



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

9686th meeting

Tuesday, 16 July 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Lavrov/Mr. Nebenzia	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria	Mr. Gaouaoui
	China	Mr. Fu Cong
	Ecuador	Mr. De La Gasca
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Guyana	Mr. Talbot
	Japan	Mr. Yamazaki
	Malta	Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
	Sierra Leone	Mr. Kanu
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	Switzerland	Mr. Cassis
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Multilateral cooperation in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order

Letter dated 9 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2024/537)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Multilateral cooperation in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order

Letter dated 9 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2024/537)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to warmly welcome the ministers and other high-level representatives present in the Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Maldives, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2024/537, which contains the text of a letter dated 9 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Today the very foundations of the international legal order — strategic stability and the United Nations-

centric system of international politics — are being put to the test. We will not be able to resolve the mounting conflicts unless we understand their root causes and restore faith in our ability to join forces for the common good and justice for all.

Let us face it — not all countries represented in this Chamber recognize the key principle of the Charter of the United Nations, which is the sovereign equality of all States. Speaking through its Presidents, the United States has long declared its exceptionalism. That applies to Washington's attitude towards its allies, of whom it demands unquestioning obedience, even to the detriment of their national interests. Rule, America! That is the essence of the notorious rules-based order, which presents a direct threat to multilateralism and international peace.

The most important components of international law — the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Council — are interpreted by the collective West in a perverse and selective manner, depending on what instructions come out of the White House. Numerous Security Council resolutions have been ignored altogether, among them resolution 2202 (2015), which endorsed the Minsk agreements on Ukraine, and resolution 1031 (1995), which endorsed the Dayton Agreement on peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of the principle of equal rights of the three constituent peoples and two entities.

We can discuss on and on the sabotage of resolutions on the Middle East. Just think back to what Antony Blinken had to say in an interview with CNN in February 2021 when taking a question about what he thinks of the decision of the previous United States Administration to recognize the Syrian Golan Heights as part of Israel. In case someone is not sure what his answer was, I will refresh their memory. The Secretary of State said that, leaving aside the legalities of that question, as a practical matter, the Golan is very important to Israel's security. That is despite the fact that resolution 497 (1981), of which we are well aware and which no one has repealed, calls the annexation of the Golan Heights by Israel illegal. However, according to those very rules, to quote Mr. Blinken, legal questions are something else. And of course, everyone remembers the statement by the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations that resolution 2728 (2024), adopted on 25 March, demanding an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, is not legally binding, meaning that the

American rules supersede Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Last century, George Orwell predicted the essence of the rules-based order in the novel *Animal Farm* — all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others. That means that people are allowed to do what they wish if they follow orders from the ruling leader. But if they dare to protect their national interests, they will be declared outlaws and hit with sanctions.

Washington's hegemonic policy has been the same for decades. Absolutely every arrangement of Euro-Atlantic security was based on ensuring America's domination, including the subjugation of Europe and the containment of Russia. The main role in that was assigned to NATO, which has ultimately trampled on the European Union (EU), which supposedly had been created to serve Europeans. The alliance has unceremoniously privatized Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) bodies, brazenly violating the Helsinki Final Act.

The reckless enlargement of NATO, which has continued for many years despite Moscow's numerous warnings, also provoked the Ukraine crisis that began with the coup d'état organized by Washington in February 2014 in order to seize full control over Ukraine and use the neo-Nazi regime they brought to power to prepare an attack on Russia. When Petro Poroshenko, and after him Volodymyr Zelenskyy, waged a war against their own citizens in Donbas, outlawed Russian education, Russian culture, Russian media and the Russian language and banned the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, nobody in the West batted an eye, and nobody demanded that their wardens in Kyiv "maintain decorum" and respect international conventions on the rights of national minorities, or even the Constitution of Ukraine, which stipulates respect for those rights. It was in order to eliminate those threats to the national security of Russia, to protect the people who consider themselves part of Russian culture and who live on the land that their ancestors had settled for centuries, as well as to save them from legal and physical extermination, that the special military operation began.

It is notable that even today, when numerous initiatives are advanced for a settlement in Ukraine, few remember that Kyiv trampled on the human rights and the rights of national minorities. None of those initiatives mention those things. It was only recently that a relevant request had been added to EU documents on the start of negotiations, and then mostly thanks to

Hungary's firm position of principle. However, the real ability and willingness of Brussels to influence the Kyiv regime are open to speculation. We urge everyone who is genuinely interested in overcoming the crisis in Ukraine to ensure that their proposals take into account the key issue of the rights of all ethnic minorities, without exception. Silence on this issue devalues peace initiatives and gives de facto approval to Mr. Zelenskyy's racist policy. It is noteworthy that 10 years ago, in 2014, Zelenskyy said,

"If people in eastern Ukraine and Crimea want to speak Russian, leave them alone and let them speak Russian legally. Language will never divide our homeland."

But Washington has successfully re-educated him and, as early as 2021, Zelenskyy said in an interview that those who have a sense of affinity with Russian culture should pack up and go to Russia for the sake of their children and grandchildren.

I appeal to the masters of the Ukrainian regime to ensure that it complies with Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, which guarantees respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all "without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion".

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is no longer satisfied with the war it has unleashed against Russia through the hands of the illegitimate Government in Kyiv, nor is it content with the entire OSCE space. Having dismantled almost completely the fundamental agreements on arms control, the United States continues to escalate confrontation. At a recently held summit in Washington, D.C., the leaders of NATO countries reiterated their claim to the leading role not only in the Euro-Atlantic region, but also in the Asia-Pacific region. They declared that NATO is still allegedly guided by the objective of defending the territory of its members, but in order to do so they need to extend the alliance's dominance to the entire Eurasian continent and adjacent waters. NATO's military infrastructure is advancing into the Pacific with the obvious goal of undermining the architecture centred around the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which, for many decades, has been built on the principles of equality, recognition of mutual interests and consensus. To replace the inclusive mechanisms created over decades around ASEAN, the United States and its allies are building closed confrontational blocs, such as Australia, the United Kingdom and the United

States — AUKUS — and other quartets and trios that are subordinate to them. Recently Ms. Hicks, United States Deputy Secretary of Defense, stated that the United States and its allies must be “prepared for the possibility of protracted war, and not only in Europe”.

In order to contain Russia, China and other countries whose independent policies are perceived as a challenge to its hegemony, the West is aggressively dismantling the globalization system originally built on its own models. Washington has done everything to blow up the foundations of mutually beneficial energy cooperation between Russia, Germany and Europe as a whole — including literally, by organizing terrorist attacks on the Nord Stream gas pipelines. Berlin remained silent at the time, but today we see another embarrassing period for Germany, whose leadership has unquestioningly complied with the United States decision to deploy United States ground-based medium-range missiles on its territory. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said, quite innocently, that the United States decided to deploy high-precision offensive weapons systems in Germany, and that it is a necessary and important decision at the right time. The United States decided so.

On top of that, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby stated, on behalf of the United States President, that the United States is not seeking to unleash a third world war, since that would have horrific consequences for the European continent. That is a Freudian slip, as they say. Washington is convinced that it is not the United States that would suffer from a new world war, but its European allies. If the Biden Administration’s strategy is based on such an analysis, it is an extremely dangerous illusion. Europeans too must realize the suicidal role that they have been assigned.

The Americans are holding the entire West at gunpoint and are expanding their trade and economic war with those they see as undesirable, having unleashed an unprecedented campaign of unilateral coercive measures that are hitting Europe first and are leading to further fragmentation of the global economy. The countries of the global South — in Asia, Africa and Latin America — are suffering from the neocolonial practices of the West. Illegal sanctions, numerous protectionist measures, restrictions on access to technology directly contradict genuine multilateralism and create serious obstacles to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Where are the free-market attributes that the United States and its allies have been telling everyone to follow for so many years? The market economy, fair competition, the inviolability of private property, the presumption of innocence, freedom of movement of people, goods, capital and services — all of that has been jettisoned. Geopolitics has buried the once sacrosanct Western laws of the market. Recently we heard public demands from officials of the United States and European Union for the People’s Republic of China to reduce excess production in high-tech industries because the West has begun to lose its long-standing advantages in that area. Today those very same rules have superseded the market principles.

The actions of the United States and its allies are certainly hindering international cooperation and the creation of a more just world. Such actions have taken entire countries and regions hostage, are preventing nations from realizing the sovereign rights enshrined in the United Nations Charter and are interfering with their vital joint efforts to settle conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and other regions; to reduce global inequality; and combat the threats of terrorism and drug crime, hunger and diseases.

I am confident that this situation can be changed if there is goodwill. In order to prevent this negative scenario from unfolding, we would like to present for discussion a number of steps that could restore trust and stabilize the international situation.

First, the root causes of the ongoing crisis in Europe must be addressed. The conditions for restoring stable peace in Ukraine have been set out by President Putin. There is no need to repeat them. Any political and diplomatic solution must include concrete steps to remove threats to the Russian Federation coming from the West and the Euro-Atlantic community. The coordination of mutual guarantees and agreements should be based on the recognition of the new geostrategic realities on the Eurasian continent, where a continental architecture of truly equal and indivisible security is taking shape. Europe risks lagging behind that objective historical process. We are ready to seek a balance of interests.

Secondly, the restoration of the regional and global balance of forces must be accompanied by active efforts to eliminate injustices in the global economy. In a multipolar world, by definition, there should be no monopoly in monetary and financial regulation, trade or technologies. That opinion is shared by the

overwhelming majority of the international community. It is extremely important to reform the Bretton-Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization as soon as possible, as their activities must reflect the real weight of the non-Western growth and development centres.

Thirdly, significant and qualitative changes must take place in other institutions of global governance if we want them to work for the benefit of all. That primarily concerns the United Nations Organization, which continues to be the embodiment of multilateralism, against all odds, with unique and universal legitimacy and universally recognized broad competencies. An important step towards restoring the Organization's effectiveness would be a confirmation by all Member States of their commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter — not selectively but in their entirety and interconnectedness. We can jointly discuss what shape that confirmation would take. The Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, established at the initiative of Venezuela, is doing important work in that regard. We invite all countries that still believe in the rule of international law to join its efforts.

A key aspect of United Nations reform must be changing the makeup of the Security Council, although that alone will not promote efficiency without a basic agreement among its permanent members on its working methods. However, this does not negate the imperative to eliminate the geographic and geopolitical imbalances in the Security Council, in which the collective West is currently overrepresented. Long needed is the broadest possible agreement on concrete reform parameters, which should strengthen the representation of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The staffing policy of the Secretariat should also change in order to eliminate the domination of Western nationals and subjects in the administrative United Nations structures. The Secretary-General and his staff must of course adhere strictly and without exception to the principles of impartiality and neutrality as required by Article 100 of the Charter, which we are constantly reminding about.

Fourthly, strengthening the foundations of multipolarity must be done not only by the United Nations but also by other multilateral organizations, including the Group of 20 (G-20), in which both the countries of the "global majority" and Western States are represented. The mandate of the G-20 is restricted to discussing economic and development issues. It is

therefore very important that a substantive dialogue in that platform is protected from opportunistic attempts to introduce geopolitical topics. That might destroy this useful platform.

The Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) group and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are playing an ever-greater role in the development of a just multilateral world based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. They include countries that represent various regions and civilizations whose cooperation is based on equality, mutual respect, consensus and mutually accepted compromises. I would call that the golden standard of multilateral cooperation involving major Powers.

Regional associations have practical significance for the development of multipolarity. Such associations include the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States, the African Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. We believe that it is important to develop multifaceted ties between those associations, including with the support of the United Nations. The Russian presidency of the Council will devote one of the next meetings on its agenda to interaction between the United Nations and Eurasian regional organizations.

On 9 July 2024, the President of Russia Vladimir Putin, addressing the BRICS Parliamentary Forum in Saint Petersburg, noted that

"the formation of a world order that reflects the real balance of forces is a complicated and, unfortunately, even painful process".

We believe that discussions on that topic should not devolve into pointless polemics and that they should be based on a sound analysis of the entire range of facts.

First and foremost, it is important to restore professional diplomacy, a culture of dialogue, the ability to listen and hear and to maintain the channels of crisis communication. The lives of millions of people depend on the ability of politicians and diplomats to formulate something like a shared vision of the future. Whether our world will be multilateral and just depends on Member States. The foundation is the Charter of the United Nations. If everyone honours its letter and spirit, the United Nations will be capable of overcoming current disagreements and reaching a consensus on

most issues. “The end of history” failed to materialize. Let us work together in the interest of the beginning of a history of genuine multilateralism that reflects all the riches of the cultural and civilizational diversity of the peoples of the world. I invite everyone to join the discussion, which of course must be an honest one.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

Mr. Cassis (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): A more just, more democratic and more sustainable world order is one that places freedom at its heart. History shows us that there is no such thing as absolute freedom and that, while freedom is essential for living in society, it is only guaranteed when it is protected by rules — rules of principle, rules of law. The right to freedom can only exist alongside the duty of responsibility.

More than 75 years ago, when we adopted the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we learned the lessons of the history of the first half of the twentieth century, particularly the two world wars. Those universal standards made it possible to build a world in which the force of law would eventually prevail over the law of force. And it is in particular the prohibition of the use of force — a real paradigm shift in international law, as the world had theretofore believed in the idea of the just war — that was placed at the heart of our Charter. Since the adoption of the Charter, we, the peoples of the United Nations, have laid the foundations of our universal commitments stone by stone, and we have tried — together — to build a better world: a world with less poverty, in which epidemics are controlled and humanitarian assistance is provided to those in need.

Many of us bathed in an optimism fuelled by the spirit of “never again”. When the Berlin Wall came down, we believed that the ideals based on the principles of the Charter would take hold once and for all. However, we must admit that we have not managed to stay the course. Our optimism collided with the merciless wall of realism. And yet we knew that history is not linear and that human beings have an unfortunate tendency to repeat the same mistakes. Protectionism and nationalism, symptoms of that global malaise, illustrate an enormous lack of trust between human beings. Wars, poverty, misinformation and geopolitical visions that are difficult to reconcile are gaining

ground all over the world. Ukraine, for example, has been devastated by military aggression for more than two years, in flagrant violation of the Charter. For more than a year, the Sudan has once again been in the grip of civil war. And 75 years of multilateral engagement have yet to bring peace to the Middle East.

Yes, multilateralism is ailing. If the United Nations seems too weak to us today, that is because it reflects the fact that there is too little willingness on the part of all Member States to obey and abide by the law of duty that they have voluntarily undertaken to uphold. We must regain the momentum that has held our community together.

In May 2023, in this very Chamber (see S/PV.9315), I presided over a debate on the role of trust between States. Trust is a key element in enabling the Council to fulfil its mandate. In order to build trust, we need to seek more dialogue, especially where there are divisions. Seeking and establishing dialogue sometimes requires creativity and risk-taking. When we organized an international conference on peace in Ukraine a month ago, our aim was precisely to build trust through dialogue. In Switzerland, for two days, approximately 100 delegations discussed possible paths to peace. By no means did we all agree on the paths to peace, but we tried to establish a basis of trust on which to move forward. And we are providing a forum for other discussions, such as the one currently taking place on the Sudan under the auspices of the United Nations in Geneva, or the one that took place earlier on Yemen.

As the depositary of the Geneva Conventions, Switzerland is ready to shoulder its responsibilities for a world order based on humanitarian law. As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions next month — and I hope to welcome all Council members to Switzerland for that important commemoration — it is high time to reaffirm the universal validity of international humanitarian law.

At the end of October, Switzerland will host the thirty-fourth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva. Under the motto “Navigate uncertainty — Strengthen humanity”, the aim of that conference is to improve humanitarian response through effective dialogue.

Faced with an increase in wars and the systematic use of violence, we need to believe in respect for international humanitarian law. While trust can be created through dialogue, it can also be created through

a change of perspective. As a doctor by training, I believe in science and scientific diplomacy. I am convinced that science can help strengthen our work. An approach based on scientifically established facts also strengthens mutual trust. It makes it possible to anticipate the risks and opportunities for peace. During our presidency of the Council in October, we will be proposing a meeting on the potential of science diplomacy.

It is up to us, the members of the Council, to live up to the responsibility we have been given — whether by the General Assembly or by the history of our common humankind.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): I thank the Russian Federation for convening today's open debate and welcome this opportunity for collective introspection and frank assessment of multilateral cooperation, in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order. In Guyana's view, such an order is exactly what was envisaged when the Charter of the United Nations was crafted. The critical ingredients can be found in the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations: a world free from the scourge of war, one where there is respect for fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person, where men and women and nations large and small enjoy equal rights, where there is justice and respect for international law and the obligations flowing therefrom, and a world that fosters for all peoples better standards of life in larger freedom.

The Charter of the United Nations, embodying as it does the fundamental principles of the multilateral ethos, has served as a framework and guide for the achievement of those objectives. It enjoins a sense of common purpose, a spirit of solidarity and of inclusion. No country or people is to be left behind. As sovereign equals, every State deserves a seat at the table of global discourse. Each voice needs to be heard and respected and each contribution valued. In the words of Guyana's most celebrated poet, Martin Carter, "all are involved, all are consumed".

Small developing countries, such as my own, attach the highest value to an effective, democratic, responsive and inclusive multilateral system and to the primacy of the rule of international law. Our security and our very survival depend on it.

In working to adapt the global architecture to the demands of the twenty-first century, the enduring relevance and validity of the purposes and principles of

the Charter of the United Nations cannot be overstated. However, too often are they honoured in the breach.

It is incumbent on the Security Council, charged with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, and by extension its member States, to be exemplary in their adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and to eschew any conduct that is inimical to the Council's mandate. But no State is exempt in that regard. States must therefore hold themselves and each other to the highest standards of performance and accountability in observance of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

As we have seen in the cases of Ukraine and Gaza, breaches of the peace can have consequences well beyond the immediate theatre of operations. The Security Council must take active cognizance of those realities and, in concert with the broader international community and regional organizations, be more proactive in addressing the drivers of conflict. Greater attention to prevention and to the pacific settlements of disputes, as provided in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, is imperative. Parties to disputes must be persuaded to seek solutions utilizing the means outlined in Article 33, including negotiation, mediation, arbitration and judicial settlement. Too often there is recourse to the threat or use of force. The result is an increasing number of armed conflicts in our world today that continue to destroy lives daily and threaten the futures of States. That is compounded by a lack of respect for international humanitarian law.

In reaffirming the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, we cannot turn a blind eye to egregious violations. Members of the Security Council should not be among those undermining the judicial institutions of the United Nations so crucial to ensuring respect for the rule of law and promoting accountability.

The thrust towards a more just, democratic and sustainable world order will of necessity entail institutional reform, not least of the Security Council, arguably the least representative of global institutions. The Council must be made more representative, democratic and accountable. For Guyana, no reform would be complete without enhanced participation of small States, who, for the most part, are a force for peace and principle. Moreover, the multidimensional and interlocking threats and challenges of today require greater cooperation, complementarity and coherence of effort across United Nations organs, international

machinery and Member States. We must broaden our frame of reference and expand our toolkit to deal with the new threats that have evolved, such as those posed by climate change, cyberattacks, artificial intelligence, disease and so forth.

Likewise, in the use of available resources to better address interlinked pursuits, such as among prevention and peacebuilding and development and poverty eradication, just a fraction of the vast resources dedicated to implements of war and destruction would more than suffice for the fight against poverty or hunger or the combat of climate change, indeed, for the promotion of sustainable peace in our world.

Finally, with regard to the question of trust — among Member States, within the Security Council or wherever — that question is not new, nor is the answer. Trust is ultimately based on performance — the honouring of commitments, the assumption of responsibilities and the discharge of obligations. It is fostered by promoting real understanding and dialogue. Across the multitude of commitments, undertakings and obligations, whether in the Charter of the United Nations, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement or in the many other instruments, resolutions and declarations adopted by the United Nations or beyond, a credibility gap exists that must be closed.

I end as the Charter begins — “we the peoples”. Their trust, their hopes, their aspirations and their expectations are ultimately what matter most. It must be acknowledged that the adversarial nature of contemporary politics makes it impossible to fulfil our global commitments and meet the expectations of our people. States must demonstrate by their actions that they are reliable and trustworthy partners, committed to working together for the greater good of all.

Mr. Gaouaoui (Algeria): First, I thank Russia for organizing this open debate, and I thank His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov for coming from Moscow to preside over this important meeting. This debate is very timely because the Security Council continues to struggle to find solutions to too many conflicts and crises, including in Palestine, where genocide is being committed as we speak. I hope this debate will help the Council to be more effective and less polarized.

Multilateral cooperation is not something new. There were instances of multilateralism through military alliances, treaties and trade routes in the Mediterranean region and elsewhere during ancient

times. While that may not fit the modern definition of multilateral cooperation, it illustrates the idea of various entities coming together for common purposes. Today we cannot imagine a world without multilateral cooperation. It is essential for addressing complex global issues that no single country can solve alone. It also allows Governments to pool resources, share knowledge and develop joint solutions. As Council members, that is precisely what we try to do every time we enter this Chamber.

Multilateral cooperation faces multiple challenges. That requires the United Nations to adapt to emerging realities, with multiple centres of power, and to enhance its role in establishing a just, democratic and sustainable international order. My delegation firmly believes that reforming the Security Council would increase the legitimacy of this United Nations organ. In that regard, expanding the Council’s membership and prioritizing the historical injustice done to Africa would be a milestone. The open debate that will be held next month under Sierra Leone’s presidency will allow us to discuss that issue further. In the meantime, the intergovernmental negotiations framework’s contribution to the Pact for the Future is an important step in the right direction. We thank the framework’s co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Austria and Kuwait.

Regarding the opportunities we must not miss, first and foremost we have the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It represents a universal framework that addresses poverty, environmental degradation and economic inequalities. Let us not forget that the Agenda calls for the full realization of the right to self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation. With less than one fifth of their targets on track, the world is failing to deliver on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals — urgent action is needed.

Algeria believes that, to re-establish an atmosphere of trust in the United Nations, and in particular within the Council, we require a greater effort to foster mutual respect, transparency, inclusivity and openness. To that end, we must abide by and prioritize diplomacy and dialogue, transparency, mutual understanding and the peaceful settlement of disputes. We also need to give priority to conflict prevention and peacebuilding by addressing the root causes of conflict. Last but not least, we need to uphold international law and the Charter of the United Nations as guiding principles. We must ensure that the Council’s decisions and actions adhere to those

principles and contribute to global peace and stability. Our compass must be the avoidance of the selective application of international law. As the Summit of the Future approaches, let us work to make that event a real Summit of the Future, not a summit of the past.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): The world of 2024 looks very different from the world of 1945, but the challenges we face are no less stark. More countries globally are engaged in conflicts than at any time since the Second World War. We are facing a climate crisis, and scientific and technological breakthroughs are raising new questions that we need to answer. A United Nations fit for the twenty-first century is vital to meet those challenges. I would like to make three points.

First, we need reinvigorated systems that are more inclusive and more responsive to deliver on those important priorities, including the Sustainable Development Goals and international financial architecture reform. That is why the United Kingdom is committed to making a success of the Summit of the Future in September and realizing its potential to set a new, ambitious course for the United Nations. We also recognize that members sitting around this table need to be more representative of the world today, and that is why we have long supported Security Council reform.

Secondly, we need to ensure the Council delivers on its mandate to uphold international peace and security. We regret that the recent resolutions 2735 (2024) and 2736 (2024), calling for a ceasefire deal in Gaza and de-escalation in and around El Fasher in the Sudan, have yet to be fully implemented. We call on all parties to do their utmost to see those resolutions implemented to prevent further human suffering. We as Council members also have a responsibility to uphold our own commitments. It is therefore vital that the Russian Government stop sourcing weapons from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in violation of Council resolutions, and stop its attempts to disrupt United Nations work in Africa, including by stopping Russian proxies' targeted actions against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

Thirdly, we must defend the Charter of the United Nations. While the Russian Minister tells us how they believe the world order can become more just, democratic and sustainable, their military is systematically bombing civilians in Ukraine in an

unprovoked war of aggression and in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

What is just about trying to annex another country's land? What is democratic about trying to subjugate another country's people? What is sustainable about waging a war that has killed or injured more than 500,000 of Russia's own people?

The war in Ukraine is a stark reminder of what kind of world order Russia really wants — a world where might is right and powerful countries can bully and invade others with impunity.

The United Kingdom will not accept such a world. We will continue to stand staunchly behind Ukraine. We will support its aspiration for a just and lasting peace in line with the United Nations Charter and international law, and we will support its demand for accountability. We will continue to be a tireless advocate for effective multilateralism and the principles at the heart of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely debate on the agenda item "multilateral cooperation in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order". Sierra Leone welcomes the debate, not only in view of the forthcoming eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, the most essential multilateral institution of our time, but also because it offers the opportunity to rethink and reshape our cooperation framework on the basis of equity, democracy and sustainability.

Today more than ever our collective efforts are essential in navigating the complexities of our interconnected world. The challenges we face — ranging from climate change to global health crises, from conflicts to economic inequalities — are beyond the capacity of any single nation to resolve. They demand a robust, coordinated and inclusive multilateral approach.

Currently, the 193 Member States of the United Nations, from diverse regions and cultures, evokes a strong statement of recognition by Member States of the importance of the multilateral system founded on international law to safeguard the sovereignty and independence of States and to advance and defend common and other critical interests. We should therefore resolve to use this unity in diversity to achieve the purposes of the Organization — to maintain international peace and security, to promote and protect fundamental human rights and to cooperate to achieve sustainable development.

Presently, however, we are challenged to generate innovative ideas and credible mechanisms that will bring all conflicts to a peaceful end; maintain peace and security; promote social progress, human rights and fundamental freedoms; and secure better standards of life for humankind.

We have limited options or alternatives to address these challenges other than to strengthen multilateralism based on the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In that regard, the Council should reflect on reform measures that will reinforce our collective obligation to uphold the purposes and principles upon which our Organization was founded, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

We cannot champion a just, democratic and sustainable world when Africa, a continent on which more than half of the discussions of the Security Council are based, remains excluded in the permanent category and underrepresented in the non-permanent category of membership in the organ with primary responsibility and binding decision-making powers on matters of international peace and security. The historical injustice against Africa must be addressed, and we look forward to the debate on that important issue during Sierra Leone's presidency of the Security Council in August.

There is a binding commitment to build a global society that is more just, inclusive and equal than the one in which we live today. Accordingly, we must be committed to supporting and facilitating multilateral cooperation in the interest of a just, democratic and sustainable world order, with the United Nations at the centre.

Respecting the prohibition on the use of force; preserving and strengthening the values of peaceful settlement of disputes; upholding the dignity of humankind and meaningful sustainable economic development through international cooperation, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are therefore essential to promoting and supporting the three pillars of the United Nations.

On the basis of the foregoing, let me highlight four key points.

First and importantly, a just world requires an unwavering commitment to the rule of law. Ensuring respect for and upholding international law and the rule

of law at the international level is a *sine qua non*, as it is self-evident that for multilateralism to be sustained and strengthened, it is imperative that States abide by their obligations under the United Nations Charter and international law, eschewing selective application of the law.

To strengthen multilateralism through international law and the rule of law, States are also urged to use or continue to use international courts, in particular the International Court of Justice, as potential tools to address shared interests of international concern. That could be seen as the application of international law to multilateralism, thereby ensuring justice and accountability in solving legal disputes. The judicial settlement of disputes gives expression to Article 2, paragraph 3, and Article 33 of the United Nations Charter, in reinforcing the rule of international law.

Secondly, a democratic world order should be centred around the principles of transparency, accountability and inclusive participation. Democracy is not merely a system of governance but a foundation upon which the principle of the sovereign equality of States rests. Support for democratic practices and transparent processes at the international level allows for inclusive participation and ownership, thus putting an end to the paradigm of inequality and inequities, as well as safeguarding against the erosion of the democratic tenet of sovereign equality. It is imperative for pluralism to be reinforced, allowing for the voices of all actors in international relations to be heard.

Thirdly, we acknowledge that sustainability is the bedrock of a world order that promises longevity and prosperity for future generations. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change provide us with a blueprint. Additionally, the Summit of the Future affords us the opportunity, at the highest level, to outline an ambitious agenda — not only to forge a new international consensus, but also to establish a new global agreement on multilateral solutions, with a commitment to deliver a better present and safeguard the future.

We must thus accelerate our efforts to combat climate change, promote sustainable development and protect our planet's biodiversity. That includes fostering innovation in green technologies, enhancing global cooperation on environmental issues, promoting meaningful capacity development and transfer of technology and ensuring that economic growth does not come at the expense of our planet's health.

Fourthly, it is imperative to highlight the role of the Bretton Woods institutions — the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank — in creating a just, fair and sustainable world. These institutions were established in order to promote international economic cooperation and stability. However, as the global economic landscape has evolved, so too must those institutions. We must ensure that their policies and practices are aligned with the principles of equity, sustainability and democratic governance. They must assist States and Governments to deliver on their social contracts. Their programmes must not drive a wedge between citizens and their Governments, exacerbating tensions that may exist.

A pressing issue that requires our immediate attention is the burden of debt on developing nations. Many countries are trapped in a cycle of debt that stifles their development prospects and exacerbates poverty and inequality. Debt cancellation and comprehensive debt treatment are not just economic necessities but means to address some of the root causes of conflicts. By providing debt relief, we enable those nations to invest in health, education, infrastructure and sustainable development, thereby fostering global stability and prosperity. Debt sustainability should be a cornerstone of our multilateral efforts. We must work for a fair and transparent international sovereign lending and debt architecture that prevents future debt crises and ensures that borrowing is managed responsibly. That includes promoting responsible lending and borrowing practices, enhancing debt transparency and developing mechanisms for fair and orderly debt restructuring.

In our pursuit of those goals, multilateralism is our most powerful tool. The United Nations, with its unique legitimacy and convening power, must be at the forefront of fostering international cooperation. We must reform and reinvigorate our multilateral institutions to be more effective, representative and responsive to the needs of all Member States. That includes addressing disparities in global governance structures and ensuring equitable representation for developing countries, especially in Africa. Our collective resolve to enhance our multilateral cooperation should be the immediate necessity. Our inaction will have a debilitating effect on the dignity of humankind. In that regard, Sierra Leone reiterates its commitment to the principles, ideals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations.

In conclusion, I want to say that while the challenges of our time are formidable, they are not insurmountable.

By embracing multilateral cooperation, we can create a world that is more just, democratic and sustainable. Let us reaffirm our commitment to those principles and work together to build a future that reflects the highest aspirations of humankind.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): It is significant and surreal that this meeting on multilateralism and the world order has been convened as the signature event of the Russian presidency of the Security Council, as that country has been providing us with an almost painful level of food for thought on the subject. With the frustration that we are feeling over the intractable conflicts, violence and threats to international peace and security that persist around the world, such as the war in Ukraine, the Gaza crisis and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's repeated violations of Security Council resolutions, many have argued that the United Nations and multilateralism have become futile. And it is indeed truly frustrating that in practice, the United Nations was designed to be powerless in the event that a permanent member of the Security Council decided to use force in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and was determined to get away with it. However, that does not mean that we should give up on the United Nations or on multilateralism.

Even without binding decisions, the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, still provides a valuable platform for exchanging views among Member States and constructing the right narrative for the international community. The United Nations can serve as a megaphone that transmits to the global audience the clear message that any Member State's violation of the Charter is unacceptable, thereby ultimately thwarting the ambitions of violators and guiding us in the right direction. In our view, that enduring multilateral diplomatic space is even more relevant amid the deepening scepticism and chaos that we are facing today. Against that backdrop, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, diversity must be fostered in a manner that promotes universal values. In addressing global challenges, it is critical to respect countries' different histories, cultures and levels of economic development, as well as different political systems. We should always listen to each other earnestly and work to deepen our mutual understanding. However, we should also be reminded that we are, after all, the same kind — one humankind — even amid conflicts, wars and extreme hatred of one another. The essence of the humanity that

we share transcends all other differences in culture, politics and history. Likewise, our fundamental and universal values are non-negotiable and must be upheld under all circumstances. For instance, the reported public execution of dozens of teenage students in North Korea last week for watching South Korean dramas, and the sentencing of North Koreans to hard labour for preparing their meal with bottled rice that South Korean non-governmental organizations sent over for humanitarian purposes, are simply intolerable. Such brutal acts by the regime cannot — and must not — be explained or understood in terms of any diversity or differences in governance. It makes no sense to preach diversity while undermining our shared universal values.

Secondly, we should preserve and effectively utilize the multilateral tools that the United Nations has developed for decades and that are we have at our disposal. For many, United Nations peace operations remain a central component in the continuum of United Nations responses aimed at maintaining peace and security. We strongly call for full support for those missions, in terms of both mandates and resources, in order to better protect civilians, prevent conflicts, establish the rule of law and promote human rights. As mentioned in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, the Security Council's sanctions regimes also remain an important instrument provided by the Charter to address threats to international peace and security. Sanctions should be more targeted and effective, minimizing unintended humanitarian impacts. At the same time, we need to ensure that such measures are effective enough to achieve their intended goal, bearing in mind that every sanctions regime has its own history and background. Undermining those regimes, including their monitoring mechanisms, without good reasons or for self-serving purposes can only further complicate and destabilize situations. In that connection, Russia's single-handed dissolution in March of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) (see S/PV.9591) was a demonstration of how a permanent member's grave violations of Council resolutions, such as trading arms with North Korea, can result in the destruction of an indispensable Council institution. One lie leads to another, and one crime also leads to another.

That brings me to my next point, which is that accountability for decisions and agreements must be ensured. The concept note (S/2024/537, annex) for today's meeting asks us whether the international order should be founded on a polycentric or a unipolar

paradigm. But in our view, that question is about how we analyse an existing phenomenon, not a matter of choice. Whether we are living in a multipolar world or not, what matters is that we realize sustaining peace from it. We have seen the consequences of the multipolar order — or rather, disorder — of the 1920s and 1930s. It should be our common goal to ensure that such history does not repeat itself.

One way to achieve that is to ensure that the United Nations outperforms the League of Nations and to stick to the rules and principles that we have agreed on, including the Charter and the resolutions of the Security Council, as far as possible. That is what we can choose. Those rules should apply to everyone in a fair and consistent manner. It must also be made clear that there will be consequences for violators, not impunity. Only then can the rule of law be established. In particular, it is paramount that the prime principles of the Charter of the United Nations, such as refraining from the use of force, respecting other nations' sovereignty and territorial integrity and promoting human rights, be upheld in every corner of the world, without leaving any vacuum. There are no so-called legitimate concerns that justify violations of those basic principles.

As we look ahead to the Summit of the Future, we do not want our present to be remembered by future generations as a dark era of multilateralism. Instead, let it be known as a key juncture when we overcame the criticisms of multilateralism as futile with tenacious joint efforts to promote our shared universal values.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): The United States welcomes the opportunity to come together to discuss this serious matter of international peace and security and multilateral cooperation, even if it was convened by a Council member that has shown time and time again that it does not take the matter seriously. And in fact, as I listened to the Russian Representative's statement, I thought I was in the wrong room — because this seemed to be a meeting whining about the United States and the West, and I hardly heard the word multilateralism mentioned.

As colleagues all know, Member States are invited to donate artwork to the United Nations. Those official gifts are meant to epitomize the ideals of the United Nations, the values outlined in its Charter. Members may all ask why I am mentioning that. Well, beyond this Chamber, at the easternmost edge of the United Nations North Lawn, is Russia's gift presented in 1959. It is a bronze statue of a man beating his sword into a

plowshare, transforming a weapon of war into a tool for the common good and prioritizing food security and agricultural prosperity over destruction. And so it is ironic that today the very country that erected that statue, that statement of the United Nations ideals, is now actively engaged in a war of aggression against its neighbour; a war that has weaponized food, worsening food insecurity not only for Ukrainians, but for tens of millions of hungry people around the world; a war that has severely damaged Ukraine's power production, threatening to leave hundreds of thousands in the cold this winter; a war that has killed thousands of innocent people, including dozens just last week at a paediatric hospital in Kyiv; a war that has facilitated the unlawful transfers of thousands upon thousands of people from their homes, including children; and a war that has caused Moscow to result to nuclear brinksmanship and to violate international sanctions obligations.

Of course, Russia's abhorrent behaviour began well before its full-scale invasion in 2022. In particular, Putin has treated human beings as bargaining chips and continues to do so to this day. I think about the family and friends of Trevor Reed and Britney Griner and Evan Gershkovich and Paul Whelan, as well as others; people detained for doing their jobs, or even just being in the wrong place at the wrong time, and used as human pawns.

Last year, the Council had the privilege of being joined by Paul's sister, Elizabeth, in the public gallery. And I asked Minister Lavrov to consider her unimaginable pain, having gone four years without seeing her brother, to look into her eyes and see her suffering. Today, over 2,000 days since he last saw his family, Paul remains locked up in a Russian penal colony. And so I want to look into Minister Lavrov's eyes while he looks into his phone and say: we will not rest until Paul and Evan come home and Russia has ceased the barbaric practice of holding human pawns once and for all. And that is a promise.

It is clear: the hypocrisy displayed on the United Nations North Lawn by a nation that has chosen to beat plowshares into swords is matched only by the hypocrisy it has displayed in the Council, today and every day. Today we gather under the guise of embracing and improving multilateralism, of recommitting to international law. And yet, as we speak, Russia continues to erode confidence in our institutions, while wilfully and flagrantly violating the core tenets of the United Nations Charter: territorial integrity, respect for human rights and international cooperation. Those are

our values, the shared principles every single one of us agreed to uphold. And they have provided the basis of the United Nations greatest triumphs. Our shared principles have helped us forestall nuclear proliferation and prevent mass atrocities. They have helped us forge peace after years of strife and to provide desperately needed humanitarian aid to those in need.

Now let me be clear: I am not starry-eyed. The United Nations is not perfect. It reflects a deeply imperfect world, one filled with conflict and contradiction. The debates we have in this Chamber exist beyond it too. And yet this institution endures — multilateralism endures — because we need it to endure. We need an effective United Nations to tackle the kind of borderless challenges that affect us all.

More than that, the United Nations endures because people and nations continue to see its promise. And even in the darkest moments of the past few years, those people, those nations, have offered glimmers of hope, moments in which multilateralism won out over isolationism, hope over cynicism. And I think about the global response to Russian aggression. In the aftermath of Russia's full-scale invasion, 143 United Nations States Members came together to affirm Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Time and time again, the vast majority of the Council has spoken out against Russia's illegal, unprovoked, unnecessary war and against all those who enable it. And in multilateral forums across the globe, including at last month's Ukraine peace summit in Switzerland, leaders have committed to Ukraine's recovery, reconstruction, reform and modernization; to good-faith negotiations towards a just and lasting peace, consistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

In all of those efforts, the United States has been inspired by the extraordinary courage and the resilience of the Ukrainian people, ordinary citizens willing to risk everything to protect the values they hold dear — democracy and justice, equality and humanity and peace and security — the very values we all have the privilege, in fact the responsibility, to fight for here in the Chamber.

The United Nation needs reform, not a wrecking ball, and certainly not one accompanied by mealy-mouthed calls for cooperation. But rather, it needs meaningful and positive evolution, real action, real change, to make this body as effective, efficient and inclusive as possible. And so, in the face of Russia's divisive

rhetoric, attacks on an international architecture we all helped shape, and flagrant violations in Ukraine and all around the world, those of us committed to progress, both within this institution and beyond it, can do more. In fact, we must do more.

For our part, the United States is committed to modernizing and strengthening this institution, and the multilateral system more broadly, to better reflect the priorities of all Member States, including developing countries — whether it be working with shareholders of multilateral development banks to address economic barriers to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, or championing efforts to reform the Security Council itself, while fostering accountability and transparency and ensuring that this body incorporates geographically diverse perspectives, including permanent representation from the global South. That is why I conducted a wide-ranging set of conversations on Council reform — a listening tour with Member States, reform groups, regional groupings and other institutional systems — and why we will continue to engage widely to ensure that the Security Council is fit for the twenty-first century.

Creating that change and upholding the rules-based international order as defined by the Charter are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they are mutually reinforcing. And so as we work to reform multilateral systems, we will uphold our commitment to the international community, from the Charter to other treaties and conventions, from international humanitarian law to World Trade Organization rules. Not, as my Russian counterpart might argue, to keep other nations down, but rather to help build them up and ensure that everyone plays by the rules and that the rules are fair to everyone, including the developing nations that for far too long have been used and abused by Russia.

To that end, we will champion the fundamental universal human rights at the very core of that international order — freedom of belief and religion, expression and peaceful assembly, regardless of anyone's identity, where they were born, what they own or how they pray. We will steadfastly pursue peaceful resolutions to conflicts all over the world, while working around the clock to promote diplomacy, expand and accelerate humanitarian efforts, aid in reconstruction and not only respond to the crises of today but work to prevent them. And we will renew our commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, healing the climate, ending poverty and hunger,

fighting corruption, sowing equity and justice where it is under assault and achieving the kind of monumental change that only we can, as a united global community.

That is our charge. This is the moment that the United Nations was designed to meet. And we must therefore rally behind the Charter and its fundamental principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and peace and security. We must embrace multilateralism for what it is — not a politically expedient buzzword but a means of achieving real progress on the issues that affect us all. And finally, we must turn swords into ploughshares and conflict into common good, and together create a more peaceful, prosperous world for us all.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of the United States for her colourful statement.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): International law and the Charter of the United Nations, underpinned by respect for all fundamental human rights, are the bedrock of multilateralism. They form the essential tenets of diplomacy and international relations. We must remain committed to all the fundamental principles of international law and emphasize that they should be seen as complementary rather than conflicting. During times of unprecedented global challenges, it is imperative that we uphold them even more vigorously.

Conflicts have escalated in both intensity and volume with the emergence of various risk factors and threat multipliers. They include climate change, which is exacerbating various challenges such as the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, reduced food supplies and the consequent escalations of conflicts. Human rights are increasingly being curtailed and violated and inequities are rising. That further underscores the importance of multilateral cooperation, which is crucial to effectively addressing such global challenges. Malta remains dedicated to multilateralism, based on international law and the Charter, as the best way to do that. In these times, we want to reiterate that enhanced cooperation between multilateral organizations at the international and regional level, with the United Nations at the core of that work, is especially important. The system must continue to evolve to answer to today's challenges. It is especially vital to ensure that this evolution safeguards and facilitates the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women, in order to promote gender-transformative actions and agreements.

We believe that the Summit of the Future presents a critical opportunity for all States to recommit to multilateralism, based on a good-faith interpretation of international law and the Charter, with the United Nations at its centre. Peace and security, sustainable development and adherence to human rights are intrinsically linked. We must therefore accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and promote and defend the universality and indivisibility of human rights within the United Nations system, while remaining committed to strengthening transitional justice and accountability for serious violations and abuses of human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law. Malta will therefore continue to be a strong advocate for the integrity, independence and functionality of United Nations human rights mechanisms and a steadfast supporter of the International Criminal Court and other international judicial mechanisms.

We cannot have peace and security without adherence to the entirety of international law and the Charter. In that regard, we must point to the continued blatant disregard that the Russian Federation has shown for them in its unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine, which has caused death and injury to hundreds of thousands, including many civilians, as well as grave violations against children, the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, and worldwide food shortages. On this occasion, we again urge the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, and to turn to dialogue and diplomacy as the tools that can bring stability to the region.

In conclusion, multilateralism based on international law and the Charter, with respect for fundamental human rights, is the only way to rise to today's global challenges. Malta remains committed to working for that goal.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): No one country can single-handedly solve the various complex global challenges of today, which my fellow Council members have already outlined. We need a collective multilateral response, and the United Nations should be at the heart of it. Multilateralism can function only when Member States work together based on mutual trust and cooperation. Given the diverse views and positions of every country on various issues, what unites us is

our shared collective commitment to the fundamental principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

It is a tragic irony and blatant hypocrisy that this debate, which is focused on how multilateralism should work better, is being organized under Russia's presidency of the Security Council. On the one hand, in the concept note for the open debate (S/2024/537, annex), Russia emphasizes the importance of ensuring commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, the need to re-establish an atmosphere of trust and dialogue, concern about increases and escalation in the use of force and areas of conflict and the need to ensure equal and indivisible security for all. On the other hand, its aggression against Ukraine goes against all of that and is a clear breach of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which are core values of international law. The unprovoked war of aggression against a sovereign State by a permanent member of the Security Council is in outright defiance of the Charter and Security Council resolutions, including those on North Korea, and constitutes a threat to global peace and security. The relentless use or threat of use of the veto that has accompanied that aggression has blocked the Council from making decisions and taking collective actions, paralysing and discrediting the Council when the world needed it most to fulfil its responsibility. How can Russia criticize others' selective approach to applying international law and imposing arbitrary measures, while at the same time violating the very international law it says it is committed to whenever it wants?

Indeed, there is no country with a flawless historical record with regard to its foreign policy. All of us should squarely face that reality and be humble about it. However, regardless of any blame Russia tries to put on others, it will never legitimize or distract the world's attention from Russia's unlawful conduct in the Ukrainian situation. As shown by the General Assembly resolutions related to Ukraine, the overwhelming majority of the membership understands who is to blame.

Russia must, first and foremost, immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and equipment from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

We strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to change the peacefully established status of territories by force or coercion anywhere in the world and reaffirm that the acquisition of territory by force is prohibited by international law.

We need to strengthen the United Nations, which is the centre of multilateral cooperation. In particular, we need an early reform of the Security Council to reflect current realities rather than those of 80 years ago. Increasing the representation of unrepresented and underrepresented regions is crucial. At the same time, Council membership is not a privilege but a solemn responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of the entire United Nations membership. The Summit of the Future is an epoch-making opportunity to take stock of what we, the Member States, have discussed so far on Security Council reform and to show the world a way forward with a sense of urgency.

We have no doubt that the United Nations continues to be the largest, most legitimate and most indispensable international organization in which the most critical issues of the world can be discussed and debated. The future of the United Nations depends solely on us. We have much to do. Let us do it legitimately.

Mr. De Rivi re (France) (*spoke in French*): After the Second World War, the Charter of the United Nations established an international order in the service of peace, based on the sovereign equality of States, respect for international law, the non-use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It entrusted the Security Council with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. There is only one method we know of for achieving that objective: multilateralism, that is, the collective development of universal rules to which we all choose to adhere, to enable the emergence of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order.

Russia cannot call for such a world order while flouting the fundamental principles of multilateralism. Similar to an arsonist firefighter, it calls for a more just global order while increasing the violations of the Charter of the United Nations and jeopardizing our system of collective security. Although the Charter bans the use of force except in self-defence or when authorized by the Security Council, Russia used it illegally against Georgia in 2008 and against Crimea and Donbas in 2014 and has been waging a large-scale war of aggression against Ukraine for over two years. It therefore continues to flagrantly violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, principles established by the Charter to which I believe we are all committed, including in the Council.

It runs roughshod over international humanitarian law by deliberately targeting civilians and hospitals. It is also

systematically targeting Ukrainian civilian energy and food infrastructure, intentionally depriving Ukrainian civilians of access to basic necessities. It is flouting international law by deporting Ukrainian children and systematically using torture and rape as weapons of war, as noted by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine and the United Nations human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine.

Russia claims to be strengthening multilateral cooperation, but it is violating the sanctions regimes against North Korea and Iran by purchasing weapons and munitions from those two countries. It is also disregarding the orders of the International Court of Justice which, in March 2022, demanded that it suspend its military operations in Ukraine.

Lastly, Russia is ignoring the resolutions of the General Assembly, which has unequivocally condemned its violations of the Charter of the United Nations and called on it to put an immediate end to its aggression and to withdraw its troops from Ukraine.

Defending effective multilateralism is essential in confronting global challenges. We can address the security, climate, health and technology challenges only if we do so collectively.

France supports the expansion of the Security Council in both of its membership categories — permanent and non-permanent. Together with Mexico, France advocates a framework for the veto in order to strengthen the Security Council's ability to assume its responsibilities. France is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and is taking concrete action for the climate, by supporting a timetable for phasing out fossil fuels. Together with Costa Rica, we will host the United Nations Ocean Conference in 2025. We continue to call for a joint fight against poverty. That is the aim of the Paris Pact for People and the Planet.

France supports initiatives in favour of inclusive multilateralism, whether in the framework of the Summit of the Future or digital governance.

In conclusion, let me recall that Russia was a founding member of this Organization. It was also, in the past, on the side of multilateralism. It is clearly no longer on that side. It must do all it can, without further delay, to respect once again the rules and principles of multilateralism.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China appreciates the Russian initiative to convene this open debate. I welcome Foreign Minister Lavrov to the Council to preside over today's meeting.

Building a more just, democratic and sustainable world order is humankind's shared pursuit. In 1945, in order to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Our forefathers, upholding the spirit of multilateralism, established on the ruins of the Second World War the most universal representative and authoritative international organization — the United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations, forming the cornerstone of the modern international order and establishing the basic norms of contemporary international relations, is an embodiment of our noble ideal of working towards a just and rational international order. Since then, a large number of countries have emerged from waves of national independence and liberation.

Seventy years ago, in the face of the shadow of the cold war and a divided world, the world faced the question of how to realize the common ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. To answer that and echoing the trend of the time, the Chinese leaders put forward the five principles of peaceful coexistence, namely, mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. The five principles of peaceful coexistence are an embodiment of the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and have forged the basic norm of international relations that countries large or small, strong or weak and in the East or the West should treat each other with mutual respect and equality. Those principles also constitute an important ideological basis for making the international order more just and equitable.

Since the dawn of the twenty-first century, humankind has continued its quest for a just and equitable international order. At the moment, the international landscape is increasingly defined by bloc politics, the world economy is facing an anti-globalization onslaught and international governance is ever more fragmented. Humankind is once again faced with a historic choice of where to go from here. President Xi Jinping's proposal for building a community with a shared future for humankind was made with the aim of carrying forward the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the five principles of

peaceful coexistence in our new circumstances. China believes that in order to promote the building of a more just and equitable international order, efforts should be made in the following six areas.

First, we must uphold sovereign equality. Every country should be able to find its own place and play its rightful role in the multipolar system. We must work jointly to promote a multipolar world in an equitable and orderly manner.

Secondly, we must adhere to mutual respect, have consideration for one another's vital interests and major concerns, respect the paths of development and systems independently chosen by the people of each country, and refrain from interfering in others' internal affairs.

Thirdly, we must build common security based on the natural law of the indivisibility of security, settle disputes through dialogue and resolve differences through consultation, in order to build a more balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture.

Fourthly, we must encourage common development by promoting universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and striving to ensure that we leave no country and no one behind.

Fifthly, we must uphold justice, safeguard the authority of the United Nations and international law, advocate a global governance that is based on joint consultation and collaboration for shared benefit and enhance the representation and amplify the voice of developing countries.

Sixthly, we must embrace openness and inclusiveness, promote equal dialogue, exchanges and mutual learning among different civilizations, foster mutual understanding and kinship among peoples and promote the common values of all humankind.

In today's chaotic world, discussions of the international order cover a full range of opinions, with some obvious truths being wilfully distorted while certain specious arguments gain currency. Given the theme of today's debate, I would like to make the following points.

First, we often hear various countries talk of a rules-based international order. But what kind of rules are we talking about? And who is making the rules? No one has a clear and precise answer to that. The fact is that the so-called rules-based international order advocated

by some is really designed to create another system, outside the existing system of international law, and to seek legitimacy for double standards and exceptions. I want to emphasize that there is only one order in the world, and that is the international order, based on international law. There is only one set of rules, and they are the basic norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. There is no room for ambiguity on matters of principle, and positions must be clearly stated. It is time for vague concepts that confuse the public to be put to rest.

Secondly, against a backdrop of the crisis in Ukraine and the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, countries are very concerned about common international security, and many peace-loving countries and people are working tirelessly to bring peace. However, NATO, a regional military bloc left over from the cold war, has been seeking to expand its sphere of influence, stopping at nothing to create false narratives, pouring fuel on the fire wherever it goes, stirring up confrontation between camps and even resorting to shifting the blame to countries outside the region in order to frame them on the issue of Ukraine. That is the exact opposite of what the international community is doing in terms of persuading and promoting peace and negotiations. History has amply proved that wherever NATO's dark hand extends, turmoil and chaos will ensue. China hereby advises NATO and the countries in question to do some soul-searching and self-examination and stop being troublemakers jeopardizing our common security and pursuing self-interests at others' expense.

Thirdly, common development and security are mutually reinforcing. They are the foundation of a sound international order in which development is the master key to solving all problems. A just and equitable international order cannot be built in a world where developed countries become ever richer while developing countries remain mired in poverty and a lack of development in the long term. We must respond to the general trend of the collective rise of the global South and make substantive strides in such areas as the reform of the international financial architecture and governance of artificial intelligence, so as to help and empower developing countries to catch up. Individual countries have inappropriately broadened the concept of national security by building small yards and high fences and have indiscriminately imposed unilateral sanctions to disrupt global production and supply chains, which will ultimately lead to a situation in

which there are no winners, bilaterally or multilaterally. We must resolutely resist such mistaken practices.

This year and the next, the United Nations will usher in such important agendas as the Summit of the Future and the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. We must seize those historic opportunities and make joint efforts to bring the international community closer together under the flag of the United Nations, practice genuine multilateralism and work relentlessly to build a just, democratic and sustainable international order.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): As we are meeting to discuss the preparedness of our multilateral system for contemporary challenges, I would like to start with the timeless words of our Organization's second Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, when he said, "The United Nations was not created in order to bring us to heaven, but in order to save us from hell".

Unfortunately, we seem to be moving more in the direction of the latter. We live in a world of dark statistics, with the highest numbers of ongoing conflicts and casualties among civilians, children, humanitarian and medical workers and journalists. Conflicts have driven the numbers of forcibly displaced people to record highs. We are living in a time of hunger and a protection crisis. Women, children and older people bear the heaviest burden. Climate change, water scarcity and pollution are putting pressure on communities around the globe. Those dark trends are not a consequence of an outdated multilateral system but rather of the erosion of respect for its principles among some States Members of the United Nations, including, regrettably, a member of the Security Council. We are witnessing a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations in the Russian aggression in Ukraine. Appalling violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law are causing immense suffering for civilians in Gaza, the Sudan, Ukraine and elsewhere. We are seeing blatant disregard for Security Council resolutions and sanctions in the Sudan, Gaza, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to name only a few places.

The problem is not in the multilateral system built around the United Nations. The problem is that the international order, based on the power of rules, is being driven out by the rules of power. We cannot and do not need to agree on every issue on the agenda of the Security Council, but we do need to share a basic foundation of effective multilateralism, which,

according to what we believe, should consist of respect for the Charter and international law — no ifs, no ands and no buts. At a minimum, that means settling disputes peacefully and refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of other countries, and it means protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure in times of war.

We are not experiencing a crisis of multilateralism, but rather a crisis of the political will to comply with and respect the international legal system that we have all built and committed to. The world finds itself in a crisis of trust — trust in the system and trust in one another. The question before us should therefore not be whether we need a new multilateral system, but rather how we can restore political will and trust in order to strengthen the system that we have diligently built for decades. One precondition for rebuilding trust is full respect for and compliance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

We strongly believe that we should reaffirm our collective commitment to the established international legal system by upholding the United Nations Charter as the cornerstone of our multilateral system. Through the codification of international law and its progressive development, we should strengthen compliance mechanisms and accountability so as to ensure Member States' adherence to their international obligations.

The inclusive United Nations system needs to stay a living mechanism, ready to adapt to new realities and challenges of the modern time. We must advance its revitalization and reform. The upcoming Summit of the Future presents an excellent opportunity in that regard.

The United Nations Charter has stood the test of time, proving its relevance through many challenges over the past eight decades. Above all, it continues to deserve our full and unconditional respect for its purposes and principles. It is on us now to effectively use the existing tools provided by the United Nations Charter and the international law and make our common future less daunting.

Mr. De La Gasca (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Russian Federation for convening a debate on a topic central to global governance. This debate complements discussions on multilateralism from previous years.

Almost eight decades ago, we adopted the Charter of the United Nations, in pursuit of a more peaceful and prosperous world. Nevertheless, the world is

now witnessing the highest number of conflicts since the Second World War. As a result, 2 billion people, a quarter of humankind, now live in places affected by war and violence. It is evident that the Charter is not being implemented, exposing multilateralism to existential criticism.

Ecuador is convinced that good faith among States is the basis for the restoration of trust — the cornerstone of an effective, representative, inclusive and cooperative multilateralism. That is because no country — no matter how powerful — can alone face transnational challenges such as the climate crisis; pandemics; terrorism; the trafficking and smuggling of persons, arms, ammunition and drugs that fuel transnational organized crime; or the risks associated with new technologies, among so many other challenges that only revitalized multilateral cooperation can address.

We must reaffirm the commitment to respect the principles enshrined in the Charter and reinforced in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, giving priority to human rights; the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes; the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States; and non-intervention in internal affairs.

The permanent members of the Council have a special responsibility to preserve the principles and values on which the multilateral system has been built and to prevent its further weakening, without prioritizing their geopolitical interests, since their individual actions have a decisive impact on the management and image of the Security Council as a collegiate organ.

The prevailing scenario of criticism for the lack of results due to geostrategic fragmentation conceals notable historical successes of the Organization, such as having contributed to the process of decolonization and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the promotion of economic and social progress, respect for human rights and the management of the global humanitarian system.

The United Nations also recently showed that it can contribute to filling the remaining gaps in global governance, as in the case of the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond

National Jurisdiction last June. We therefore cannot and must not let our guard down. We must breathe new life into the various processes under way and thus persevere to ensure that the multilateral architecture adapts to new realities, giving priority to the needs of the developing world.

The first thing to recognize is the existence of a pending debt in relation to Security Council reform. Ecuador will continue to support an ambitious and realistic reform, without new vetoes or privileges in perpetuity. That would not work. A reform limited to an ethical model of democracy, based on the principles of the rotation of powers and accountability, appropriate to the reality and diversity of the contemporary world.

The international community's greatest debt, however, is its failure to recognize and act on the inextricable nexus between peace and development, which requires a global reform of the multilateral architecture, in particular, the international financial institutions, which, in their current structure, do not respond to the pressing needs of the global South.

This is not a recent yearning. A few months ago marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, whose provisions remind us of the need to improve the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading system, as well as the urgency of addressing the asymmetries that have affected the development prospects of the countries of the global South.

Such reforms take on particular relevance for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a transformative vision towards economic, social and environmental sustainability. Investments in development and shared prosperity are fundamental to peacekeeping, and their implementation depends on access to finance, capacity-building and technology transfer to developing countries.

Dag Hammarskjöld has already been quoted here, but I conclude by referencing his words, in English, during the afternoon meeting of the General Assembly on 3 October 1960,

(spoke in English)

“[i]t is not the Soviet Union or indeed any Big Powers which need the United Nations for their protection. It is all the others. In this sense, the Organization is first of all their Organization and I

deeply believe in the wisdom with which they will be able to use it and guide it.” (A/PV.883, p. 332)

(spoke in Spanish)

As we prepare to celebrate the Summit of the Future in September, Ecuador believes that we should approach it as a new opportunity to demonstrate that multilateral cooperation is the best tool to face global challenges and that the implicit call for those of us who most need the Organization to use its architecture so as to leave no one behind is still valid.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): Mozambique highly commends the initiative of the Russian Federation to convene this open debate under the theme “multilateral cooperation in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order”

The theme under discussion today offers a unique opportunity for Council members to revisit the Charter of the United Nations — the legal instrument that binds us together around this horseshoe table and beyond. It is a golden opportunity for us to exchange thoughts and views on how best our collective actions can be energized and channelled to build a more just, peaceful, democratic and sustainable world order in the current challenging times. We are of the view that the United Nations was essentially born as a multilateral body with the aim of guaranteeing that the system of collective security enshrined in the Charter worked for the benefit of all humankind. As a matter of fact, Article 1, paragraph 4, defines one of the purposes of the United Nations as being “a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of ... common ends”. It is our understanding that chief among those common ends is the maintenance of international peace and security. On many occasions, as Council members and as Members of the United Nations at large, we have committed ourselves to the multilateralism that is embedded in the letter and spirit of the Charter. Therefore, harmonizing our actions for international peace and security mean above all that, both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly, we need to — and in fact must — speak with one voice and act with one purpose in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter.

As Mozambique, we have always believed in the Organization as a locus of understanding among nations and a fundamental instrument for prevention — in the words of the Charter, “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. Since the inception of our

statehood, we have embraced that framework of multilateral cooperation based on the principle of the sovereign equality of the United Nations membership. We welcomed the end of Cold War in the years 1989 and 1990. We viewed that event not as a victory of one rival over the other, but as a new and fresh departure to build a just, democratic and sustainable world order in the interest not just of the West or of the East, but of all humankind. In our view, that spirit and courage for dialogue and mutual understanding was the correct way to proceed.

We believe that the centre of the world should continue to be the United Nations. That is to say, States must be guided at all times by the Charter of the United Nations and the tenets of international law. Our common yardstick in that respect should be the degree to which each nation behaves with regard to international law. We have always advocated multilateralism with inclusivity. In every instance, we have supported efforts to create a peaceful and sustainable world order where the needs and priorities of developing and least developed countries are taken into account.

We recall that that was the purpose behind our effort for the establishment of a new international economic order in the 1970s. We believe that is what we aspire to bring about today with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which pledge that no one should be left behind. The SDGs therefore faithfully translate what the Charter aptly phrased as the determination “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”. In the context of building effective multilateralism, Mozambique reiterates the call for the need for Security Council reform, which must take into account the African Common Position, based on the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. That will allow the Council to be more inclusive, fair, just and democratic in the discharge of its duties under the Charter at the service of all humankind.

The current global security challenges require concerted efforts and a reinforced role for cooperation. Those challenges include inter-State wars, intra-State conflicts, terrorism, violent extremism, transnational organized crime, the proliferation of weapons and limited peacekeeping capacity and financing, among other things. We are certain that global problems demand global responses. Therefore, a more just, democratic and sustainable world order must be anchored on cooperation where relations among nations are constructive and robust and based on respect for

the principle of the equal rights of States and the self-determination of peoples.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

Mr. Szijjártó (Hungary): First of all, I thank the Security Council for the opportunity to speak here in the age of dangers, as nowadays there are around 30 countries around the world that have been suffering from armed conflicts.

I represent a country, Hungary — and I hope European Union colleagues are paying attention — that has been living in the shadow of a war for two and a half years now, and we have been confronted with the direct consequences of that war. We have received more than 1 million refugees. We have been faced with war inflation. And we had to pay tremendously high energy prices. I can therefore tell colleagues that a war looks totally different from the neighbourhood as compared to an ocean away. Thousands of people are dying. A country is being destroyed. And that is the daily experience.

But there is a long-term risk as well of the world again being divided into blocs. And here is our historic experience as a country from Central Europe: we know very well from that experience that, if there is no chance for civilized cooperation between East and West, we lose. And we do not want to lose again.

I have been in my position for almost 10 years now. I am currently the longest-serving Foreign Minister in the European Union. And I must say that I have participated in a number of events and meetings in the European Union in the past 10 years when we discussed the issue of armed conflicts and wars far from Europe. And what was always the European position? To urge the parties in the war, in that particular war, to give up seeking a battlefield solution, to sit around the negotiating table, to go for peace, to negotiate with one another and to look for a diplomatic solution. And what is the position now that there is a war going on in Europe? It is totally different, and not only is it totally different, but when anyone uses the words “peace” and “negotiation”, they are immediately stigmatized. We are very familiar with expressions such as “spies”, “Trojan horse” and “friends of whoever”. That is a very bad approach, in which the legitimacy of diplomacy is essentially up for debate. In our view, diplomacy is not only about talking to those with whom you agree 100 per cent.

That is not diplomacy. It is something totally different. Diplomacy is about talking to everyone, even when you do not agree on major issues. That is an achievement. In our neighbourhood, the last two and a half years have clearly shown that there can be no battlefield solution to the war in Ukraine. We have to restore the legitimacy of diplomacy. And I have to say that not only is it unacceptable, but it is truly scandalous, that in the twenty-first century a country is being stigmatized merely for arguing in favour of a diplomatic solution and for using channels of communication to talk to those with whom a common understanding on major issues may be lacking. That is totally unacceptable and scandalous.

Here we are in New York, the Headquarters of the United Nations. The United Nations was not established to be a platform for like-minded countries. There are other organizations for that. It was established to be a platform for those who do not agree with each other, who are in a hostile relationship with each other, who are at war with each other, so that they can talk to each other. I therefore believe that the over-politicization of the United Nations is unacceptable and it is equally unacceptable to prevent countries from negotiating with whomever they want to negotiate with, especially within the framework of the United Nations. Some Council members may have heard that Hungary assumed the Presidency of the European Union on 1 July and perhaps even that that has not made everyone in Europe happy. But we are now being very heavily attacked politically by the European politicians who represent a pro-war position, and I am here to say that such attacks will further encourage us to continue our peace mission. And we will continue our peace mission because we have been living in the shadow of war for two and a half years. We want peace, not war, and only peace will make Europe great again. But in order to make Europe great again, we have to make Europe peaceful again.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Bagheri (Islamic Republic of Iran) (*spoke in Farsi; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Russian Federation on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and for organizing this timely initiative.

Effective multilateralism is essential to ensuring international peace and security. We stress the

importance of such initiatives in highlighting the need for multilateralism and underscoring the harmful consequences of selfish unilateralism. As a founding Member State of the United Nations, the Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its commitment to effective multilateralism, grounded in international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I would like to take this opportunity to share a few thoughts on behalf of my country.

First, the United Nations was created not only to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war but also to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, among other goals. Those and other lofty purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter can be achieved only through multilateral cooperation. Unilateralism is antagonistic to both peace and justice.

Secondly, the sovereign equality of States is the basic tenet of the United Nations system. It is based on the core principle of the right of every nation to self-determination, according to which every nation is entitled to decide its own destiny. The principles of the prohibition of the use or threat of use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries are all designed to protect sovereign nations from foreign aggression and to secure friendly relations among them. Unilateralism negates the basic tenets and fundamental principles of the United Nations and is an invitation to injustice, confrontation and war.

Thirdly, the United Nations, as the world's greatest symbol of multilateralism, is potentially becoming a victim of the dangers of unilateralism. Regrettably, certain permanent members of the Security Council have abused its platform in their pursuit of self-centred political or strategic agendas. On the one hand, they have been leveraging the Council to put pressure on other independent sovereign States, while on the other, they have paralysed any action on its part to stop aggression and breaches of the peace by their allies. One very salient example is the United States' decades-long veto of any meaningful decision aimed at stopping the Israeli regime's persistent genocide of Palestinians and frequent aggressions against various nations in the region. I want to emphasize that Iran's support to, and solidarity with, resistance groups in the region is legitimate under international law and aimed at ending acts of aggression and occupation in our region. The

resistance itself serves as a response to unilateralism and to the biased support extended to the occupying Israeli regime, which is committing acts of genocide in Gaza and Palestine.

Fourthly, multilateralism entails respecting the division of mandates among United Nations organs. When the Security Council encroaches on issues beyond its mandate, it is putting the integrity of the Charter as an international treaty at risk. According to Article 25 of the Charter, the Council's power is not limitless or arbitrary. It cannot override customary international law and international treaties. The unjust resolutions that the Council imposed on Iran from 2006 to 2010, on the basis of unfounded claims by the United States about Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, were in clear violation of Iran's rights under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and at the expense of my people's fundamental human rights. Those responsible for those unlawful sanctions cannot evade accountability or responsibility for the suffering inflicted on my people.

Fifthly, unilateral coercive measures, in the form of extraterritorial sanctions, continue to display a blatantly inhumane manifestation of radical unilateralism. The United States and its Western allies, which enforce those sanctions, must be held accountable for the untold suffering, death and destruction that they have inflicted on the targeted nations, including my own.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently demonstrated its commitment to multilateralism, with a clear example being its constructive contribution to the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. That successful multilateral initiative addressed an unwarranted crisis and unfounded concern of the West with regard to Iran's peaceful nuclear programme and was aimed at lifting the illegal and unjust sanctions imposed on the Iranian nation. However, the multilateral process encountered a significant challenge owing to the unilateral actions of the United States and its allies. The United States unilateral and unlawful withdrawal from the agreement exemplified unilateralism in the international arena, causing harm to all parties involved.

Equally important, Iran's good neighbourliness policy highlights the importance of multilateralism in resolving common concerns and challenges. In that context, Iran is pursuing regional dialogue and cooperation to create an environment in which resources can be devoted to the progress and development of the

region for the benefit of all. Strengthening partnerships and cooperation for collective security and sustainable development in the region will be the cornerstone of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the new approach and foreign policy of the President-elect of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which focuses on strengthening multilateralism in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. His Excellency, Mr. Pezeshkian, the President-elect of the Islamic Republic of Iran, recently outlined his primary foreign policy strategy, which is aimed at opening new horizons and fostering friendly relations with other nations based on dialogue, cooperation, equality and mutual respect. The strategy places particular importance on neighbouring countries and the broader region, as well as on maintaining constructive relationships with other States.

As the Secretary-General has underlined, global challenges can be solved only through respect for international law, adherence to global commitments and the adoption of appropriate frameworks of multilateral governance. The Islamic Republic of Iran echoes that call and welcomes any initiatives to further promote respect for international law. Multilateralism is key in that regard. We believe that is the only way to establish a safe, just and inclusive environment in which all nations can enjoy sustainable peace and development.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kuwait.

Mr. Al-Yahya (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your friendly country on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month, with the hope that your presidency will contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. I also hope that your efforts will respond to the visions and aspirations of all peoples of the world to achieve stability and enhance our foreign relations. I value as well your call for the convening of this one-of-a-kind meeting in order to engage all Member States in a direct and constructive dialogue, to assess the existing international order in all its dimensions and to further the achievement of the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world.

As the eighth decade since the establishment of the United Nations and the entry into force of its Charter draws to a close, we reaffirm the importance of the international community's reiterated commitment to

the goals, purposes and principles of the Charter, which is the cornerstone of joint international action and the basis for strengthening international cooperation in response to the changes and consequences witnessed in the world during the past years. That will enable us to face international challenges through creative and innovative policies that keep pace with those changes and ensure an environment conducive to joint work and international cooperation.

Despite all the challenges and obstacles facing our Organization in carrying out its work, the United Nations remains the international multilateral mechanism with the most authority, credibility and legitimacy in the field of joint international action. Its Charter, purposes and principles remain a clear framework and a main point of reference for defining and developing relations among States and a solid basis for our joint work. That is why, now more than ever, we must review our assessments and priorities to strengthen all the means for developing our common action.

The State of Kuwait reiterates its call for the reform of the Security Council as one of the main pillars of the comprehensive reform process of the United Nations. The State of Kuwait also supports all efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive and genuine reform of the Security Council so that it becomes more capable and effective in addressing our current challenges in a more representative, transparent, impartial and credible manner.

The political, humanitarian and health crises that the world has witnessed over the past two decades, as well as the food and energy security crises, the challenges of climate change, the spread of poverty, the threat to international peace and security, the achievement of the development goals and other cross-border crises, have severely tested the multilateral world order and have made clear beyond any doubt the urgent need for a strong and effective world order based on partnership and solidarity at the international level along with the fundamental values and principles of multilateralism governed by international law and regulations which we have all accepted.

Given the global challenges, which require concerted efforts to address them, small States must play a pivotal role in addressing them. In that context, we count on developed States to play a leading role that contributes to creating a more just and balanced partnership and to fulfil their agreed commitments in support of the development process of the least developed countries through technology transfer and debt relief, including

the provision of official development assistance, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They must also take into account, within the framework of new development and financing partnerships consistent with national priorities, the advances in development so that developing countries, especially those facing special situations, are not left behind in the global mainstream.

In conclusion, I would like to once again commend your cooperation, Mr. President, and that of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations in conducting the work of the Security Council for this month. We hope that the discussions on reforming the current international order will continue so that it will be more just, stable and sustainable in the near future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Belarus.

Mr. Ambrazevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me to congratulate the Russian Federation on its presidency and wish it success in fulfilling that important role in multilateral diplomacy.

We would like to note the exceptional importance of the topic of today's discussion. Indeed, next year the world will commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the bloodiest and most devastating conflict in human history. The witnesses of that war and great minds of that era, when creating the Charter of the United Nations — a document that embodied the ideals of universal engagement, solidarity and respect for the sovereign equality of States, that reflected the concepts of truly shared responsibility and indivisible security and that would be an instrument for multilateral, inclusive solutions to global problems — could not have imagined that the long journey of their ideals, from a de facto bipolar world, through a moment of unipolarity and towards a future multipolarity, would bring us today not just to a state of affairs where multilateralism's role in international affairs is minimal, but to the brink of a third world war.

The desire to maintain its hegemony, an unwillingness to recognize the legitimate interests and security concerns of its neighbours and other actors, the pursuit of unilateral advantages in access to resources and of the unfair advantage given by its dominant economic position have led the West and its elites, intoxicated by the euphoria of their unipolar moment, to an outcome that

they apparently never expected themselves. The West has been unable to spearhead multilateralism, as a true leader could have done. Instead, its elites have attempted to maximize their advantages to exploit others. The resistance to that has led to increased tensions across the world, growing conflict and a deterioration in the international security architecture, confidence-building measures and arms control. It has led to confrontation to a greater or lesser degree with part of the international community and even to war in Europe.

We are witnessing the Western elites, represented by NATO, consciously rejecting multilateralism in addressing crises and relying on confrontation with those whom they identify as competitors, adversaries and threats. And we are witnessing the West's rejection not just of multilateralism but of bilateral international collaboration, and instead a reliance on forcing others to cooperate on terms and rules that it imposes. Take for example the real war that Poland has just unleashed on its border with Belarus against migrants from countries of the South, with dozens killed and hundreds maimed by Polish security forces? And yet despite our persistent proposals, Warsaw has completely refused to cooperate with Minsk within the framework of legal assistance and border management mechanisms, while knowing full well that only joint efforts will make it possible to effectively fight the criminals who are exploiting unfortunate migrants on their way from their countries of origin to Western Europe, primarily Germany. Or take Lithuania's deliberate ban on the transit of Belarusian fertilizers through Lithuanian ports to African and Asian countries, or Vilnius's rejection of Minsk's willingness to arrange the transit of Ukrainian grain to those same countries. We should also mention the European Union countries' ban on flights to the Republic of Belarus. Surely all three are aimed not only at my country but against the interests of many other States and of ordinary people. And we can cite many more such examples.

We get the impression that while still globally involved in the international agenda, the countries of the West are increasingly creating limits for themselves and depriving themselves of instruments of influence. Is that not a rejection of multilateralism? A focus on unilateral actions and benefits based on dictating one's own rules is at the root of the problems of today's world. That trend, however, runs counter to what we are seeing in greater Eurasia, which is a unifying agenda in a number of formats, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of

Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other regional associations operating in the area. They are directed neither against the West nor anyone else, but as I have pointed out, it is the West itself that is unwilling to cooperate with them.

In recognition of that state of affairs, last year Belarus organized a high-level international conference in Minsk on Eurasian security and its reality and prospects in a transforming world. In addition to our peacemaking efforts to facilitate the fulfilment of the Minsk agreements, our unifying initiatives aimed at building a new security architecture in Europe named Helsinki 2, and the global theme of a security dialogue in the spirit of San Francisco, at the Minsk conference last year Belarus launched a discussion on building an equal and indivisible Eurasian security architecture. It is revealing that an overwhelming majority of the Western States invited ignored it. It seems that true multilateralism will be revived among the genuinely like-minded participants. During the conference, Belarus put forward an initiative to develop a European charter for diversity and multipolarity in the twenty-first century. We see it as a unifying document that will formulate the parameters and principles for the functioning of the security architecture in Eurasia, as well as a strategic vision of multipolarity and multilateralism for a revitalized system of international relations — perhaps not just for Eurasia but the whole world.

We believe those principles are clear and self-evident. Above all, they are based on reliance on international law, strict observance of the principle of indivisibility of security, respect for the diversity of the development paths of every State, the cooperation on an equal footing of all members of the international community, enhancement of the role of the United Nations, full use of regional associations, organizations and integration mechanisms, and of course a return to truly effective multilateral cooperation. There will be further discussions on the topic at the second Minsk conference on Eurasian security, to be held at the end of October and the beginning of November.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Jalichandra (Thailand): I would like to thank the Russian Federation for organizing today's meeting. Thailand welcomes this open debate because we are committed to multilateralism. I want to make four points.

First, the increasing number of conflicts worldwide requires a more inclusive, resilient and effective multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core. The lack of inclusive and transparent discussions often leads to differing perceptions and mistrust. Diplomacy and dialogue are key to avoiding further confrontations and escalations of violence. The convening power of the United Nations should be leveraged to bring all sides together to work on sustainable and peaceful solutions. The forthcoming Summit of the Future will be an opportunity for all States to redesign a United Nations that is capable of addressing current and future global challenges.

Secondly, in order to ensure that multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core, remains relevant, it will be important to reform the United Nations, particularly the Security Council. The Council should be reformed to reflect broader geographical representation, cross-regional balance and greater representation of developing countries. However, a more representative Council is not enough. How it makes its decisions is also important. Thailand shares the view of a majority of the States Members of the United Nations that the right to the veto is not a privilege but an international responsibility. At a very minimum, all members of the Security Council should agree to refrain from blocking any draft resolution intended to prevent or stop mass atrocities. At the same time, countries should work on improving the Council's working methods and increasing stakeholders' participation in Council meetings, which are low hanging fruit.

Thirdly, it is important for the United Nations to work in close partnership with international financial institutions, regional organizations and institutions and other key stakeholders. A deeper look into Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, on regional arrangements, could be beneficial. In order to achieve sustainable peace and stability in any conflict-affected area, close dialogue and engagement with the affected countries and region are crucial.

The role of women in peace and security should also be emphasized. It is important to promote women's leadership and their participation in decision-making processes. Member States should continue to work together to advance the women and peace and security agenda.

Fourth, peace and security cannot be considered in a silo. It is essential for the United Nations to take a holistic approach and strengthen the complementarities

between peace, sustainable development and human security. Peace and sustainable development are two sides of the same coin, with one reinforcing the other. To achieve this, all entities within the United Nations system should work together in sync. The work of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and all specialized agencies should be more closely coordinated.

In conclusion, multilateralism, with the United Nations as its core, remains a vital platform for diplomacy and the pursuit of friendly relations among States. But the United Nations can only be as effective as its members. We must therefore reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism and work together to make it strong because a more just, democratic and sustainable world order cannot be achieved without the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after three minutes.

I now give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Mr. Mart (Serbia): The world of today is faced with numerous and serious challenges that necessitate the close cooperation of all and call for responsibility in the quest for proper and applicable answers. Serbia considers that productive multilateralism is both necessary and achievable if we demonstrate readiness for common engagement in the spirit of cooperation, compromise and flexibility. My country's foreign-policy efforts at the global level and cooperation with our partners in Europe and in the region have been aimed at making a contribution, through a constructive approach, to the achievement of all our common goals.

The global situation is characterized by numerous and complex issues and multidimensional and interconnected crises and conflicts, the solution of which is possible only through common and sincere efforts within a multilateral framework. Serbia believes that multilateralism is the best approach in the current geopolitical situation since it implies equitable participation by States, respect for diversity and the harmonization of the interests of all, with the aim of finding long-term sustainable solutions.

In our current crisis of multilateralism, with conflicts in many parts of the world and global

challenges, we must ensure respect for international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations if we want to preserve the existing international order and the foundations of development of each and every society. My country calls for the intensification of efforts to overcome differences and solve global conflicts through dialogue and full respect for the United Nations Charter and international law.

We empathize deeply and grieve for lives lost in conflicts around the world, including the tragic events in the Middle East and in Ukraine. We are convinced that only constructive dialogue and diplomatic solutions can lead to peace. All conflicts must be resolved at the negotiation table, for which there is no viable alternative. The United Nations is based on common principles and norms that are — supposedly — the guidelines for the international community. If we step away from the guidelines, we are bound to end in the vicious circle of selective justice.

Serbia respects the territorial integrity of all States Members of the United Nations. Accordingly, we expect other Member States to respect the territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia, under resolution 1244 (1999). Serbia's actions to preserve its territorial integrity and sovereignty reflect its efforts to uphold the principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and, in the case of my country, legally binding resolution 1244 (1999), which guarantees my country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We are convinced that the digital space abounds in possibilities. We must therefore promote an open, free, global, stable and safe cyberspace in which human rights, freedoms and the rule of law are fully implemented. Our task is to make sure that everyone can enjoy the digital transformation and that accessible, sensible interlinkage and digital inclusion are achieved.

We believe that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals laid out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents a substantial component of global efforts in the domain of poverty and hunger eradication; increased employment, especially among young people; economic growth; greater inclusivity; improved education and health; climate change mitigation and the preservation of the planet for future generations, as well as the achievement of full gender equality and respect for human rights. We trust and believe that economic and social development, the key development goals of contemporary society, cannot be achieved if we fail to resolutely confront

the other challenges of today, the complexity of which exceeds the capacity of individual countries or regions to address them.

Serbia's independent foreign policy is guided primarily by the principle of preserving national and state interests while respecting the basic principles of international law. A consistent implementation of all of these principles, which we agreed upon a long time ago, is therefore a key guarantor of global peace and security.

We should therefore not abandon our efforts to promote the universality of the basic principles of the United Nations Charter even though we continue to suffer the consequences of their selective implementation. It is of paramount importance that the majority of Member States refuse to accept the implementation of double standards. In that context, we are very thankful to all those who support Serbia's efforts to maintain its own sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We agree that transparency and confidence-building strengthen safety and security, improve sustainability and contribute to better confidence and understanding among States and peoples. I want to believe that the upcoming Summit for the Future will open a new chapter in which we will renew mutual confidence and achieve greater understanding and solidarity, creating prospects for a safer and better future.

In conclusion, I want again to refer to Serbia's full commitment to the values of multilateralism set out in the Charter of the United Nations. It is important that we continue to work together to redefine and harmonize multilateralism with the contemporary multipolar world in order to respond in a proper way to current as well as to future crises and challenges.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I would like once again to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their statements to a close after three minutes.

I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the holding of this open debate of the Security Council under your presidency. This is a further opportunity for Member States to reaffirm their full and steadfast

commitment to promoting multilateralism for the sake of an equitable, just, democratic and prosperous world.

Order and justice are essential and two sides of the same coin. A global order without justice is impossible. But it is also true that that peace will never be fair or long-lasting without respect the Charter of the United Nations. The establishment of a new world order that reflects the aspirations of the of the peoples of the world requires good governance and working in tandem to ensure that our common efforts are in harmony with our international commitments. In that regard, it is crucial to ensure the fair representation of States' national and collective interests while promoting their participation in international decision-making, so that their disputes and differences can be resolved equitably in the framework of international law. No single model should be considered as the norm for all States to follow. Furthermore, a just international order requires genuine opportunities for socioeconomic development for Member States, without leaving anyone behind and as part of sustainable development for all.

The holding of the Summit of the Future in September will be a milestone for multilateralism. The implementation of the commitments emanating from the Summit should benefit from a renewed and revitalized multilateralism, based on the United system, that promotes international cooperation to confront the challenges we face, in particular climate, energy, food and security challenges, including terrorism and violent extremism.

The Kingdom of Morocco underscore the need to continue efforts to revitalize the General Assembly and reform the Security Council so that they can continue to be up to task of current global challenges. We have an opportunity before us to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the United Nations as a bastion of multilateralism, in particular via respect for the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, good-neighbourly relations, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

The Kingdom of Morocco advocates in favour of an effective, inclusive, preventive and cooperative multilateralism that strives towards robust solidarity and cooperation among States for the achievement of the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, development and human rights. In that connection, South-South cooperation, in particular among fraternal African countries, is a fundamental

pillar of the Kingdom of Morocco's foreign policy, in line with the guidance of His Majesty King Mohammed VI. The multilateralism to which we aspire is one of inter-religious, intercultural, inter-civilizational and intergenerational dialogue.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm that the Kingdom of Morocco will remain an active and responsible partner that respects the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and works towards the achievement of its goals.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I convey to you, Mr. President, greetings of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Mr. Badr Abdelatty, who was unable to participate in this meeting due to previous commitments. I also thank you for organizing this open debate to address an issue of paramount importance, especially as we approach the Summit of the Future in September, at whose core is the future of the United Nations and the multilateral international order.

Today we are going through a critical stage where we have to address the shortcomings that have marred the multilateral system on which our world is based. It is evident that the international system that was established in the wake of the Second World War is no longer able to respond to the needs and complexities of a world that is rapidly changing. That system is no longer fit for the present or for the future, which are moving steadily towards multipolarity, with the countries of the South playing an ever-more important role. The security and geopolitical challenges, the prevailing political polarization, along with economic challenges, climate change and other challenges, are all factors that should prompt us to work together more effectively towards establishing an international system more capable of responding to those challenges.

In that context, we pose certain questions and try to find answers that might help us to become more aware of the needs of the upcoming phase and the aspirations of the peoples of the world, who expect a lot from the Organization, especially the new generations that grew up in a very different world. I would like briefly to address two important aspects that are very important to consider closely if we are to find solutions to make the multilateral system more just, democratic and sustainable.

First, the developments we have seen in the Middle East over the past 10 months prove that our world today needs new arrangements for collective security that reflect international contemporary reality and make the international system more responsive to the current security and political challenges. Here in the Council, we speak a great deal about the Charter of the United Nations and the importance of promoting it and adhering to its purposes and principles. However, recent developments, especially the unjust Israeli aggression since 7 October 2023 against Palestinian civilians in Gaza, have unequivocally proven that many who speak about the Charter, the principles of international law, human rights and protecting civilians are clearly falling short, especially given that many have been applying double standards when it comes to addressing Israel's aggressive behaviour against the countries of the region. The developing crisis in Gaza and Israel's continued aggression while the international community stays shamefully silent threaten the multilateral system, which is based on international law, and threatens the United Nations as a whole due to practicing double standards.

The Security Council has failed to stop the continued killing of the Palestinian people in Gaza. That prompts us to reiterate our call for a reform of the Council and for making it more representative, more just and more democratic. Egypt has always called for enhancing African representation in the Council in line with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We have also called for granting Arab countries permanent representation in the Council commensurate with the multiple issues related to the region on its agenda. It is also important for the Council to hone and improve its working methods so as to be more transparent and ensure more participation with other Member States. It is important as well to promote dialogue with other groupings and regional organizations, especially as the role of such groupings and organizations is becoming increasingly important and they now express the voice of the countries of the South, such as the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa group.

Secondly, it is no use talking about a multilateral global system that is more just, democratic and sustainable without also talking about reforming the global financial system, which no longer fits our times. That issue is one of the most important challenges facing us today. We have to find effective solutions to it, without which we will not be able to achieve comprehensive economic development and will not be possible to bridge the vast gaps between the countries

of the North and the South. We will also not be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, whose importance we all agreed upon. The Summit of the Future in September will be an opportunity to take practical and effective measures in that regard, while affirming the role that the United Nations must play in order to reform the world financial system, including international financial institutions and the International Monetary Fund. It is also important to enhance cooperation on taxation and debt restructuring.

In conclusion, if we do not seize this opportunity to bring about a comprehensive and radical change in the multilateral system, and notably in the United Nations which forms its core, we will have to face a new reality in which the Organization loses its credibility and relevance to the peoples of the world and in which our countries lose one of their most important tools for maintaining international peace and security. In such a scenario, it would be difficult to imagine any promising future for multilateral international action.

Once again, I would like to thank the Russian Federation for convening this important meeting. We hope our discussion today will lead to a significant outcome.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Nasir (Indonesia): We thank the Russian Federation for convening this timely open debate on a very important issue.

Our multilateral system is being debilitated from the inside. The basic principle of the system is being put aside. International agreements, rules and laws are regularly being broken. Dialogue is being replaced with a take-it-or-leave-it approach. Solidarity is being replaced with the mighty-takes-all approach. Consensus has become rarer than the Tanzanite gemstone. Double standards have often become the order of the day.

That trend is disheartening and dangerous. We are failing the people we serve on upholding peace and security, saving lives in conflict situations, protecting human rights, ensuring development, protecting the environment for our children and our children's children. If we remain indifferent, we will be accomplices to the fall of multilateralism, and if multilateralism fails, a more peaceful, prosperous and just world will be a distant dream.

In that context, I would like to convey two points.

First, it is time to recommit to the principles of multilateralism. The principles of inclusivity, equality, solidarity, partnership and trust-building must always guide us, with the Charter of the United Nations and international law as our beacon of light. We must avoid any abuse of power from the mighty, as it will create distrust and sharpen fragmentations.

Secondly, we must seize the momentum to reform our multilateral system to be more fit for purpose. We must stop the Security Council from being paralysed in addressing humanitarian catastrophe in many conflict situations. The Council's decision-making process must be brought back from the stone age. We need to expedite reform of the Council to be more effective, efficient, democratic, transparent and accountable. A Security Council that is well adapted to new global realities is the very tenet of a strong multilateral system.

We must therefore use all avenues to reform the Council, including the Summit of the Future. If we want to prevent our future generations from the scourge of war, we must unite our strength and let multilateralism prevail.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Ms. Del Águila Castillo (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Republic of Guatemala, as a founding member of this Organization, firmly believes in multilateralism and reaffirms that the United Nations is the forum and central axis for addressing issues related to international cooperation, sustainable development, peace, security, human rights and the rule of law. That is why, among the principles of my country's foreign policy is the search for peaceful settlements to disputes based on dialogue, cooperation and diplomacy. The collective security of humankind cannot and must not depend on deterrence through the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or any other type of weapons that threaten future generations.

Guatemala reiterates its firm determination to confront the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons to humankind, as well as to international law and international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations and to maintain its commitment to their prohibition and complete elimination. Nuclear disarmament is an issue that we must all treat with vital importance for the security of our hemisphere and the world and for the survival of humankind.

A more just world order means ensuring that all people, especially the most vulnerable, have equal access to basic rights such as education, health care and security. That requires the removal of all structural barriers that promote inequality. Multilateral cooperation can and must contribute to establishing international norms that promote equity and social justice in all nations. It is essential to work on strengthening multilateralism, so that the United Nations is able to respond to the new challenges that threaten international peace and security, within a framework of action based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Greater coherence is needed in the implementation of the three pillars of our Organization, while recognizing that they are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. In that regard, we reiterate our support for the New Agenda for Peace.

We have a collective responsibility to strengthen respect for international law, which is essential to maintaining a just global order. We reaffirm the critical importance of compliance with the norms of international humanitarian law as a means of preventing and mitigating the human cost of international and domestic armed conflicts, without neglecting the responsibility to protect. It is unacceptable that health-care and educational facilities are military targets. Such attacks must be condemned in the strongest terms.

Guatemala will continue to advocate preventive diplomacy and mediation as means to avoid conflict escalation. As reaffirmed in the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, all States have an obligation to settle their international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, arbitration and judicial settlement.

The Security Council can and should benefit from greater interaction with Member States and other United Nations bodies, including with the Human Rights Council. Furthermore, we maintain our strong support for the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and its integrated approach. From Guatemala's perspective, it is necessary for the Security Council to take into account the different strategic tools that can be used at the operational level in order to include the peacebuilding component in the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, we urge all Member States to strengthen their commitment to the Charter of the United Nations by upholding its principles, such as refraining from the threat or use of force, respecting

territorial integrity, international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nicaragua.

Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We congratulate the Russian Federation and its Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on its successful presidency of the Security Council in July.

Nicaragua associates itself with the statement to delivered by the representative of Uganda on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

Nicaragua reaffirms that peace and multilateralism are fundamental principles for our peoples in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which is reflected in all our international relations and in our commitment to multilateralism. For a just and genuine peace and security, it is time to ensure the rights of peoples are reflected in a United Nations Organization that represents us all.

It is our view that in the face of the increasing interventionist actions of Western countries, which endanger international peace and security, a new world order is becoming more necessary than ever to ensure international peace and security in a new multipolar and polycentric world. We reiterate that the new order must abide by the principles and purposes of the Charter, respecting the sovereignty and independence of States, the self-determination of peoples and non-interference in States' internal affairs. Those principles are vital

to achieving the national and international peace and stability that we all long for. Inhumane and illegal unilateral coercive measures must be lifted immediately in order to ensure the stability, peace and development of families, peoples and nations. Such measures constitute acts of aggression and a major obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the eradication of poverty.

A new world order is born and empires grow weaker, and what begins to emerge are alternatives and new mechanisms for integration and solidarity among peoples, along with initiatives and actions such as those undertaken by the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the peoples represented in the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa group, the peoples of Africa and the Arab peoples. In spite of its multiple crises, this age is bringing forth a multipolar world characterized by solidarity and the struggle of all our peoples against old and new forms of imperialist, colonial and neocolonial domination. Nicaragua will continue to support the peoples of the global South in those aspirations to build a multipolar world, advocating for a stronger global solidarity that will help us to hasten the establishment of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order. We once again thank the Russian Federation for its leadership and for its contributions to creating that new multipolar world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on the list for this meeting. Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.