard, regular meetings between United Nations Special Envoys and Special Representatives and representatives of the League of Arab States would be useful.

Fourthly, let me also add that all such activities must be conducted with the utmost respect for the principles of the national sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of all Member States, in line with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

A discussion of cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States would be incomplete without mentioning its importance in the Middle East peace process. Both organizations should renew their efforts to facilitate the peace process. Recent months have witnessed positive developments, including the signing of the Abraham Accords. India has always supported the Palestinian issue and peace and stability in West Asia, which is our extended neighbourhood. As such, we welcome normalization agreements between Israel and other countries, which, we believe, will contribute to peace and stability in West Asia.

We also continue to maintain our traditional support for the Palestinian cause. A two-State solution and lasting peace can be achieved only through direct negotiations between the two parties on all final-status issues, taking into account the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians for statehood and Israel's security concerns. We urge the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to re-engage in meaningful negotiations and to eschew violence, which may make negotiations more difficult to resume.

In conclusion, let me reiterate India's support for closer and meaningful cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. That will benefit the region immensely. India will continue to partner with Arab countries in their efforts to achieve peace, stability and prosperity, and will work together with the League of Arab States in its efforts to achieve regional peace and security, combat terrorism and other challenges and promote tolerance and pluralistic traditions.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geraldine Byrne Nason

I want to begin by thanking the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia for organizing today's meeting.

I want to give a warm welcome to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit. Ireland has worked closely with the League of Arab States and its member States over time, and we very much appreciate the important role that the League plays regionally. Ireland believes that, when drafting the Charter of the United Nations, the Organization's founders recognized the reality that regional organizations and arrangements, such as the League of Arab States, have a central and often critical role to play in maintaining peace and security.

While progress has been made in the implementation of Chapter VIII — and we have heard a great deal in that regard this morning — it is clear that much needs to be done to fully exploit the potential of regional organizations to deliver on our collective goals. It is in that spirit that we welcome this opportunity today. Before looking to some of the specific regional challenges, I would like to make a few general remarks.

Coming from Europe, a region transformed — through regional cooperation — from a post-war wasteland to a thriving and peaceful union of States, Ireland strongly supports, and indeed advocates for, regional cooperation. We firmly believe that cooperation on addressing common challenges faced by States — from water management to the threat of climate change, from the role of women in sustaining peace to, of course, the current common challenge of the coronavirus disease — can build confidence and trust, promote solidarity and lay the critical foundations for peace.

In framing today's debate, Tunisia rightly welcomes the progress achieved on cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations and recognizes its contribution to regional stability. The thoughtful briefings this morning by Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Secretary-General Aboul Gheit underline the shared ambition and, indeed, the need to further build upon it.

Ireland encourages both organizations to actually invest in strengthening the relationship. We welcome the establishment, in 2019, of the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States and urge the Secretariat to ensure that the Office is staffed at a senior level in order to facilitate enhanced dialogue and cooperation between the organizations. Mindful of the types of conflict in the region and their interconnected nature, Ireland strongly supports Tunisia's call for intensified coordination between the League of Arab States and United Nations Special Envoys in addressing the current crises in the region. We also echo Tunisia's call for all to support efforts undertaken by both organizations with regard to conflict resolution, conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Ireland firmly underlines the urgent need for lasting political solutions to disputes and conflicts in the region, as we heard every speaker say this morning. As a Security Council member, we are ready to play our part to support that work here in the Council and will also support similar efforts made by the League of Arab States and its member States.

We welcome the Al-Ula Declaration of 5 January, made by the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Egypt, as it represents a key milestone in the development of closer regional integration, cooperation, stability and prosperity. We only hope that the progress made in Al-Ula will be built on in the months to come.

We welcome the Libyan ceasefire agreement reached in October, as well as the Secretary-General's December report on ceasefire monitoring options. The European Union and its member States remain ready to support the monitoring of that ceasefire. Ireland is concerned that key elements of the agreement remain unimplemented, especially with regard to the withdrawal of foreign fighters. Ireland looks forward to the fulfilment of the political road map to December elections thanks to the ongoing work of the Libyan Political Forum, in which women participants have played a critical role. Ireland welcomes their recommendations for improving women's participation in the political process and in governance. We hope that success can serve as a useful example elsewhere in the region, and hope that the League of Arab States will continue to assist in that process.

We all know that we must redouble our efforts to bring to an end the terrible conflicts in Yemen and Syria. We recognize that there are no military solutions to those conflicts, and we share the ambition to agree on political pathways forward. We also know that sustained peace will require respect for human rights, and that those responsible for violations of international law and international human rights law need to be held accountable. Collectively, we must also continue to do all we can to support humanitarian workers in reaching those in need. Today, on behalf of Ireland, I renew our call for the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid to all in need, particularly in conflict areas.

As a leading troop contributor to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon since 1978, Ireland remains resolutely committed to the stability of Lebanon as its people grapple with complex political and economic challenges. In that connection, we welcome the strong support and solidarity of the League of Arab States. We also recognize that there are nine peacekeeping operations under the League's regional watch. Peacekeeping is an important and noble function, and Ireland supports the League's efforts to reinforce regional capacities in that regard.

As Secretary-General Aboul Gheit is all too aware, a key element for regional and global security is a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting two-State solution is critical — not only for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples but for unlocking a better, more peaceful future for the region as a whole.

Ireland welcomes the 15 January presidential decree issued by President Abbas on the holding of elections. That is an important step in renewing legitimacy, and the European Union stands ready to support the electoral process.

We welcome the normalization agreements between Israel and a number of countries of the region. We sincerely hope that those will be followed by inclusive engagement to support tangible confidence-building measures with and by the parties and a reinvigorated role for the Middle East Quartet to achieve progress towards a just and lasting peace.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Foreign Minister of Tunisia and the Tunisian presidency for organizing today's important discussion. I also wish to thank Secretary-General Aboul Gheit. As a member of the Security Council, Ireland will continue our committed partnership with Mr. Aboul Gheit, the League of Arab States and its member States in tackling peace and security issues over the next two years. Mr. Aboul Gheit has an important and onerous responsibility, and he can count on Ireland.

Annex IX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Martin Kimani**

The Kenyan delegation is grateful to the Government of Tunisia for convening this meeting and thanks Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for their briefings.

My delegation notes that cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States has evolved over several decades — from the signing of a cooperation agreement in 1960 to the conclusion of the 2016 protocol of amendment as an update of the agreement between the two entities.

As the organizations commemorate their seventy-fifth anniversaries and celebrate their many years of cooperation, it is sobering to note that the Arab world still faces a web of complex transboundary and security threats. That calls for the intensification of coordination and partnership between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in addressing the crises within the region, with a particular focus on conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and counter-terrorism.

As we work to strengthen that cooperation arrangement, we further note that African countries constitute close to half of the League's membership. The African Union (AU) and the League of Arab States have in place a long-standing cooperation framework characterized by regular summits that has continued to focus on areas of mutual concern, including peace, security, development and cross-regional trade.

We believe that theirs is a natural partnership that can strongly drive collective peace and security. Given the significant number of issues that the Council is seized with from all over Africa and the Arab world, we believe a trilateral consultative exchange among the AU, the League of Arab States and the Security Council can contribute to a more effective partnership and can yield even-greater reach and capability in delivering the peace that the people of the League of Arab States and African States crave.

Such a trilateral approach could increase momentum in the various situations in Africa. It could boost support for the Libyan-led peace and political transition, including the recent intra-Libyan political dialogues, in a manner that ensures that the outcomes speak to the national context and specific security needs of the Libyan people, as well as neighbouring States and the region. It could lend continued support for the implementation of the Juba peace agreement in the Sudan. It could provide coordinated support to the Federal Government of Somalia, including measures to defeat Al-Shabaab. It could help strengthen counter-terrorism initiatives and operations in the Horn of Africa, the Lake Chad basin and the Sahel. It could also help promote collective and coordinated measures to secure the maritime domain, especially the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, with a view to ensuring that those waterways are safe to navigate and free from piracy, terrorism and any dangerous naval confrontations.

Finally, the emerging challenges to peace and security cannot be ignored in any member State of the League of Arab States, many of which are suffering the effects of climate change. Others are dependent on national revenues from the exploitation of hydrocarbons and must make the energy transition as the world moves to renewable energy. Solutions to facilitate that transition need to be undertaken.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Kenya's support for a robust cooperative relationship between the League of Arab States and the Security Council as a critical element in the quest for sustained peace and security in the Arab world.

Annex X**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez**

[Original: Spanish]

We thank Minister Othman Jerandi for convening this debate, as well as Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for their insightful and informative briefings. We also welcome the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates to this meeting.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is essential in efforts to maintain international peace and security. The complexity of the global challenges we face, from which no country or region is exempt, requires cohesive, concerted and collective action. We reaffirm Mexico's support for a multilateralism that incorporates coordination between the United Nations and various regional mechanisms to address shared challenges, identify potential synergies and implement joint actions.

The challenges of international peace and security require that global measures be accompanied by regional actions, and that both be capable of responding to the particularities of each environment. Regional organizations are necessary for the prevention, mediation and peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as for peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Mexico recognizes the work of the League of Arab States as a strategic partner. We maintain a fluid and positive dialogue with the League based on a bilateral consultation mechanism on matters of mutual interest, and we have an international cooperation fund for development that supports technical cooperation projects, academic exchange and human capital formation.

It is no secret that the Middle East has seen instability in recent years. But the signs of normalization of relations between various countries of the region are encouraging. In that regard, we welcome the successful summit held on 5 January in Al-Ula, Saudi Arabia, as well as the reopening of borders and airspace between Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States has become increasingly relevant. It is important to continue to strengthen it. A significant and notable step in that direction was the recent opening in Cairo of a United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States. My country also acknowledges the League's support for the Organization's efforts in Libya to achieve a ceasefire and a return to the political process in that country, as well as in the development, in Arab countries, of a regional counter-terrorism strategy that is in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We also underline the role to be played by the League of Arab States in the development and implementation of national action plans for the women and peace and security agenda.

The annual meeting of the Security Council with the members of the League of Arab States is a valuable space to identify opportunities and contribute in a balanced way to addressing the situations in the Middle East and North Africa. In particular, we underline the importance of close coordination between the League of Arab States and United Nations Special Envoys.

In line with Security Council presidential statements S/PRST/2012/20, of September 2012, and S/PRST/2019/5, of June 2019, we call for further cooperation between the two organizations on all issues involving early warning and prevention, as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Finally, we reiterate the importance of following up on resolution 2532 (2020), which reaffirms the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, and recognize the role of regional organizations in continuing to join efforts and support that initiative with a view to combating the coronavirus disease pandemic.

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

[Original: French]

I would like, through the Foreign Minister of Tunisia, to express our gratitude to the Republic of Tunisia for organizing this important debate on the theme “Cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States”.

As these two organizations, whose ideals embody multilateralism, are celebrating their seventy-fifth anniversary, peace and stability in the Arab world remain of vital importance to the Council because of the involvement of many of our countries, which, to varying degrees, have special relations with this region.

Allow me to take this opportunity to express our thanks to Ms. DiCarlo and Mr. Aboul Gheit for their very pertinent briefings.

As we have always noted during the various debates on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, regional organizations have proved their leading role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. They have the advantage of better knowledge of cultural and political dynamics and can be the least costly and most effective framework for identifying the root causes of, and solutions to, conflicts.

To that end, my delegation warmly welcomed the 2019 presidential statement (S/PRST/2019/5), which

“also emphasizes the importance of trilateral cooperation and coordination between the United Nations, the African Union and the League of Arab States on cross-regional peace and security issues, as well as with other organizations on situations of common interest”.

We note that, despite that statement, the level of cooperation has not lived up to expectations, particularly on the Libyan file. We dare to hope that, in the near future, the dynamics of cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States will be strengthened, in the interests of both organizations and the objectives they pursue.

Beyond the Libyan issue, cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States is of particular interest to my country, which holds the current presidency of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. As everyone knows, the Palestinian question, which is the primary *raison d'être* of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, is of particular importance for the United Nations and for the League of Arab States. In that regard, my delegation remains convinced that neither Israel nor the Palestinians can, in the long term and in a lasting manner, achieve their legitimate aspirations for security, for the one, and the creation of an independent and viable State, for the other, without a negotiated solution on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Similarly, for the conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan, which have direct consequences on the region, my delegation remains convinced that they cannot be resolved by military means. Instead, we must promote a political solution inspired and led by the peoples concerned, with the support of the international community. In the same vein, cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States must ensure that responses are found to the humanitarian challenges resulting from those conflicts.

In Libya, Syria and Yemen, to name but a few places, we are witnessing — often powerless — human tragedies whose victims are, unfortunately, women and children. In those situations, first aid should come from the countries of the region, as international humanitarian aid is becoming increasingly difficult to facilitate due to the regrettable intrusion of political considerations into humanitarian issues.

The persistence of conflicts, accompanied by humanitarian crises, has been compounded by the disastrous consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic, all of which calls for us to better coordinate our efforts to respond effectively to those challenges.

Strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States should make it possible to promote peace and security for the benefit of several Member States affected by crises. In that regard, my country welcomes the initiative of opening of a United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States. There is no doubt that this Office will serve as a catalyst for the development of cooperation between the two institutions, which we fervently desire.

Annex XII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations, Mona Juul**

I thank Mr. Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, for their interesting and timely briefings. I also thank Foreign Minister Othman Jerandi for his statement and for personally presiding over this important meeting today. Finally, I welcome Mr. Anwar bin Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, to this meeting.

Norway believes that more inclusive deliberation of issues on the Security Council's agenda will benefit the Council's situational awareness and decision-making. Engaging with regional and subregional organizations is therefore important. We strongly support the cooperation and dialogue between the Council and the League of Arab States on key matters related to peace and security in the region. The political and security situation in the Middle East and North Africa region remains deeply complex and, in several countries, volatile. The conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen are still ongoing, and the situation in Western Sahara is more tense now than it has been in long time.

While we welcome recent developments from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit and prospects to restore GCC unity, tensions in the Gulf region are still running high. Furthermore, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other terrorist groups continue to pose a grave threat to regional peace, stability and prosperity. The absence of a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also remains a source of unrest in the region. We see a new regional dynamic, with several members of the League of Arab States having recently normalized relations with Israel.

At the same time, support for the Palestinian cause in the Arab world remains strong. This new dynamic might present an opening for a renewed attempt to reach a negotiated two-State solution. We encourage greater coordination between the League of Arab States and the Council to support such a process.

Organizations like the League of Arab States are important in order to facilitate dialogue, build consensus and bridge differences between States. We encourage the League to assume a more prominent role in promoting stability, peace and reconciliation in the region, in cooperation with other regional and international partners.

I would like to highlight the engagement of the League of Arab States in the Libya quartet, together with the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union, as well as the quartet's efforts to support the Libyan-led political process. Furthermore, we fully support and encourage efforts to intensify contact and coordination between all the relevant United Nations Special Envoys and the League of Arab States in order to address the crises in the region. We encourage the two secretariats to continue working together to identify concrete, realistically achievable areas for cooperation, especially on peace and security.

One such area for further cooperation could be support for networks of women mediators. In the Middle East and North Africa region, as in so many places around the world, women remain underrepresented in political life and in peace and security efforts. That is why networks of women mediators are so important; they demonstrate the competence and capacity of local women leaders.

We are very pleased that the League of Arab States and UN-Women have launched the Arab Women Mediators Network to mobilize efforts to promote the

participation of women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping. We also welcome the joint efforts of UN-Women and the League of Arab States to support Member States in developing and implementing national action plans on women and peace and security. Women's participation in local and national peace and stability processes in Yemen is of the utmost importance. Yemen's national action plan on women and peace and security is a good tool, and we encourage one and all to support Yemen's implementation of that plan.

We also welcome cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations on issues related to climate and security, including through the Climate Security Mechanism.

In conclusion, I am encouraged by the statements made today and hopeful that the cooperation between the Council and the League can be further deepened for the sake of greater peace and security in the region.

Annex XIII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vassily Nebenzia**

[Original: Russian]

We welcome your participation in today's debate in your capacity as President of the Security Council. We also note the participation via video-teleconference of Mr. Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. We thank him and Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for their information and assessments. We also welcome the participation of Mr. Anwar bin Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates.

Russia has consistently advocated stepping up cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. The two organizations are of the same age and were both established to ensure peace and security on a global and regional scale. In order to enhance their interaction, the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States was opened at the League's headquarters in Cairo, in 2019. We advocate the effective use of that channel.

Unfortunately, the situation in the Middle East and North Africa remains difficult, owing, in part, to unresolved acute crises often triggered by external interference. The conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen remain volatile, there is escalation in Western Sahara and efforts are needed to strengthen stability in Iraq. Urgent steps are needed to break the deadlock on the central issue for the region — the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We hope that the recent normalization of relations between a number of Arab countries and Israel will not lead to further violations of the rights of the Palestinian people and will, instead, promote a just settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of internationally agreed parameters.

All these pain points provoke a strengthening of radical sentiments and an increase in manifestations of extremism. The task of developing collective measures to combat the terrorist threat is becoming increasingly urgent. The coronavirus pandemic has compounded the already difficult socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in a number of Arab countries. This situation calls for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the League in countering new challenges, peacekeeping and jointly preventing the escalation of conflicts in the region. That would contribute to resolving existing problems and disputes peacefully, without external interference, while respecting the interests of all parties involved and on the basis of international law.

To that end, the League of Arab States is increasingly needed as a mechanism for multilateral dialogue among regional players. We consider it important to activate coordination between the League of Arab States and United Nations Special Envoys in dealing with crises in the Arab region in order to better understand the nature of the problems encountered and to find possible joint measures to address them.

We are interested in a strong, united and effective League of Arab States that will enhance the profile of Arab countries in preventing and unblocking conflicts. We believe that attempts to prevent rapprochement among Arab States by external players pursuing geopolitical interests are immoral and unacceptable.

We believe that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should be based on the recognition of the leading role of regional actors in determining ways of settling conflicts in that part of the globe.

Given the potential of the League of Arab States in spreading an interfaith and inter-ethnic culture of peace and combating radical and extremist ideologies, it is important to hold a dialogue between the United Nations and the League on the situation of Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities affected by conflict.

It is in the interests of all States in the Arab region and beyond to abandon mutual recriminations and suspicions, much less the use of unilateral sanctions, pressure and provocations. Unfortunately, tensions in the Persian Gulf region, which have a destabilizing effect on international relations as a whole, have not abated and are largely being artificially exacerbated by the United States Administration. We echo the call to de-escalate the situation, as confirmed by the October Council video-teleconference meeting on this topic (see S/2020/1037), presided over by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. We appreciate Mr. Aboul Gheit's statement at that event, unequivocally confirming the League's desire to seek a diplomatic solution to the existing contradictions.

We confirm our readiness — in our national capacity and collectively — to assist in any way in the process of normalizing the situation, including through cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations. We have put forward an initiative to ensure regional security by renouncing confrontational approaches and promoting a constructive, unifying agenda. Russia's concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf is an invitation to dialogue, in which the League can play an important role. It is an invitation to peace, not war. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, I would like to follow the example of our American colleagues by citing a different quote from Mr. King, which they seem to avoid:

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defence than on programmes of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.”

There is a need to stop the rattling of arms and provoking an arms race in the region.

Russia will continue to strengthen its partnership with the League of Arab States on topical international and regional issues. To that end, we will make use of the mechanism of the Russian-Arab Cooperation Forum, the fifth ministerial session of which was held in Moscow in 2019. The action plan adopted at its conclusion and the joint communiqué confirm the proximity and convergence of positions on a wide range of issues. We look forward to continuing dialogue in that format as the epidemiological situation improves. In that context, we confirm our readiness to discuss common efforts to combat the coronavirus.

We underscore the spirit of strengthening Russian-Arab friendship and cooperation. We will also promote coordination between the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Halimah DeShong**

I thank Mr. Othman Jerandi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, for convening today's important meeting. We express our gratitude to Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, for their informative briefings. We also welcome the participation of the Mr. Anwar bin Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates and Chair of the Arab Group.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines supports efforts aimed at strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States, and we commend the League's members for their continued commitment to peace efforts. We take this opportunity to welcome the recently concluded Al-Ula Declaration, which we recognize as a positive step towards strengthening regional peace and stability. Such unifying, diplomatic efforts should continue to be pursued as countries of the region build confidence and strengthen relations to overcome common threats.

Regional and subregional organizations perform a vital role in mediating conflicts and restoring peace in their respective regions. This is recognized in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and even in paragraph 96 of presidential note S/2017/507, our guidebook on working methods. Furthermore, the June 2019 presidential statement S/PRST/2019/5 represents an important development in the relationship between the Security Council and the League of Arab States. The establishment of an annual briefing by the Secretary-General of the League is a welcome step towards a more productive relationship. Annual briefings have strengthened the Organization's relationship with other regional actors, such as the African Union and the European Union. We hope the same will be true with the League of Arab States. Indeed, the complex conflicts in several Member States in the Arab region serve to underscore the necessity for cooperation between the Security Council and League of Arab States.

The Arab region currently faces several challenges, including the situations in Somalia, the Sudan, Libya, Lebanon, Yemen, Palestine and Syria. Those protracted conflicts have resulted in some of the worst humanitarian crises that the world has ever faced, and they undoubtedly impact regional stability. The only practical and durable solution to secure peace and prosperity in the region is through inclusive political processes rather than military means. The constructive engagement of regional members is critical to achieving this goal. We therefore encourage stronger cooperation between United Nations Special Envoys and the League of Arab States. That relationship can be mutually beneficial for mediation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Regional organizations have invaluable knowledge that can be further enriched by support from the United Nations.

Turning to the situation in Palestine, we reaffirm the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative and commend the engagement of the League of Arab States to promote a comprehensive resolution to the decades-long conflict. To that end, we reiterate that the internationally agreed two-State solution, based on pre-1967 border lines, remains the only credible solution for lasting peace between Israel and Palestine, and across the wider region. We also echo President Abbas' call for the United Nations to convene an international conference to launch a genuine peace process, and we emphasize that the League of Arab States remains a critical interlocutor for those discussions.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has served to further underscore the need for multilateral coordination and cooperation. The socioeconomic consequences of the pandemic have been exacerbated by the ongoing conflicts, and humanitarian situations resulting from those conflicts have further deteriorated. To that end, we continue to appeal for a cessation of hostilities in all situations, especially in the Arab region, as called for by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States in resolution 2532 (2020). Overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and remediating the severe socioeconomic downturn will require the support of the international community, along with relevant regional actors.

In conclusion, the League of Arab States and the Security Council have a shared interest in maintaining peace and security and promoting the welfare of all people. It is our fervent hope that our two organizations will continue to strengthen the critical cooperative ties needed to address the multidimensional challenges at hand.

Annex XV**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations**

I want to congratulate the delegation of Tunisia on organizing this meeting with the League of Arab States. I would also like to thank the Secretaries-General for their briefings today. We agree with others that sustainable long-term peace and prosperity is best achieved through coordinated efforts to prevent and resolve conflict.

It is also only right in this, the seventy-fifth anniversary year of their foundation, to recognize the primary role of the United Nations, the League and other multilateral organizations in creating and supporting the international rules-based system that provides a foundation for coordinated and collective action to address our biggest challenges — an achievement that is brought into sharp relief in a year when we have all suffered, and continue to suffer, from a global pandemic.

The League has played, and continues to play, an important role in promoting regional peace and security and enhancing cooperation and friendship among the Arab nations and between the region and the rest of the world. Throughout its history, it has been a voice of moderation and mediation during times of regional conflict. Building on that, and deepening inclusive political processes with female participation, will enable us all to confront the urgent challenges that we share in the region and that still demand the international community's immediate attention.

Turning to some specifics and beginning with Syria, a negotiated political settlement remains the only sustainable solution to the conflict, and the United Kingdom continues to support United Nations Special Envoy Pedersen's efforts to that end. We will not consider funding reconstruction without a political process firmly under way, and we welcome the League's continued suspension of Syria. Resolution 2254 (2015) requires a nationwide ceasefire, unhindered aid access, releasing those arbitrarily detained, conditions for safe refugee returns and free and fair elections pursuant to a new constitution. Instead, the Al-Assad regime's policies continue to devastate the Syrian economy, deny aid to those in need and endorse repeated violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

With regard to the Middle East peace process, the United Kingdom remains committed to a two-State solution leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State, based on the 1967 lines and with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both States. The United Kingdom is clear that all actions that undermine this objective must cease, including terrorism, incitement, settlement expansion and demolitions. The United Kingdom welcomes the recent Arab-Israeli normalization agreements, which show that dialogue triumphs over hostility. The closer ties and benefits of those agreements must also be extended to the Palestinians. We encourage the parties to harness the new regional dynamic and, through dialogue and compromise, to move towards a lasting solution to the conflict.

In Libya, we welcome the United Nations-brokered ceasefire and continue to stand ready to support the political road map agreed by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, working towards elections in December 2021. We welcome the efforts of the League to support a peaceful resolution to the conflict, including through promotion of the Berlin process. It is clear that the Libyan people have had enough of instability, violence and external military interference in their affairs. It is incumbent on the international community to play our role in helping Libyans on their path to peace and stability.

The United Kingdom is deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict in Yemen and its devastating humanitarian crisis. We fully support the peace process led by United Nations Special Envoy Griffiths and urge all the parties to engage constructively. A political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis.

Finally, looking ahead, the region shares with the rest of the world two challenges in the short and longer term: recovering from COVID-19 and reversing climate change. As we build back better towards a long-term, sustainable, peaceful and prosperous future, we look forward to deepening and developing the relationship between the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

Annex XVI**Statement by the Political Coordinator of the United States of America to the United Nations, Rodney Hunter**

I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Secretary-General Aboul Gheit for their briefings today.

It has been 18 months since the United Nations established its Liaison Office to the League of Arab States in Cairo, and we support the ongoing efforts to enhance coordination between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. We hope to see increasing dividends from that coordination as both organizations engage on key issues such as peacebuilding, counter-terrorism, conflict prevention, post-conflict reconstruction and natural-resource management.^[P]_[SEP] The United States also values our important partnership with the League. We thank the League of Arab States for working with us as we mutually seek a stable, prosperous and secure Middle East. That includes the League's ongoing engagement in a range of protracted conflicts that continue to threaten regional stability and create multiple complex humanitarian crises.

Across the region, the United States supports United Nations-led international efforts to resolve ongoing conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen, and we will always demand respect for international humanitarian law. We seek political solutions that allow the parties to establish legitimate, accountable and effective Governments that respect the rights of their citizens.

The Syrian conflict continues after nearly a decade with untold and completely unnecessary suffering and humanitarian need as the Al-Assad regime continues its brutal campaign against the Syrian people. As we and others on the Security Council have made clear over and over, it is the Al-Assad regime's actions that starve the Syrian people and prevent assistance from getting to all those who need it — not international or unilateral sanctions.

Despite the regime's pretence that Syria has stabilized sufficiently for foreign assistance, the conflict is not over. There will be no reconstruction assistance until the regime has fully committed to a political solution as outlined in resolution 2254 (2015).

We commend our friends and allies within the League of Arab States for standing firm against readmitting Al-Assad's Syria and not normalizing relations until an inclusive political process is under way. A unified stance on that issue is essential to ensure that the Al-Assad regime realizes there is no military solution to this conflict.

We thank the League for its contributions as a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and the Shams (ISIS). The Coalition has brought together 83 countries and international organizations to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS.

Iran remains the most significant threat to regional peace and security, as it is engaged in malign activities across the region from Lebanon to Saudi Arabia. We welcome the League's May 2020 statement that condemned continued Iranian malign actions, its aggressive behaviour and its provocative acts to undermine regional security and stability.

The current situation in Iraq shows the real damage that Iranian-backed elements can do to a country's prosperity and long-term stability. Iranian-backed militias routinely engage in widespread theft of Iraqi State resources, conduct targeted killings and stoke sectarian violence.

To combat that, the United Nations and the United States have worked closely with the Iraqi Government to help Iraq strengthen its sovereignty. The Secretariat is currently in talks with the Government of Iraq on how best to support its request for election observers. We stand ready to support the Government of Iraq and the United Nations in providing the resources needed to hold a free and fair election.

We welcome greater cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States to ensure better outcomes for the Iraqi Government and people. Success will give members of vulnerable minority communities the chance to thrive again. Success will also mean a sovereign Iraq that can defend its national interests and hold free and fair elections, thus fulfilling a key demand of Iraqi protesters who want to end Iranian malign influence.

The United States continues to aggressively press the Iranian regime to end its role in these conflicts and curtail its support for terrorist groups and militias. Individually, States are susceptible to Iran's coercion, intimidation and malign behaviour, and those States should not have to go it alone. Indeed, Iran has deployed so many of its resources to perpetuate its revolutionary ideology and malign activities in the region that it can be effectively countered only by a strong, unified front. As such, we are encouraged by the breakthrough made at the 5 January Gulf Cooperation Council summit, which marks a positive step towards restoring Gulf and Arab unity, and we hope the Gulf countries will continue to reconcile their differences.

Finally, The Abraham Accords and the decisions by the Governments of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, the Sudan and Morocco to normalize relations with Israel present a historic opportunity. After decades of division and conflict, these normalized relations offer new paths of peaceful diplomacy that can help promote greater regional security and widen opportunities for expanded economic growth and prosperity among all countries of the region. The Abraham Accords provide a foundation for further advances towards regional peace, and we encourage other League members to join their fellow Arab States in normalizing relations with Israel.

As we face each conflict across the world as a Council, I am reminded of the words of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whom we honour today in the United States with a national holiday. He said:

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

The United States thanks Tunisia for holding this important meeting, and we look forward to continued cooperation with the League of Arab States.

Annex XVII**Statement by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Pham Hai Anh**

I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for their insightful briefings. I welcome Mr. Anwar bin Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, to this meeting.

Our world today has changed enormously since the end of the Second World War, with complex challenges at regional and global levels. Yet the Charter of the United Nations remains as relevant as ever. It provides for coordination and complementarity between the United Nations and regional organizations to effectively address challenges to the maintenance of international peace and security at a regional and global level, as enshrined in three articles of Chapter VIII. In addition, a number of recent United Nations resolutions recognize that cooperation.

Viet Nam has consistently championed the strengthening of such cooperation. We therefore strongly support Tunisia's initiative to hold this briefing. Last January, Viet Nam also held the first-ever Security Council briefing on United Nations cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see S/PV.8711).

We commend the efforts and contribution of the League of Arab States and its members for peace, stability and development in the region, including through conflict prevention and mediation. Many Arab States are among the largest troop contributors to peace operations and are generous donors to humanitarian causes in the region and around the world.

We support the determination of the League to strengthen its role in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the Arab world. With over 75 years of experience, the League of Arab States is well-versed and positioned to lead regional efforts, especially in resolving long-standing conflicts in the region. Viet Nam supports the League's contributions to international peace and security.

However, protracted conflicts, old and new, have been preventing the people in the Middle East and North Africa from enjoying lasting peace for too long. These conflicts have adversely affected stability and development in the larger region. Terrorism, radicalization and armed hostilities threaten the daily lives of the people in the region. Compounded by the ongoing pandemic, the region is home to the most serious humanitarian crises, affecting millions of people in Yemen, Syria, Libya and the occupied Palestinian territory.

The situation in the region serves once again to underscore the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the League of Arab States. The two organizations share a common mission of preventing conflicts and maintaining peace and security. The United Nations and the LAS recently demonstrated their determination and took substantive measures to that end. The establishment of the United Nations Liaison Office to the LAS is a great example of a new level of cooperation.

Viet Nam is of the view that the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should aim to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, respect for sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference. We believe that the Security Council and the League of Arab States could strengthen their cooperation on the basis of regional visions and values. We support the efforts

to achieve a general cessation of hostilities in all situations, especially in the Arab region, as called for by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the LAS, as well as further engagement between United Nations Special Representatives and the LAS and a stronger role for the United Nations Liaison Office in the work of the LAS.

Before I conclude, I would like to reiterate our unwavering support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for their inalienable rights. We strongly support the two-State solution, including the establishment of the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital that peacefully coexists alongside the State of Israel, with secure and internationally recognized borders on the basis the pre-1967 lines and a negotiated settlement, and in accordance with international law, the United Nations Charter and the relevant United Nations resolutions. We look forward to seeing further contributions by the United Nations and the LAS to the settlement of this issue.

Annex XVIII**Statement by the Minister of State Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, Anwar Gargash**

[English and Arabic]

I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States at the United Nations.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Republic of Tunisia for holding this important meeting and for its intensive efforts to bring Arab issues before the Security Council. I also thank His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, for their valuable briefings.

Today's meeting is of great importance in the light of the many crises and complex challenges that have sapped the strength of the Arab States and their peoples. In the absence of effective solutions, some of those crises have escalated to the point where they pose a threat to regional and international peace and security, particularly given the spread of extremism and terrorism. Over time, the Arab crises have accumulated on the Council's agenda and now consume a considerable amount of the members' time and effort. In parallel with the Council's efforts, the League and its members have worked hard to find solutions to the region's crises, particularly in Libya, Palestine, Syria and Yemen.

No single organization, however, can find lasting and comprehensive solutions to such complex crises; doing so requires joint efforts. Cooperation between the United Nations and the League pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations has a long history but should be strengthened, particularly with the Council, so that together we can maintain regional and international peace and security. In that regard, the Group of Arab States would like to make the following recommendations.

Further formal and informal consultations and meetings between the Council and members of the League should be held to exchange information and views on Arab issues. In accordance with the statement of 13 June 2019 by the President of the Council (S/PRST/2019/5), we call for today's meeting to be repeated annually. The Council could also conduct more visits to the region in order to deepen and clarify its understanding of the nature of, and ways of resolving, the Arab crises on its agenda.

Arab solutions must be found to Arab problems. To that end, Arab States must be involved in formulating appropriate solutions to crises and finding common ground in peace-related matters. We welcome the increase in coordination between the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General and the League. Through their historical experiences and relations, our nations can contribute to mediation efforts and support the implementation of agreed-upon solutions.

The Council's position on Arab issues should be unified, with limited use of the veto, and should reflect the concerns of the Arab States about the crises that affect them. Those concerns include in particular an end to foreign intervention in Arab affairs, protection of the region from weapons of mass destruction and an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab territories. In addition, all Council resolutions related to Arab issues should be implemented.

Cooperation between the Council and the League should include all stages of early warning about crises and should be given a high priority in order to prevent the onset of further crises. It should also include developing ways of exchanging information between the two bodies and building our capacity in the area of preventive diplomacy.

The work of the United Nations Liaison Office to the League should be enhanced, and a periodic assessment of the office's work and coordination mechanisms should be conducted. The expertise of other organizations can be used to develop the work of the Office. The Group welcomes joint projects implemented by United Nations agencies in conjunction with the League in such areas as the prevention of extremism, humanitarian crises, refugees and the empowerment of women and young people.

We also welcome the continued coordination between the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, and the Secretary-General of the League, His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit. We urge the Council to promote forthwith the common initiative through which the Secretaries-General of the United Nations, the League and the African Union are calling for an immediate ceasefire in all conflict areas following the coronavirus disease pandemic.

As we work to strengthen our spirit of solidarity and unity in order to address threats to peace and security, we emphasize the need for young people to be at the centre of our collective action. About half of the people of the Middle East and North Africa region are less than 26 years old. Without them, we cannot meet existing and emerging challenges.

Similarly, the active role of women in strengthening the resilience of our societies and in preventing and resolving conflicts cannot be ignored. Studies and experience have shown that the involvement of women in matters related to peace and security has positive results and significantly increases peace agreements' chances of success.

In conclusion, we reiterate that conflicts and crises cannot be resolved without coordination between the major regional and global actors. The Group will therefore continue to support the work of the Council, looking forward to the day when stability returns to our region and the Council's agenda is free of Arab crises.
