



# Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

**9573**<sup>rd</sup> meeting

Tuesday, 12 March 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Yamazaki . . . . . (Japan)

*Members:*

Algeria . . . . .	Mr. Bendjama
China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. De La Gasca
France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
Guyana . . . . .	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Malta . . . . .	Mrs. Frazier
Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Afonso
Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Sangjin Kim
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. Kanu
Slovenia . . . . .	Mr. Žbogar
Switzerland . . . . .	Mr. Hauri
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Wood

## Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

European Union

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

#### **European Union**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Borrell.

**Mr. Borrell Fontelles:** There are moments in history when the darkness of the world is becoming even darker, and today is one of these moments. The world is even darker than usual, black is even blacker, and pain and despair are becoming the ordinary human condition. Yes, the state of the world today is deeply worrisome, but it would be worse if we did not have the United Nations, which, through its Charter, remains an unsinkable compass for our humanity, confronted with the surge of passions, torrents of blood and rivers of hatred that destroy any semblance of reason around the world.

What we see is that, every day, the Charter of the United Nations is being flouted, distorted, hijacked or ignored — ignored, in some cases, with a sense of impunity that is increasingly worrying. But the United Nations is here, with all the men and women who work for it, among them the Secretary-General, to whom I would like to pay tribute today. I would like to support him in the face of the many accusations and attacks he has had directed against him. The United Nations remains a landmark in the turmoil, a lantern in the thick fog through which we seek to find our way every day, trying to find solutions. The United Nations is a ray of light, a sign of hope. That is why we expect a lot from the Summit of the Future. That moment, the Summit of the Future, must be the moment to reform the Security Council, to enlarge its composition to better reflect the world of today, and to reform the international financial

institutions, moving from a few billion to the many trillions that are needed. The future will come anyway. Let us try to make it less bleak than our bleak present.

With respect to concrete issues, for two years now, we have been witnessing a flagrant violation of international law by a permanent member of the Council, which deliberately launched a war of aggression against a sovereign State, Ukraine, whose security it was supposed to guarantee. Since the beginning of this war, which is an attack on the Charter of the United Nations, the European Union (EU) has shown its full solidarity with Ukraine by granting exceptional economic, financial and military aid. The EU has demonstrated remarkable unity and an ability to make Europe an active and structured Power in the international system. That support, symbolized by our commitment to making Ukraine a member of the European Union, will continue. Because it is not simply a matter of preserving a fundamental principle of international law, which is the territorial integrity of sovereign States. It also reflects Europeans' determination to protect ourselves against the danger that Russia now represents to our peace and security.

The second major conflict that we must confront is the one in Gaza. Gaza is just the tip of an extraordinarily serious conflict that has been raging between Israelis and Palestinians for almost a century — it is a one hundred years' war. We have repeatedly condemned — and I will do so again here — the terrorist attacks that took place on 7 October 2023 and reaffirmed Israel's right to defend itself. But we have also stated, equally strongly and repeatedly, that that right must be exercised in full respect of international law and international humanitarian law. When we see what is happening, we may have our doubts about that. I do not want to lecture anyone here about what is happening in Gaza — 30,000 people dead, 1.8 million displaced persons and 500,000 people on the brink of starvation. We are now facing a population fighting for their own survival. Humanitarian assistance must get into Gaza, and the European Union is working as hard as it can to make that possible. But this is a humanitarian crisis, not a natural disaster. It is not a flood or an earthquake, it is human-made. And when we look for alternative ways of providing support by sea or by air, we must remind ourselves that we have to do so because the natural way of providing support, by road, has been artificially closed, and starvation is

being used as a weapon of war. Just as we condemned that happening in Ukraine, we must use the same words for what is happening in Gaza.

In Gaza, United Nations agencies — the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) — are the last lifeline for many people. Yes, UNRWA is facing allegations, but allegations must be proved — that is why they are allegations. We await with interest the conclusions of the United Nations independent investigation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the systems audit to be conducted by European Union experts and the findings of the commission set up by the Secretary-General and led by Ms. Colonna. But let me remind members of something: UNRWA exists because there are Palestinian refugees. It is not a present to the Palestinians, it is an answer to their needs. UNRWA exists because, first, there were Palestinian refugees, and we will not make those refugees disappear by making UNRWA disappear. They will still be there. In fact, there is only one way to make UNRWA disappear: by making those refugees citizens of a Palestinian State that coexists with an Israeli State. Almost everybody agrees on that.

But how can we make that solution a reality? There is no magic solution, but maybe there are credible ways to try to achieve it: the two-State solution. We talked about it many years ago, and we are now talking about it again, but admittedly we have never seriously tried to make it a reality. In order to do so, the first step should be a unanimous resolution by the Security Council, endorsing a two-State solution and defining the general principles that may lead to that result. The European Union is ready to cooperate on that. I think that we have a wonderful opportunity to show that our principles are not empty words. Since we all agree on the implementation of a two-State solution as the only viable solution to the conflict, we must act accordingly, following, in my opinion, three principles that should guide our actions. They are: the principle of clear separation between the two States, since there is no viable alternative to this separation; the principle of security, without which tragedies like that of 7 October 2023 can only be repeated again and again, because both Israel and Palestine must feel secure; and finally, the principle of regional integration, since both Israel and Palestine are perfectly capable of taking their place in a peaceful regional collective.

Today we are dominated by images of war and hatred. But it is not impossible to imagine a pacified region, based on complementarity between Israel and its wider neighbourhood, from the Mediterranean to the Gulf. That was Shimon Peres' dream. Shimon, my old friend, dreamed of that. Let us try to make that dream come true. Let us roll up our sleeves, and let us try to engage with that, because world peace is at stake. Let humanitarian support flow into Gaza, and let us continue to ask — and more than ask — Israel not to impede humanitarian support going through the natural channel, which is by road. And, in the meantime, let us try to find other solutions, which will be less efficient and never an alternative to the hundreds of trucks that should be going into Gaza to avoid the starvation of hundreds of thousands of people.

That is the scenario in which the United Nations and the European Union are cooperating. That cooperation is very well reflected in numbers. I know that the United Nations is facing serious financial constraints. Some contributions have not been paid, and now that everybody is talking about securing adequate financing to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, numbers matter. Let us go from principles to facts and recall that the European Union and its member States finance almost one third of the regular budget of the United Nations. We collectively finance one quarter of all United Nations agencies and one quarter of all programmes. We pay, and we pay on time. We are the largest financial contributor to the United Nations, and we are proud of that. We are also the largest provider of humanitarian aid in the world. From time to time, it is important to reiterate those facts.

But we are not only payers, we are strategic partners on crisis management and peace operations. We are working together in 25 crisis contexts, providing peace mediation and supporting dialogue. In the future, we would like to focus increasingly on conflict prevention, increasing our cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, analysing conflicts and preventing electoral violence. I think that conflict prevention should have a prominent place in the Pact for the Future. It is better to foresee and prevent than to try to mend the problem once the crisis has erupted.

Our role is particularly committed to peace and security in Africa. Twenty-five years from now, 25 per cent of the world's population will be living in Africa.

One out of four human beings will be living in Africa, a continent of opportunities where humankind will still be growing. But, in order to harvest that potential, they need security, and they need stability. That is why we are working with the African Union, supporting African-led peace operations. I know that that is a priority for the Security Council, and I welcome resolution 2719 (2023) on the financing of such peace support operations. In the last three years, we have provided almost €1 billion in military support to African partners through the European Peace Facility.

We have 24 missions and operations around the world. We have 4,300 people deployed in various operations, including the recently launched European Union Naval Force Operation ASPIDES to ensure maritime security in the Gulf; the European Union Naval Force Operation ATALANTA, to counter piracy in the Horn of Africa; support to our partners in the Gulf of Guinea; a mission in Armenia to support mediation efforts in the region; an advisory mission in Ukraine to train Ukrainian police; in the Mediterranean, Operation IRINI, with a strong mandate from the European Union; the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and another mission trying to work on implementing the arms embargo in Libya. We hope that the Security Council will renew the annual authorizations for those operations that we are implementing under the Council's mandate.

Let us turn our attention to Haiti, where the recent, dramatic escalation by criminal gangs over the past weeks has brought the country to the brink, and ordinary Haitians are paying the price. We welcome progress on the political effort and commend the Caribbean Community on its facilitation, and we support the efforts for a Haitian-led political transition. We are looking for ways to support the broader objective of the mission led by Kenya, and we are ready to contribute and to finance that operation.

In the Sahel, after 10 years of cooperation, we are facing a deteriorating situation. With several military coups in recent years, the political landscape in the region has changed, but the challenges remain the same. We want to be engaged and to support any peace initiative, the Economic Community of West African States and African solutions to African problems. However, I think that in the Sahel, the international community needs to adapt to new threats and new actors, be more flexible and respond better to the demands of our regional partners.

The same is true of the Sudan. The world's largest internal displacement crisis is taking place silently in the Sudan, with 8 million people displaced inside and outside the country. Twenty million Sudanese — half the population — are at risk of starvation. It is not in the press headlines, but it is happening. And the de facto Government's refusal to allow United Nations agencies to deliver aid via Chad is making the situation even worse. Yes, we do want to support any initiative and any international response in the Sudan, and we need all parties and their sponsors — because those parties are indeed being sponsored — to silence their guns and end hostilities without preconditions.

In the Horn of Africa, in Somalia, we have been the main contributor to African Union missions for years, in order to stabilize the country. Since 2007, we have provided €2.6 billion in support of those missions, and we increased support to the Somali security sector, and there have been some positive results there. We will present to the Security Council a detailed proposal for a new mission in Somalia, and we stand ready to work with international partners to support the implementation thereof. However, I want to emphasize the importance of financial burden-sharing.

Afghanistan seems to have been forgotten, but the country's humanitarian, economic, political and human rights situation is alarming. There is de facto gender apartheid in Afghanistan. This situation cannot stand. We therefore support the work of the Secretary-General and the meetings in Doha, and we need to push for the implementation of Security Council resolution 2721 (2023) and to continue to engage.

Myanmar is another priority. We fully support the mediation efforts of Laos and of the new Special Envoy of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, but I think that the United Nations must also play a more prominent role and speak with one voice about what is happening in Myanmar. The appointment of a United Nations Special Envoy and of a Resident Coordinator is long overdue. We have to fill that gap — the United Nations has to be present there.

And do not forget that we just celebrated International Women's Day. I want to conclude my remarks with a few words on the human rights of women and girls. I referred to the subject when I mentioned gender apartheid in Afghanistan. Yesterday the sixty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women began. That Commission is one of a

kind. It is the main global body dedicated exclusively to advancing the enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls. I think that this is the right time for the European Union to once again reiterate our firm stance against sexual and gender-based violence, wherever it occurs. This kind of violence has to stop, no matter where or by whom it is committed.

To conclude — and I thank the Council for its attention — let me restate the deep commitment of the European Union to United Nations values and principles. It is not only to the Organization, or to the men and women who are working every day and, in some cases, losing their lives in the service of the Organization. Our commitment is also to the principles and values that underpin the existence of the United Nations — with the promise that we will continue to work hard to ensure the full implementation of those values and principles through our financial support and our political commitment.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Borrell Fontelles for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Bendjama** (Algeria): I would like to thank Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, for his briefing.

I would also like to commend Mr. Borrell on his dedication to enhancing cooperation with the African Union and with the Arab world, and I want to express our admiration of his leadership and his courageous stance on the situation in Gaza and on the unjust campaign against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

The world is facing complex crises, involving multiple actors who are increasingly interconnected. The complexity is often affecting the effectiveness of the Council, which is sometimes constrained to inaction and bound by its own configuration and rules. Meanwhile, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, under the terms of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations remains critical to leverage the synergic benefits of multilateralism and to face multiple challenges.

In that regard, and as an African country that continuously promotes the principle of complementarity between the United Nations and regional organizations,

Algeria recognizes the key role of the European Union (EU) in contributing to the maintenance of peace and security, including in Africa. The African Union (AU) and the EU enjoy long-standing cooperation premised on the principle of African solutions to African problems, within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture. We commend the adoption in December 2023 of the resolution that opened the door to United Nations funding for African Union-led peace operations authorized by the Security Council (resolution 2719 (2023)). In that regard, the technical and financial support of the EU to these AU-led missions and the implementation of that milestone resolution will be of critical importance.

Equally important are the European efforts to mitigate the suffering of the Palestinians, especially in Gaza, where the Israeli occupying Power is committing the most horrific crimes against civilians, including tens of thousands of women and children. Algeria has repeatedly highlighted that suspending or cutting UNRWA's funding undermines the work of the only organization able to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinians, especially in such an extremely difficult and challenging environment.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the EU is also reflected in Ukraine. Algeria encourages the EU to redouble its diplomatic efforts towards an inclusive and constructive dialogue that could pave the way for a negotiated solution to the deadly conflict in Ukraine.

In conclusion, although cooperation between the United Nations and subregional organizations is widening the spectrum of the United Nations action, Algeria considers as paramount the need for comprehensive reform of the United Nations and the Security Council that would allow for more effectiveness to face the multiple and protracted challenges, including in the areas of peace and security.

**Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett** (Guyana): Guyana thanks Japan for organizing this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union (EU). This annual briefing provides a platform through which areas of mutual interest and concern can be reviewed and discussed. I therefore thank the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, for his insightful briefing.

Guyana, and indeed the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the European Union enjoy a strong partnership based on shared values, our commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the political independence of Member States. We therefore see the EU as an important partner of the United Nations and, in this context, the Security Council. We extend our appreciation for the EU's efforts to enhance collective security and promote conflict prevention, post-conflict stabilization and peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. We note too that, as mentioned by the High Representative, the EU is a major troop- and police-contributing bloc, representing more than 4,000 personnel throughout the world. As a collective, the EU member States are among the largest financial contributors to the United Nations system and United Nations peacekeeping missions. In that regard, I take this opportunity to welcome the EU's support for the African Union peace support operations, including resolution 2719 (2023), which was co-sponsored by EU member States.

Guyana also recognizes the EU as the world's leading donor of humanitarian assistance. Its continued support for Gaza, including through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), is critical. Guyana also takes note of the EU's commitment to continued support for Haiti, which is essential, especially at this time, given the recent agreement facilitated by CARICOM. We also acknowledge the EU's consistent representation of prominent thematic issues, including climate change and the women and peace and security agenda.

As outlined in resolution 1631 (2005), regional organizations have a critical role to play in international peace efforts. Guyana believes that enhanced cooperation between those bodies and the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, will be vital to realizing a world of greater peace and stability. As generic threats to global peace and security remain and new threats emerge, including unregulated artificial intelligence, other cybertools and the rollback in democracy, among other factors, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the EU, is even more critical. The increasing risks that climate change pose to peace and security in specific contexts is also another area for

strengthened EU-United Nations cooperation. Guyana views addressing climate security risks, including in relation to food insecurity, as an urgent objective.

I believe that the Council is unanimous in its recognition of the intrinsic link between peace and security and development. In that regard, Guyana recognizes the EU's leading role in the provision of development assistance. We encourage continued attention to the development needs of countries, with full consideration of their cultural and other local contexts. The reform of international financial institutions remains critical, and Guyana notes the High Representative's acknowledgement of that need.

In conclusion, the EU remains a critical partner to the United Nations. The partnership must be strengthened as we maximize complementarity for a more peaceful and secure world.

**Mr. De Rivière (France)** (*spoke in French*): I thank the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for his statement and warmly welcome him to this meeting.

The European Union is a major partner of the United Nations. It tirelessly defends the Charter of the United Nations. The European Union and its member States are more committed than ever to supporting Ukraine, while Russia has waged its war of aggression on European soil for two years in defiance of international law. The European Union and its member States also continue to respond to crises. Its member States have deployed more than 3,000 personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations. In Lebanon, European Union member States contribute almost a third of the personnel of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, whose commitment to de-escalation is of major importance. In the Red Sea, the European Union supports the Organization's regional security efforts by protecting maritime traffic with its Naval Force Operation Aspides.

In the Middle East, the European Union continues to support United Nations. Last week, it made a payment of €50 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and will contribute a total of €82 million in 2024. Off the coast of Libya, European maritime Mediterranean Operation IRINI is helping to implement the arms embargo decided by the Security Council. In Syria and Türkiye, the European Union and its member States have provided €30 billion in humanitarian aid since 2011 to the most vulnerable Syrians.

In Africa, the European Union is deploying several training missions in partnership with African defence and security forces. In Somalia, the EU is deploying two training missions, as well as maritime Operation Atalanta, off the Horn of Africa, and has committed over €2.6 billion in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia and then the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia over the past 15 years.

The EU and its member States are mobilized to defend the values of the United Nations. That includes the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of women and girls. We will continue to promote the priorities of the Secretary-General and is doing so concretely by providing significant funding to the United Nations. The EU member States are the largest contributors to the regular budget and the second largest to the peacekeeping operation budget, financing almost a quarter of both, without falling behind on payments.

The European Union is helping the Secretary-General meet the great challenges of our time, particularly climate and environmental challenges, as well as development financing and supporting the least developed countries. This year, several international events will enable us to do just that. Two United Nations conferences — the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States and the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries — to be held in May and June, respectively, as well as the One Water Summit, which we will be organizing with Kazakhstan, will be great opportunities. And let us not forget the twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held at the end of the year, which will place climate financing at the heart of discussions, building on the Paris Pact for People and the Planet. We are also working alongside Costa Rica to prepare for the 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Finally, in his New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General makes recommendations for making our collective security system more effective. We welcome the reflections linked to the Pact for the Future, which we hope will help strengthen multilateralism and the authority of the United Nations Charter.

**Mrs. Frazier** (Malta): I too welcome Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European

Union (EU), to today's meeting and thank him for sharing his thoughts and insights with us.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations remains a cornerstone of the Organization's work. As a member of the European Union and as a committed multilateralist, Malta strongly supports enhanced cooperation between the EU and the United Nations. We remain open to exploring new approaches to delivering effective multilateralism for all and to enable diplomacy to work.

The EU seeks to maintain a strong focus on international peace and security and to promote the rule of law over force. Those principles are fully aligned with those of the United Nations, making the two organizations natural partners. The EU and its member States have consistently underlined the need to work together towards one common goal — upholding international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Only through multilateralism can we find global solutions to global problems. In that regard, the Summit of Future provides a unique opportunity to reinvigorate the system that binds us together — bringing peace, stability, prosperity and growth.

The EU has always been a peace project, born from the ashes of the Second World War. It has been successful in bringing peace to its people and promoting it around the world. It is central to our DNA. Through the years, EU-United Nations cooperation has focused on the two organizations' priorities and objectives and has addressed current crises that overlap on the EU and Security Council agendas. Those include our firm support for Ukraine against Russia's war of aggression, as well as our calls and contributions towards the humanitarian crisis suffered by the civilian population in Gaza.

The EU works together with the United Nations in different countries with the shared objectives of protecting human rights, including those of women and children, tackling the root causes of conflict and preserving peace. Moreover, the EU is a key partner to the United Nations in crisis prevention and management and is a leading donor to humanitarian and development assistance.

The comprehensive United Nations-EU approach to crisis management, mediation and peace operations has helped several nations overcome the difficulties of conflict in their path towards peace. There are currently

24 EU peace and security missions and operations in three continents. EU member States collectively deploy more than 4,300 personnel in peacekeeping operations. Those efforts overlap with, and contribute to, strengthening the New Agenda for Peace.

In the Mediterranean Sea, Operation IRINI continues to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations arms embargo on Libya, in application of resolution 2292 (2016). As co-penholders with France, we believe it is essential that the Security Council renew that resolution again in June.

In Africa, the EU's missions testify its commitment to the continent and its engagement with the African Union.

In conclusion, we believe that strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the EU will enhance our ability to prevent and resolve conflicts. It will also advance the principles of the United Nations Charter. Alongside the European Union, Malta will continue to contribute to the construction of an effective and fair multilateralism for the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Mr. Afonso** (Mozambique): Mozambique welcomes this briefing under the theme "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security".

We thank Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, for his important and insightful briefing this morning. It reaffirms, among other things, the deep commitment of the European Union (EU) to the values and principles of the United Nations.

Within its core functions and powers, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Under the Charter of the United Nations, the role of regional and subregional organizations in the domain of peace and security is paramount. In that connection, we hold the view that cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union is an important mechanism for the maintenance of peace and security around the world. That applies to the African continent, as it does to other continents. We therefore welcome, in particular, the cooperation and collaboration that exists between the

United Nations and the European Union, especially their support for African-led programmes on the maintenance of peace and security.

Since 2004, the EU has been supporting the conflict-prevention efforts of the African Union (AU) by financing African-led peace support operations, promoting capacity-building for African Union institutions and contributing to AU-led initiatives for conflict prevention and resolution. We would like to continue counting on that long-standing cooperation and friendship that derives from mutual interest.

We advocate in particular our joint reflection and action regarding the operationalization of resolution 2719 (2023) on the financing of African Union-led peace support operations, which Mr. Borrell Fontelles made excellent reference to in his statement. The unanimous approval of that resolution by the Council constitutes a milestone in the framework for enforcement actions led by the African Union. In that connection, the support of the European Union to that Security Council resolution can be a game changer in many African peace support operations.

It is our belief that the vision of African solutions to African problems must be the guiding principle in the partnership between the African Union and the European Union in the promotion of peace and security in Africa. During the sixth EU-African Union Summit, held on 17 and 18 February 2022, the Heads of State and Government of both organizations recognized the need to abide by that principle. They undertook in particular to address the question of radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism, illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and organized crime, including tackling the root causes of conflicts. In that regard, we highly value the support provided by the European Union to the African Union in the implementation of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the African Peace and Security Architecture, the African Governance Architecture and the Silencing the Guns initiative, now extended to 2030.

On many occasions, the Security Council urged the international community to support peacebuilding processes in a number of countries, with a view to avoid relapsing into conflict or being trapped in a web of terrorism and extreme violence. We would like to highlight that the political transition in South Sudan and the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of

South Sudan and the financing of local elections in the Central African Republic are of paramount importance. They need to be supported strongly, consistently and unconditionally. We therefore appeal to the international community to assist financially the electoral processes under way in those two African countries. They are part of the contribution to the maintenance of peace of security in Africa.

In many countries on our continent, peacebuilding goes hand in hand with State-building, and those two processes are mutually reinforcing. In it is in that context that Mozambique welcomes the valuable contribution of the European Union to strengthening the African Union Peace and Security Architecture.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The topic of our meeting today — cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union (EU) — cannot be viewed separately from the current state of the European Union. The European project, which began as an integrating economic union designed to help to heal the wounds left by the Second World War and reconcile the peoples of Europe, is today of a completely different nature. Today, through the European Union, we are observing an aggressive, expansionist bloc that is completely subordinating itself to the goals and objectives of the United States and NATO and placing political interests above economic ones. Furthermore, the leaders of common European bodies, who once sought to advance purely technical objectives, are now rushing into global politics and attempting to impose their will on other Member States. In that regard, the European Union stands out among the regional organizations with which the United Nations has established relationships under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Today's European Union, to our great regret, has inherited the worst colonialist traditions and, even without the United Kingdom, is strongly advancing neocolonial approaches, doing everything possible to protect the well-being of the notorious golden billion, regardless of what that means for the rest of the world. We heard the European Union's opinion of itself expressed most strikingly in the immortal metaphor of Mr. Borrell Fontelles, who is present in this Chamber today, that the European Union is a beautiful blossoming garden, which weeds — namely, the other States — are trying to invade. It is difficult to avoid an analogy with the American concept of a shining city on a hill, around which the fabled American exceptionalism is built.

Perhaps we could observe that from a distance and occasionally joke about the bombast and myopia of our European neighbours, if their integration project had not become increasingly anti-Russian and even Russophobic by the year. And that trend emerged long before our special military operation in Ukraine and even before the anti-constitutional coup d'état in Kyiv in 2014, which was organized with the direct involvement of EU countries. The starting point was the 2004 expansion of the European Union, when 10 fledglings from Eastern Europe joined the Union, many of whom were objectively not ready for membership. It was then that the EU ceased to be a purely economic union and, for the first time, placed politics above economic considerations, which was a huge and fatal mistake.

We had serious questions about many of the more recent EU members. Already at that time, alarming trends were gaining momentum in the Baltic States, where violations of the rights of the Russian-speaking population and cases of the glorification of Nazi criminals were reported. Even then elites in Poland and the Czech Republic were already revealing their Russophobic nature. However, Brussels and leading European capitals, with whom we maintained a dialogue on the issue of expansion, reassured us that those new member States were small countries and were afraid of confronting Russia one on one, and as soon as they joined the European family, they would calm down and embrace constructive plans to build four common spaces between Russia and the EU. It is hard to imagine today, but at one point we had joint projects with the European Union and even adopted road maps for their implementation.

Ultimately, everything was turned upside down. Having joined the EU, the Russophobic fledglings poisoned the entire European Union and effectively usurped EU policy vis-à-vis Russia, turning it into a competition and a zero-sum game instead of cooperation.

At the same time, we saw a fundamental unravelling of the vaunted "shared European values" that attracted many people to a united Europe. The EU became selectively deaf and dumb on the basis of political expediency, jettisoning its fundamental principles of human rights and the freedom of speech and the media. Today, for example, Latvia is about to expel about 1,000 Russian-speaking pensioners who have lived in the country for decades, because their level of proficiency in the Latvian language was deemed insufficient, and the Baltic countries are doing everything in their power

to eradicate the Russian language on their territory. The Foreign Ministry of Estonia recently published a report indicating that, during the liberation of Tallinn from the fascists 80 years ago, the Red Army allegedly targeted residential areas and cultural objects. Taking into account the fact that the bombing targeted headquarters of the Gestapo, the Abwehr, air defence systems, maritime arsenals, gunpowder depots and communications centres, it is obvious that the current Estonian authorities firmly associate themselves with Hitler and his henchmen. The EU prefers to ignore that. Moreover, the European Union unanimously votes against the General Assembly draft resolution that we submit every year condemning the glorification of Nazism, and even stands at the forefront of initiatives to prohibit everything Russian, even trying to rewrite history to that end.

In recent years, the EU has become a symbol of blatant double standards, and that was, by the way, largely facilitated by Mr. Borrell Fontelles, who is present here today. I can cite numerous examples. Let us recall, for instance, his statement in February that banning Russian media is “protection of the freedom of speech”. At the same time, our reciprocal measures are being criticized in the European Union. Take another example. It was also in February that Mr. Borrell said that, in order to end Israel’s war in Gaza, there is a need to stop delivering weapons to the country. That is ironclad logic, and we support it. However, in the Ukrainian context, Mr. Borrell insists on increasing and stepping up military support for Ukraine, acknowledging that, in the absence of that, the conflict would end within a few weeks. I cannot but note that weapons for Ukraine are being provided through the European Peace Facility. To put it succinctly, this is very Orwellian: “War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength”. Those are the principles that guide the European Union today.

At the same time, the EU is striving to position itself as a peacemaker and mediator, and is attempting to wear that mantle even when it comes to Ukraine. But does the EU want the conflict in that country to end? Let us address this question to the root source, that is, to Mr. Borrell himself.

In June 2023, after acknowledging that the conflict in Ukraine could be over in a matter of weeks if the West stopped providing military support to Ukraine, Mr. Borrell noted that “the question was not whether to end this war, but how to end it”. In other words, the European Union, essentially a warring party — even

if by proxy — in Ukraine, is working not to resolve the conflict, but rather, through the conflict, to inflict maximum damage on Russia, and ideally to achieve the strategic defeat of Russia. The EU applies this anti-Russian “geopolitical optic” everywhere, which Ukraine and other countries are paying for with the lives of hundreds of thousands. This is a logic that is being applied by the EU ubiquitously. It is guided by that logic in Armenia, in the Kosovar settlement, in Moldova and even in Africa. For that reason, Mr. President, I think that you understand why Russia is calling for caution when it comes to cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union. The assistance that the EU offers is far from free. Inevitably, there will be political demands and the imposition of alien political and socioeconomic templates. Ultimately, that always results in something either neo-colonial or anti-Russian, because the modern-day European Union does not know how to operate in any other way.

I will not talk now about the very odd economic manoeuvres that the European Union has adopted in its impotent anti-Russian rage. I will not talk about how it is shooting itself in the foot when it comes to energy issues, eschewing cheap Russian energy supplies and cultivating an addiction to the far more expensive deliveries from the United States, as a result of which major operations have begun to leave the EU. I will not talk about the flooding of European markets with cheap Ukrainian agricultural products, which have caused farmers to protest in nearly all Member States. I will also not talk about the collusion of American weapons production companies and dealers that are stealthily supplanting European markets amid the Ukrainian crisis. Those are internal matters for the European Union. Let the European voters decide for themselves. There is a Russian saying about this: “cutting off one’s nose to spite one’s face”.

Let me just say that the European Union is making a huge strategic mistake by striving to portray Russia — in order to please its petty, but very shrill Russophobes — as an enemy, and that despite the fact that Russia has never undertaken any aggressive actions against the European Union. We also have neither devised nor implemented any anti-European projects. However, Brussels is obstinately trying to promote security formulas against Russia, rather than with Russia. In that connection, I would like to remind our European neighbours that any attempts to forge a united anti-Russian bloc have always ended badly for Europe. I would like to believe that there

are still some in Europe who remember those lessons of history, who are capable of considering the situation in a broader context and who are capable of undertaking the necessary measures to restore relations in a constructive and pragmatic way. We remain open to that. It is now up to Brussels to follow suit.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I thank High Representative Borrell Fontelles for his briefing and participation today.

The United States is grateful for the contributions of the European Union (EU) to international peace and security, including through partnership and cooperation with the United Nations. The EU has proven to be a reliable partner with the United Nations in responding to threats to international peace and security.

Putin's aggression against Ukraine has made clearer than ever the urgency of standing up for the Charter of the United Nations and for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is true of the United Nations, and it is true of the EU, that we are stronger when we work together to address crises. We particularly appreciate the opportunity to work with the EU Advisory Mission Ukraine, including through its support of Ukraine's Office of the Prosecutor General and other authorities, as they work to investigate and prosecute atrocities committed as part of Russia's war.

The United States, the European Union and many United Nations States Members, inside and outside of Europe, are working with United Nations agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to mitigate the humanitarian impacts of Putin's war, not only in Ukraine but around the world. But the EU's cooperation with the United Nations is not limited to Europe. We welcome the EU's efforts to implement the United Nations arms embargo on Libya, through inspections of vessels in accordance with resolution 2292 (2016) and subsequent resolutions. Thanks to the mission's information gathering and patrols, human smuggling and trafficking networks are being disrupted.

The United States and the European Union have taken a strong and coordinated stance supporting humanitarian aid in conflict zones, calling for accountability and respect for international humanitarian law. We remain the largest donors to humanitarian and food security organizations like the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations each year.

Following last April's armed clashes in the Sudan, the United States and the EU have supported United Nations response efforts to the humanitarian crisis. United Nations cooperation with regional organizations such as the EU is now more important than ever. The United States, the EU and the United Nations have also worked together in Somalia to bolster the fight against Al-Shabaab. In particular, we welcome the EU's augmented support to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia to fulfil its mandate and assist in capacity-building as it transitions security responsibilities to the Somali National Army.

International cooperation is also required to combat the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The United States and the EU have both supported the efforts of the United Nations Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza. Continued humanitarian assistance, long-term reconstruction planning and aid will be pivotal in ensuring that a coherent and actionable plan is in place to meet the immense needs of the people in Gaza the day after the violence ends.

In Afghanistan, we must also continue to work together to support the vital efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the United Nations-led political process to develop a road map for Afghanistan's integration into the international community, in return for steps that the Taliban must take. Complementary assistance and coordination with regional organizations such as the EU can ensure more effective operations. When done right, they extend the impact and reach of the United Nations and allow resources to go further.

The United States unequivocally welcomes the EU's role as a crucial partner to the United Nations, and in particular to the Security Council, in the maintenance of peace and international security.

**Mr. Sangjin Kim** (Republic of Korea): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely meeting. I welcome High Representative Borrell Fontelles to this meeting and thank him for his comprehensive briefing today.

At the outset, I should reiterate that I cannot agree more with the way in which he described the crisis we are facing globally, as well as the directions and principles he presented, which can guide us in handling the crisis more efficiently. As the year 2024 begins, multilateralism — of which the United Nations is

the fundamental cornerstone — finds itself in crisis. Indeed, much of the world is still contending with expanding climate shocks and with the armed conflicts that are expanding all over the world. Most notably, two years of Russia's brutal war against Ukraine and the grave situation in Gaza have both called into question the effectiveness of the post-Second World War multilateral architecture in responding to major security and humanitarian crises and protecting civilians. Moreover, the Security Council's gridlock and paralysis on key issues is causing reputational harm to the United Nations more broadly as it strives to address overlapping crises and achieve the transformational promises of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Against that backdrop, the Republic of Korea highly commends the ongoing relationship between the United Nations and the European Union (EU) as like-minded champions of multilateralism and its core universal values. My delegation is of the view that bolstering United Nations cooperation with key regional and subregional organizations such as the EU, as envisioned in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to strengthening multilateralism and supporting our intertwined peace and security efforts during these times of globally interconnected crises. That means that enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations such as the EU is more significant than ever before. It is especially important as the Council's agenda continues to broaden and deepen alongside emerging security challenges.

Owing to their intimate knowledge of their respective regions, regional and subregional organizations are well positioned both to understand the root causes of conflict and to promote confidence, trust and dialogue among the parties and civil society partners concerned within those regions. Those tools also underpin the foundations for the peaceful settlement of disputes, as stipulated in Chapter VI of the Charter. As we heard in Mr. Borrell Fontelles's detailed briefing, the European Union is contributing to international peace and security across the globe through its cooperation with the United Nations by drawing on its unique experience and strength. And as he explained, 24 EU missions and operations are currently being conducted around the world. The EU's operations in the Western Balkans, where it monitors security and supports key local institutions, and in the Mediterranean, where it helps implement the United Nations arms embargo, are both representative examples of its efforts to advance

international peace and security. My delegation greatly appreciates the United Nations-EU partnership in that connection.

For its part, the Republic of Korea has been actively expanding its engagement and partnership in recent years with various regional mechanisms, and the EU is one of our strategic partners, despite the fact that we are located on opposite sides of the globe. In May 2023, the Republic of Korea and the EU held a summit during which both sides reaffirmed their strong support for multilateralism, as well as their shared values regarding freedom, the rule of law, open societies, democracy, human rights and good governance. Both sides agreed to continue their close cooperation within international organizations, including the United Nations, in order to find solutions to global challenges. As a member of the Security Council, the Republic of Korea will continue its efforts to strengthen cooperation and partnership with the EU at the United Nations.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the Republic of Korea's firm commitment to close cooperation with and support for the partnership between the United Nations and the EU, with a view to realizing peace and security for all during this era of many crises.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome Mr. Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to today's meeting.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is clearly provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. Such cooperation is an important manifestation of multilateralism and a general expectation of the international community. Today the world finds itself in the throes of turmoil and is facing unprecedented challenges. The United Nations, as the core of the international system, has therefore assumed a more prominent mission and responsibility. The European Union (EU), as an important force on the international stage, has also seen its role and contribution become ever more present and visible. China supports cooperation between the United Nations and the EU in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, with a view to expanding their contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security, enhancing the welfare of humankind and addressing global exchanges. We expect that cooperation to be guided by the following principles.

The first is genuine multilateralism. As an advocate of multilateralism, the EU should take the lead in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter, respecting international law and the universally recognized basic norms of international relations, defending the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core, and promoting solidarity and progress among nations under the banner of multilateralism.

The second is our common security. Security is indivisible. The security of one country cannot be secured at the expense of that of others. Equally, there can be no grounds for achieving regional security by strengthening and even expanding military blocs. All countries' legitimate security concerns should be taken seriously and properly addressed. The EU should work with the United Nations to promote political solutions to hotspot issues and to resolve conflicts and disputes by peaceful means.

The third is a common future for humankind. In the face of global changes of a kind that we have not seen for a century, the countries of the world should rise above their historical, cultural, geographic and institutional differences and work together to create a better future through win-win cooperation. At the Summit of the Future to be held later this year, the EU should work with United Nations Member States to promote consensus and action-oriented steps that can send a positive message to the rest of the world about opening up new prospects for humankind.

The crisis in Ukraine has posed a great challenge to European security, and an ultimate resolution of the crisis can only come through dialogue and negotiation. The EU, as an important stakeholder, should do more to promote a political solution and create favourable conditions to build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture in Europe.

The war in Gaza continues to rage, creating an unprecedented and worsening humanitarian catastrophe. To protect civilians, provide assistance, save lives and restore peace is the common responsibility of the international community. We appreciate the positive efforts made by the EU in that regard and hope that it will leverage its influence and role to make greater contributions to the promotion of an immediate ceasefire, the expansion of humanitarian assistance, the implementation of the two-State solution and the realization of lasting peace in the Middle East.

Africa is facing growing challenges in pursuing peace and development. We hope that the EU will shoulder greater responsibility, adhere to the principle of African solutions to African problems and support African countries in strengthening capacity-building to better address risks and challenges in realizing sustainable development. It is important to support the building of the African Union collective security mechanism and provide more predictable and sustainable financial contributions to African Union-led peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations.

China has always attached great importance to the development of relations with the EU, as we regard the latter as an important force in the process of multi-polarization. We are pleased to see that the EU is strengthening its strategic autonomy, playing a greater role in international affairs and making greater contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security. China is willing to deepen its cooperation with the EU in the United Nations and other international forums, join hands in practising multilateralism, advocating openness and development and promoting dialogue among civilizations, and make unremitting efforts to safeguard world peace, promote common development and strengthen global governance.

**Mr. Kanu** (Sierra Leone): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I also welcome Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and thank him for his briefing, which endeavoured to spotlight the global security reflections and concerns of the European Union (EU) and also laid out the critical policy goals that the EU is pursuing in responding to prevailing and evolving threats to international peace and security.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the EU continues to be a crucial aspect of regional initiatives that brings significant value to our shared objectives for global peace and security. The demonstrative relevance of regional and subregional bodies in conflict prevention and peacebuilding has been indisputably recognized by the Security Council itself, which has the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Sierra Leone therefore welcomes the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Association of Southeast

Asian Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and certainly the European Union, which is the focus of today's meeting.

We commend the EU-United Nations strategic partnership, which is currently providing peace mediation and dialogue support in more than 25 crisis contexts in Africa and the Middle East. The foresight of the framers of the Charter of the United Nations, through its Chapter VIII provisions, resonates with the increasing viability of regional bodies in the maintenance of international peace and security. In view of the fact that Europe has had to grapple with some of the worst security and geopolitical crises in recent memory, it is important to underscore the point that global peace and security would be better maintained through strengthened multilateralism and cooperation.

In that regard, Sierra Leone wishes to recognize the important role of the European Union in maintaining peace and security in Europe in the light of the conflict in Ukraine, which is now in its second year. We note that the conflict in Ukraine poses, for the EU, the question of addressing concerns regarding collective security that will guarantee peace in Europe. In that connection, Sierra Leone encourages closer cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union to facilitate the immediate de-escalation of tensions and a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine. We encourage the European Union, the strategic bloc for the collective security of Europe, to bring about, through dialogue, a peaceful and comprehensive resolution of the conflict in Ukraine. This call for peace is not support for a *fait accompli* approach, but a call that respects the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine and the legitimate concerns of the parties. We wish to further underscore the need for total peace in Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders in line with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

While the conflict in Ukraine continues to be the main epicentre of conflict in Europe, we call on the EU to continue to explore all necessary diplomatic means to address the outstanding issues between Pristina and Belgrade to ensure that a truly multi-ethnic society thrives in Kosovo in peace, security, unity and development. In addition, we commend the broader engagement of the European Union in other conflict situations in Europe. The joint efforts of the EU and the United Nations through the Security Council's annual renewal of the mandate for the EU Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a strong demonstration

of the importance of the principle of subsidiarity in the overall maintenance of international peace and security as the EU continues to act as a significant contributor to maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, with regard to the Cyprus question, Sierra Leone is extremely concerned about the prolonged political stalemate between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities in the north of the island. We support the ongoing engagement of the EU for a comprehensive settlement of the dispute on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The collective goal of the members of the Council must be focused on mutual trust so as to open up lines of communication and cooperation between the two Cypriot communities to facilitate genuine political dialogue and bring a final closure to the Cyprus question.

In the context of Africa, the partnership between the European Union and the African Union on matters relating to the prevention of conflict in Africa is crucial to maintaining long-term peace and security on the continent. The European Union capacity-building and technical assistance missions to African Union peace support operations are pivotal in helping African peacekeeping missions to adjust to the challenges of their environment. In Somalia, for example, the European Union's continuous support for the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and the effective implementation of the Somalia transition plan has been valuable, notwithstanding the difficulties with which the Mission has had to contend to execute its mandate.

Allow me to conclude by first echoing the strategic importance of regional and subregional organizations in collaborating with the United Nations in upholding and maintaining international peace and security and, secondly, by noting the valuable contributions of the European Union to securing a peaceful, stable and prosperous world.

**Mr. Žbogar** (Slovenia): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this annual briefing on cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union (EU). I warmly welcome Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and I appreciate his informative briefing on the EU as a force for good in this troubled world.

As opposed to the Russian Federation, we do not see the Security Council as a battlefield where we must focus on our divisions and where we accuse each

other of double standards. And we definitely do not see this Chamber as a place to offend each other or to offend regional organizations and their member States with derogative labels. We are of course aware of big differences among us, and the Russian Federation's aggression on Ukraine is one of the most striking one. But we see the Council as a body, a very powerful body, the most powerful body, which can be effective if united. It is a body that can help to bring about and stabilize peace if, and only if, we are united. We, a naive fledgling, see the Council as a body where we should prioritize crises in which we can unite, use the Council's unique powers and responsibilities and make a difference.

In a couple of weeks, Slovenia will celebrate 20 years of EU membership. We are proud to be part of the largest European peace project. We also take great pride in representing EU member States here on the Security Council. The European Union that we represent, together with two others of its member States, is one that does not merely listen but also hears concerns from around the globe. It is a European Union that has a vision for a more peaceful and secure future but is not afraid to work with others to improve it. It is a European Union that believes in a world order based on respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and with the United Nations at its centre. We believe in a genuine multilateralism, as was just defined by the representative of China, and we believe in synergy between regional organizations and the United Nations.

The current international security landscape is marked by escalating complexity. The need for strengthening the cooperation between the EU and the United Nations has never been more evident, as we navigate the challenges that threaten the foundations of international peace. Genuine multilateralism matters and is more indispensable than ever before.

First, let me reiterate the significance of the EU-United Nations strategic partnership on crisis management and peace operations. It is by no means an abstract partnership. It is substantive and visible. EU missions are deployed alongside United Nations peacekeeping operations or special political missions, and some are mandated by the Security Council. That is a tangible example of the EU's contribution to global security action on the ground, and it is happening in places ranging from Slovenia's neighbourhood of the Western Balkans and Ukraine to missions in Africa,

the Middle East and, most recently, the Red Sea, where European Union Naval Force Operation ASPIDES has been deployed to fulfil its defensive mandate. Slovenia is very proud of its own contribution, as it is participating in seven missions and peacekeeping operations.

For my second point, I would like to touch on the EU's role as a guarantor of peace in Europe. In its pursuit of peace, the European Union has reached far beyond its work in various field operations. The process of further integration into the European Union is one concrete means for that pursuit of peace. And in spite of what we have heard from the Russian Federation about how bad the EU has become, a number of countries still seem to be lining up to join our project. The process of EU integration is a strong stabilizing factor in Europe, encouraging prospective members to stay on a path of reform, democracy and the rule of law. It helps reconcile divisions and reduce tensions. With that in mind, Slovenia firmly supports the integration into the EU of the Western Balkans and the eastern trio of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Thirdly, let me expand on the EU's role globally. While developments on our continent and the global implications of Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine cannot be overlooked, we share the collective aspiration to silence the guns in Africa. In that respect, and as High Representative Borrell Fontelles confirmed this morning, cooperation with our African partners continues to be a priority for the European Peace Facility instrument by which the EU provides sustainable and predictable support to African Union-led peace support operations, including the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia.

EU global engagement includes responding to humanitarian emergencies. To that end, the EU has been among the leading humanitarian donors globally, in close cooperation with 26 United Nations humanitarian agencies, attesting to the synergy between the EU and the United Nations. We are also proud of the contribution of Janez Lenarčič, Slovenia's EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, who makes sure that the EU's humanitarian relief reaches the places where it is most needed, including through continued funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

The European Environment Agency's first-ever report on climate risk, published yesterday, brings me to my final point. The Agency's findings show the

undeniable links between climate, peace and security as established in the EU's joint communication on the climate-security nexus. That pressing concern demands that the Security Council develop a climate-sensitive approach to conflict prevention and peace. Investments in the resilience of communities around the world and the sustainable management of key natural resources, including water and food security, are at the centre of Slovenia's contribution to the Team Europe approach.

In conclusion, I would like to return to the foundation of cooperation between the EU and the United Nations, which is our common understanding that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Security Council. The Council must reassume its role and work for sustainable solutions for peace and security in Gaza, Ukraine, Haiti and elsewhere.

**Mr. De La Gasca** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I welcome the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, and I thank him for his informative briefing.

We are at a critical juncture for multilateralism and the international system. The proliferation of conflicts, economic inequalities, food insecurity, transnational organized crime and human displacement, among other things, is a challenge that requires coordinated and decisive global responses. True to its history and principles, Ecuador has always been a staunch defender of multilateralism. We believe that collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations is crucial, going beyond the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

The United Nations and the European Union share common principles and objectives. The European Union's support to the United Nations, both political and financial, attests to its commitment to the three pillars of our Organization — peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. In the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, Ecuador highly values the support of the European Union for the Council's efforts and its commitment to global security, as exemplified by its significant contribution of troops and police to United Nations peacekeeping missions and the deployment of its own missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy. We recognize its commitment to humanitarian aid throughout the world and note with satisfaction its commitment to

Africa through the European Peace Facility and its relationships with regional organizations worldwide, including the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Like the European Union, Ecuador is committed to upholding the principles and purposes of the Charter and international law. That commitment entails a strong endorsement of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, which underscores the importance of refraining from the threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Regrettably, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has triggered a severe humanitarian crisis, leading to the displacement of millions, the loss of innocent lives and untold suffering. A potential escalation could have devastating consequences for the European continent and the international community. In that regard, I call on us to join our efforts to find diplomatic solutions to the crisis, based on respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which will enable us to build the foundations for a lasting peace in the region.

Ecuador joins the call for a stronger multilateralism and closer cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. May the example of unity and cooperation that is the European project inspire all of us to work for a future of shared peace and prosperity. As Robert Schuman put it in 1950, "World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers that threaten it".

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, for his briefing.

In six months' time, we will be meeting for the Summit of the Future, which, *inter alia*, will be an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. In accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, such organizations play a key role in strengthening the peace architecture at both the international and regional levels. The partnership between the United Nations and the European Union provides many examples in that regard.

First of all, that partnership is key to conflict prevention, crisis management and peacekeeping. As we have heard, the European Union is committed to promoting peace in various regions, such as the

Middle East and the Horn of Africa. Similarly, in the Western Balkans, the EU supports the implementation of Security Council mandates, including within the framework of the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which Switzerland actively participates.

Secondly, partnership with the European Union is crucial to responding to major global and regional challenges. The principles and rules of international law, held in common by both the Charter and the founding documents of the European Union, form the bedrock of a peaceful international order, with respect for human rights and a focus on development. Those elements are interdependent and cannot be fully achieved individually. In exactly the same way, Switzerland, the United Nations and the EU are committed to the rule of law, international criminal justice, democracy and sustainable development. And just like the EU, Switzerland pays particular attention to the protection of civilians in armed conflicts and respect for international humanitarian law. In the context of Ukraine, Switzerland also shares the priority of ensuring respect for those fundamental principles. It is high time to take meaningful steps towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in that country. Switzerland also shares the EU's priorities in terms of climate, peace and security, aimed at mitigating humanitarian and security impacts. Like the EU, we believe that strengthened cooperation is vital to conflict prevention.

In that regard, it is imperative to develop and use early-warning and early-response mechanisms that integrate climate and environmental factors. In order to ensure their effectiveness, such efforts must be coordinated between national and regional institutions, as well as the EU and the United Nations, which is, moreover, among the recommendations of the New Agenda for Peace. Across the board, the EU is also a major partner in promoting the women and peace and security agenda in the various agenda items of the Security Council.

In less than six months' time, we will be adopting the Pact for the Future. The challenge faced by multilateralism is clear in laying the foundations for a peaceful and sustainable future for all people to live in full dignity. Partnerships with the European Union and other regional organizations, in general, are critical to revitalizing multilateralism. While reforms to global governance are needed, we must not ignore the achievements made, particularly with regard to conflict prevention. Thanks to the fact that they are locally

based, their ability to detect tensions and the increased trust among their members, regional organizations can actively contribute to such hard-to-measure successes.

In striving to achieve a sustainable and peaceful future for all humankind living in full dignity, Switzerland will continue to work closely with the European Union and the United Nations both within and beyond the Security Council, as that is the vision of the United Nations and the European Union, as well as ours.

**Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom):** I join others in thanking High Representative Borrell Fontelles for his briefing.

The Summit of the Future this year will offer an important opportunity to reinvigorate the multilateral system, in which regional organizations play an important role. The United Kingdom welcomes the European Union's (EU) ongoing commitment to championing multilateralism, tackling global challenges and assisting the work of the United Nations, including the Security Council.

Let me highlight three areas in particular.

First, we recognize the EU's efforts to address the challenges that will shape the twenty-first century. We welcome the EU's Global Gateway initiative, including the ambition to leverage €150 billion between 2021 and 2027 for investments in transport, digital, climate, energy, health, education and research across the African continent. We also welcome the EU's contribution to the design and development of safe artificial intelligence (AI) systems, including its support of the landmark Bletchley Declaration which will deepen international coordination on AI.

Secondly, we recognize the EU's support for the United Nations security work, running 24 EU peace and security operations across three continents. The United Kingdom welcomes the EU's engagement in African security, including in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, and its close cooperation with the African Union in support of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia. We hope that the EU will be able to continue its long-standing and generous financial support to the African Union and Somalia throughout Somalia's security transition. In the Middle East, we welcome the EU's ongoing support for the Palestinian people and, as we heard today, its efforts to address the humanitarian situation in Gaza. And, closer to home, the EU plays an important role in promoting stability and prosperity in the Western Balkans. The United Kingdom

has long supported the EU-facilitated dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo, and the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to play a vital role in securing peace and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Thirdly, the United Kingdom welcomes the EU's strong support for Ukraine two years into Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion. The EU's recent announcement of €50 billion provides a vital pillar of international support for Ukraine. We will continue to work closely with the EU to support Ukraine and assist its long-term recovery and reconstruction.

By working together we can promote responsible multilateralism and act as a force for good in the world.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Japan.

I would like to begin by welcoming High Representative Borrell Fontelles to the Security Council, and I thank him for his comprehensive and insightful briefing on cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union (EU).

The United Nations is at the core of multilateralism. However, the United Nations cannot take on all international challenges alone. Cooperation with partners is essential. Regional organizations play an indispensable and complementary role in enabling the Security Council to fulfil its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that context, Japan values cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations, even more so as the world has come to a critical juncture in history. We appreciate the fact that the EU has consistently demonstrated leadership in its action, thereby garnering vital international attention and support for tackling current global challenges. Japan and the European Union, as strategic partners, have reaffirmed their commitment to sustain a free and open international order, based on the rule of law, with the Charter of the United Nations at its centre.

Our cooperation on security was elevated last year, when Japan and the EU decided to start the strategic dialogue for addressing unprecedented challenges to international peace and security. Japan and the EU have been actively contributing to the world together in a variety of fields. For instance, through our joint projects, Japan and the European Union are mobilizing strategic investments in quality infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region and Africa, which will serve as a foundation of steady development of the regions, benefiting all.

We commend the EU's steadfast support for Ukraine. In the face of the flagrant violation of the Charter by a permanent member of the Security Council, Japan and the EU stand firmly together to protect the fundamental principles of international relations by upholding the Charter. Japan and the EU will stand firm together to protect the fundamental principles of international relations by upholding the Charter. In this interconnected world, we will continue to coordinate and cooperate more closely than ever. The United Nations, where all Member States gather, is the best place to discuss issues of mutual concern for the EU, Japan and the entire international community. Since the EU's inception, in 1993, we have worked tirelessly together on various global peace and security issues, and we look forward to continuing our joint efforts at the United Nations for another 30 years and more.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Borrell Fontelles to respond to the comments and questions raised.

**Mr. Borrell Fontelles:** I think I will speak in Spanish, which will enable me to express myself from the heart without having to translate what I am thinking and saying.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

I would first like to thank everyone for their kind words and for their determination to continue to work with the European Union from the United Nations.

I began my statement by saying that the European Union is an essential compass for guiding humankind through the brutality and cruelty of our world. Today's debate shows that an overwhelming majority of the Council shares that view. I agree with much of what has been said, in particular the representative of China's points about the importance of seeing security as indivisible, avoiding policies of confrontation between blocs and working together for an effective multilateralism based on respect for international law. The European Union has nothing against China's expansion as a major political and economic Power. We simply want to see that expansion, as part of the march of history, proceed in a way that contributes to that effective multilateralism. In a world that is ever more multipolar and porous, multilateralism is increasingly faltering. We are more divided, and we are cooperating less with one another. The number of vetoes cast in the Security Council is larger and the agreements are fewer. We need greater cooperation because the

number of major actors that did not even exist when the United Nations was founded has grown, and it is logical that they would demand their place in history.

The only difference I have, obviously, is with the Ambassador of Russia, who seemed sarcastic to me. I do not know whether to laugh or cry when I hear Russia — yes, Russia — say that the European Union is an aggressive bloc. The country that has launched the greatest military aggression of our time sees the European Union as an aggressive bloc. Does anyone here feel under attack by the European Union? How many countries are we bombing? Frankly, I think that suggesting that Russia sees us as an aggressive power was meant to be sarcastic. Of course, we recently heard the candidate for re-election, President Putin — a dubious re-election — give an explanation of the reasons why Hitler invaded Poland in which he said that it was because Poland provoked Hitler so much that the poor man had no choice but to invade it. Based on such a reinterpretation of history, it is not surprising that Russia would consider the European Union an aggressive power. I think everyone here knows that we are not.

The Council knows that the European Union's mission today is to contribute to global peace and stability. While we are not a military alliance, neither do we wish to be merely an economic union. We want to be a geopolitical player, not just an economic one. Of course, we support Ukraine. We support it because we believe it is a country that has a right to exist and to defend itself. There has been a clear aggression that was recognized by the vast majority of the countries in the United Nations when they voted in the General Assembly. We surely cannot expect Russia to defend the primacy of international law or of sovereignty and territorial integrity when we see what is happening.

But I did not come here to get into a fight with Russia. I simply want to say that for us, our support for Ukraine is a way of supporting the fundamental principle of the territorial integrity of States. And we certainly believe that the diplomatic path should always remain open. All wars end in peace, or at least with no war. But when we hear Russian officials say that the war will continue until they achieve their military objectives, we believe that this is not the moment to stop supporting Ukraine. Neither is it a moment for Ukraine to raise the white flag of surrender. It has already paid too much in terms of lives and wealth lost, infrastructure destroyed and bombing experienced for the war to end in a way that does not respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Peace, yes — but it must

be a fair peace that respects the principles that we defend and have established.

Those principles are universal and must be applied everywhere. When we say that cutting off supplies to civilians and using hunger as a weapon of war contravenes international law, that holds true whether it is happening in Ukraine or in Gaza. We believe that we must apply the same principles and values and recall that right now there are half a million people on the verge of starvation, which was caused not by an act of nature but by putting obstacles in the way of access to humanitarian aid. Yes, we must use air and water routes, as we have been trying to do. But I want to point out that the reasonable approach would be to use efficient and existing land routes, which would enable humanitarian aid to be supplied on a mass scale and which, unfortunately, have not been opened up enough. We need to address the root causes of what is happening in the Middle East. We need to find a solution to that conflict.

I would like to conclude by saying that if the United Nations believes, as the vast majority of its members seem to, that the only solution to the Palestinian question is the coexistence of two States, then I invite the Security Council — and I say this as solemnly and formally as possible — to proclaim that principle and understand that practical solutions are needed to prevent the tragedy that the people of Gaza are facing and build a future that ensures that we do not see that tragedy repeated over and over again. The European Union will do everything it can to further those efforts, and not just in the role of the good Samaritan coming in to help those suffering. We will work to set up political mechanisms that will prevent what is causing that suffering. And that clearly means that the Security Council must be able to arrive at agreements that will enable an end to the hostilities, the provision of humanitarian aid and the establishment of the principle of a two-State solution as the formula that should guide all of our work. And we need a serious and effective commitment from the international community to make that a reality.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Borrell Fontelles for his further input and clarifications.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

*The meeting rose at noon.*