



General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

82nd plenary meeting
Thursday, 23 May 2024, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Francis (Trinidad and Tobago)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 138 (continued)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/78/707/Add.4)

The President: Before proceeding to the item on our agenda, I would like to inform members that since the issuance of document A/78/707/Add.3, Ecuador has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter. That information is reflected in document A/78/707/Add.4.

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in that document?

It was so decided.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The President: Before proceeding further, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of His Excellency Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who passed away on 19 May 2024.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of

the Islamic Republic of Iran and to the bereaved family of His Excellency Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: A formal tribute in the General Assembly will be convened on 30 May, as announced in my letter dated 22 May 2024.

Agenda item 14 (continued)

Culture of peace

Draft resolution (A/78/L.67/Rev.1)

The President: The General Assembly will proceed to take action on a draft resolution issued as document A/78/L.67/Rev.1. As always, I intend to conduct the proceedings of this meeting in strict compliance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

I now give the floor to the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1.

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): The United Nations was founded on the ashes of the Second World War, a war unleashed by Nazi Germany that left more than 60 million people dead. One of our common goals in the Organization is to build a multilateral system that prevents such crimes from happening again. On many occasions we have gathered in this Hall to commemorate events that have left deep marks on our collective

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



conscience. Those failures must never be repeated. As Spanish-American philosopher George Santayana put it, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

It is my privilege to present draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”, on behalf of the co-facilitators, Germany and Rwanda, as well as the cross-regional core group of 17 Member States.

Almost 30 years ago, at least 8,372 Bosnian Muslims were systematically executed in the town of Srebrenica. Executions began on 11 July 1995 and lasted several days. The prior designation of Srebrenica as a safe area through Security Council resolution 819 (1993) could not prevent that crime from happening. Perpetrated amid the Bosnian war, that act of genocide led to the tragic death of the victims and to unimaginable suffering for the survivors and their families.

Our initiative is about honouring the memory of the victims and supporting the survivors, who continue to live with the scars of that fateful time. Alongside the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda of 1994, the Srebrenica genocide has been recognized as such by international courts. The 1994 genocide against the Tutsi is commemorated annually in keeping with resolution 58/234.

By designating 11 July as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, we are committed to closing that gap in the institutionalized memory of the Organization.

The draft resolution is closely modelled on the resolution on the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. It creates an outreach programme in order to facilitate annual remembrance within the United Nations, and it invites all to join in this remembrance and reflection.

The draft also underscores the role of international courts in fighting impunity and ensuring accountability for genocide. It contains language against genocide denial and the glorification of perpetrators, urging Member States to preserve established facts, including through education.

Let me be frank: false allegations about this draft resolution have been made. I therefore want to provide some clarification. This draft resolution is not directed against anybody, not against Serbia, a valued member

of the Organization; if at all, it is directed against the perpetrators of a genocide. I therefore invite everybody to judge the text on its merits and to support our call to commemorate and reflect on what happened in Srebrenica almost 30 years ago.

The draft resolution enjoys strong support from a diverse group of Member States, including States from the Western Balkans region and co-sponsors from all parts of the world. In recognition of the importance of regional ownership and participation, the core group decided to include proposed amendments to the text even after the draft resolution had already been submitted. Montenegro’s suggestion clarifies that criminal accountability under international law for the crime of genocide is individualized and cannot be attributed to any ethnic, religious or other group or community as a whole. We are confident that this helps to prevent misinterpretation and appreciate the constructive engagement of Montenegro.

The draft resolution seeks to foster reconciliation in the present and for the future. We welcome the strong regional support, including from youth organizations in Serbia, for the draft. All ethnic groups involved in the wars in the former Yugoslavia have suffered terrible losses. We mourn all victims equally. In saying all, I include every ethnic group that has suffered tragic losses.

It is a major achievement of the international community in recent decades that perpetrators of crimes such as genocide can be held accountable. We hope that the Organization will unite in acknowledging a genocide recognized by its own judicial institutions.

As Emir Suljagić, a survivor of the Srebrenica genocide and Director of the Srebrenica Genocide Memorial, put it, “To remember is to affirm our humanity and to affirm our freedom”.

What message would be sent to future generations if we, the General Assembly, chose not to commemorate the victims, not to reflect on the historical context and judicial processes of the crimes committed in Srebrenica? I call on all Member States to lend their valued support to this draft resolution and to vote in favour should it be put to the vote.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): The present oral statement is made in the context of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. It has also been distributed to Member States.

Under the terms of operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to establish an outreach programme entitled “The Srebrenica Genocide and the United Nations”, starting its activities with preparations for the thirtieth anniversary, in 2025, and further request the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and civil-society organizations for appropriate observance.

The requests referred to in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution would entail new activities in 2025 and annually thereafter related to the outreach programme, including the commemoration of the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica and other outreach activities. Adoption of the draft resolution would give rise to budgetary implications in the range of \$350,000 to \$600,000 per year, for additional post and non-post resources, starting from 2025. Detailed cost estimates would be developed following further internal consultation within the Secretariat.

Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, a revised estimates report would be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee, during the main part of its seventy-ninth session detailing the requirements for which an additional appropriation would be requested for 2025. Requirements for 2026 and thereafter would be presented in the proposed programme budgets for consideration by the General Assembly in the applicable years.

I should also like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/78/L.67/Rev.1, the following countries have also become co-sponsors of A/78/L.67/Rev.1: Andorra, Latvia and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The Secretariat has also been informed that Vanuatu has withdrawn its co-sponsorship of the draft resolution.

The President: Before giving the floor for explanations of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

President Vučić: Speaking after Germany and speaking against draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1 is not easy, for several reasons. No matter what one does, one will be accused by the big, powerful ones, those that are dominant here and in the media, of denying the serious crimes that really happened in Srebrenica. In a situation where all moral justice is in their hands, they will accuse those who dare to raise their voice against it of underestimating and minimizing it.

At the beginning of my speech, I would like to unmask that untruth and false justification for adopting such a draft resolution. Once again, before this meeting started, I bowed my head to all the victims of the conflicts in Bosnia and to all Serbian and Bosniak victims, and I underlined that I had already bowed my head and laid a flower at the Srebrenica memorial for all Bosniaks who were killed. It is difficult to speak after Germany, which stands for the most powerful country in Europe and which believes that it is unmistakably entitled to give moral lessons to all those who disagree with it. That is why I am calling on everyone in this Hall to vote against the draft resolution.

This is a highly politicized draft resolution. I will ask three questions to which we did not hear a proper response from its main author, Germany. Why is this draft resolution being adopted?

First, they spoke about individual legal liability, mentioning the Montenegrin amendments. I am asking, if that is so, why is this draft resolution being adopted? Because speaking about individual legal liability has already been done, justice has already been delivered, through indictments and verdicts. All those who were indicted have already been convicted and sentenced to prison.

There are no individual names in this draft resolution. There is nothing specific about it. It is all about everything in general. Why in general if we have already adopted resolution 69/323, in 2015, on genocide throughout the world? Why only this case, why only this example?

Second question: they were speaking about reconciliation. Is this draft resolution bringing any reconciliation to the country that it is referring to,

Bosnia and Herzegovina? No, not at all. Is it bringing reconciliation to the region? No, not at all. I am asking the Permanent Representative of Germany here why they were hiding all the preparations for this draft, why there was a lack of inclusiveness on this draft resolution. When resolution 58/234 was prepared for Rwanda, it was done in a very transparent way and had the support of the African Union and every single country.

Is the Assembly aware of what really happened on 25 March in the Security Council (see S/PV.9587), when we wanted to discuss why they bombed Serbia in 1999? They said to us, do not look at the past, look at the future, it happened 25 years ago. Two days after that, we found out that they were preparing this same kind of draft resolution but relating to events that had taken place four years before that — 29 years ago. When they have political needs, they can go deep into the past. When someone else is referring to the past, facts do not matter.

Who needs this? And why at this particular moment? Why did those people not speak about the genocides that their countries had committed? They started speaking about the Holocaust, but that is the only genocide that was recognized by the United Nations, one that the country that was an author of this draft resolution gets recognized here. I just wish that all the other genocides had, in accordance with resolution 69/323, adopted in 2015, been recognized here, including the genocide against the Serbian people during the First World War. Most probably none present here have ever heard of the fact that Serbia lost the most people of any country in the world in terms of the number of victims proportionate to its size and its numbers, with 28 per cent of its overall population dead; second was France with 10.5 per cent, according to Paris Peace Conference data.

During the Second World War, we were among the very rare people in South-East Europe to be anti-Nazi-oriented, and we paid the highest price. In South-East Europe, more than 1 million Serbs were killed by either German Nazis or Croatian Nazis. Why did they not start with a draft resolution on that issue? Because they needed this draft resolution at this particular moment. I am not going to speak about Gaza and all the other issues today, but no one should underestimate the people here in this Hall, because everybody will understand everything.

There are other questions as well. The German representative just said that “we mourn all victims equally” and that they regret the victims on all sides. Why did they not put that into the draft resolution? There is no such sentence in the draft. Why is that? Because they did not mean that, and because they did not want to discuss it with anyone else. Is this draft resolution going to unify anyone in Bosnia? Is it going to create divisions in the region? Yes, divisions will become deeper and deeper. Will this draft secure peace, tranquillity and stability in future? I have a lot of doubts about that. We will have to work on this; we will have to work very hard to maintain peace and stability. We will do so.

I know what the final result of today’s work will be. But I am asking the powerful, the big and, one might say, the arrogant. I am waiting for their response. Why did they need to bring such great pressure to bear on States Members of the United Nations in the past seven days against one small country, Serbia? Why did they threaten those Member States that did not want to vote in favour of the draft, saying that if they did not vote that way, they would not receive support and assistance on economic and all other issues?

Are those European values or democratic values? Or perhaps they thought that I was not going to be able to speak up about it. I have dozens of examples to that effect. Still, as all can see, there is one small country from the Balkans that is not afraid to say loudly that it will vote against the draft resolution because it will end by opening Pandora’s box. My colleagues will face dozens of such draft resolutions on the issue of genocide. My question would be, how are they going to explain that the terrible killings, terrible massacres, terrible crimes, the killing of 8,000 people, is worse than killing, let us say, 20 million people during in the Second World War, or killing tens of thousands of Serbians during the Second World War, including children from elementary and secondary schools in Kragujevac?

I wanted to raise one more issue. Why were those amendments adopted? Just to try to cover up the real truth behind this draft resolution — to say that it is not against peoples, not against nations — but we have already had all convictions, all verdicts, everything is finished. Now wounds are being reopened. Why? Because someone needed it politically. No other reason at all. Once again, I myself went to Srebrenica to bow my head and to lay a flower, and I was almost lynched. Even the day after, I extended my hand to those who had

organized that. This is not about reconciliation. This is not about memories. This is something that will just open old wounds and create complete political havoc, not only in our region but even here, in this Hall.

Finally, I wanted to give a gift to you, Mr. President. I know that I cannot hoist my flag, the flag of the brave, and I know that I cannot wave it. I will bring it to you because we belong to a proud nation that has always been able to defend itself. That is what we are doing today, but today we are not defending ourselves; we are defending the world and the principles of international public law.

I call upon Member States to vote against this draft resolution.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Since its independence, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been painstakingly exploring the path to peace and development. It is in the common interest of the countries in the region and the international community for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as an important country in the Balkan region, to realize the harmonious coexistence of all ethnic groups and for the country to maintain peace, stability and development.

The conflict that took place in the region of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s is a dark chapter in history. Innocent civilians of all ethnic groups were killed, and the Srebrenica tragedy is deeply deplorable.

China has always advocated that we should not forget history but learn from it in order to prevent the reoccurrence of tragedies, and it hopes that all ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina will demonstrate tolerance and reconciliation, move forward in unity and solidarity and work together to maintain peace and stability in the country so as to promote economic and social development.

As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, China looks forward to all ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the international community, committing themselves to jointly safeguarding the institutional framework established by the Dayton Peace Agreement, seeking consensus on major policy issues related to national development and stability, and making greater progress on the path to consolidating national reconciliation and advancing nation-building.

China notes that draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, to be put to the vote by the General Assembly, has sparked great controversy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The affected countries of the region and the Member States concerned have also expressed their strong views in that regard. China has repeatedly called for full communication with the key parties and Member States on the draft resolution, with a view to advancing the relevant process on the basis of consensus.

A hasty vote on the draft resolution, which is still marked by major differences, would not be in line with the spirit of reconciliation or harmony within Bosnia and Herzegovina and among the countries of the region, the desire to maintain peace and stability in the Western Balkans and in Europe as a whole, or the original purpose of the establishment of the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime: to demonstrate the solidarity of Member States.

For that reason, China will have no alternative but to vote against the draft resolution. China has always respected the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the independent choice of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the future of their country.

China will continue to work towards the development of friendly relations with all ethnic groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina and play a constructive role in maintaining peace and stability in the country as well as tranquillity in the region.

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): I wish to deliver this explanation of vote before the voting to clarify Namibia's position on draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, to be considered by the General Assembly today.

Namibia has taken into account several political and legal considerations which have informed our decision. Namibia acknowledges the extensive work done to foster peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, underpinned by the Dayton Peace agreement. We further recognize and acknowledge how important it is to build on that process to foster reconciliation in a manner that ensures that the divisions of the past do not remain or are exacerbated.

The proposal to commemorate an International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica is taking place against the backdrop of a consultative process with a number of complexities, some of which we as outsiders may not be fully aware of. Namibia has taken note of the concerns raised by the parties to the tripartite agreement that

feel that their views were not taken on board. It is not the intention of Namibia to interfere in the internal matters of those parties, but there is a strongly held belief in Namibia that inclusivity spells harmony while exclusivity spells conflict.

Genocide is a crime against humanity, and its significance in the world in both history and present times warrants our interest and warrants global interest. The gravity of its impact on affected communities, nations and humankind as a whole is reason enough for us to continue commemorating an international day on genocide, as already agreed to by the Assembly in 2015 (resolution 69/323), marking 9 December as the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime.

There can be no denying that genocide is a blight on our collective conscience. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that it is permanently ended.

We are, however, living in a world where selective amnesia is fast becoming the norm, a world where genocide is only that which we individually decide is genocide, notwithstanding what our own international statutes say is genocide. What our designated foes do is genocide; but when we or our allies do the same, it is not genocide.

What happened in Srebrenica was genocide. What happened in Rwanda was genocide. What happened in Germany with the Holocaust was genocide. What is happening in Gaza today is genocide. What happened in my own country, Namibia, between 1904 and 1908, was genocide and is recognized as the first genocide of the twentieth century.

Many genocides are going on today around the world. They are crimes of the worst kind against humanity, and I repeat: they are a blight on our collective conscience.

Namibia will abstain in the voting on this draft resolution because we want to discuss genocide comprehensively and honestly. We must, as an international community, commit fully to the cause of ending genocide without exception.

Taking the aforementioned into account, in tandem with our domestic considerations on how the international system can address historical events relating to genocide, it is our view that more can be done to fight impunity and ensure accountability for

genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes through the international criminal justice system.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): We have closely followed the deliberations on draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”, and have taken careful note of the submissions by all interested parties.

Azerbaijan enjoys a strategic partnership with the Balkan countries based on close historical ties, mutual respect and shared interests, and attaches importance to the development of relations and cooperation with them and is genuinely interested in peace, security and stability in the region.

Azerbaijan knows well how painful the wounds of war are and how important accountability and reconciliation are to ensuring justice and building trust and peace.

Azerbaijan reaffirms its unwavering support for the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Balkan countries and strongly opposes any attempt at interference in the internal affairs of States.

We believe that ensuring accountability and the provision of justice and truth, as well as the commemoration of victims of past crimes, require careful planning and preparation, and that actions by the United Nations in that regard should enjoy the widest possible support and be adopted by consensus in order to better serve to promote reconciliation and mutual understanding among peoples and within societies.

Given the aforementioned considerations, Azerbaijan will be unable to vote should the draft resolution be put to the vote.

Mr. Soberón Guzmán (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolutions that are submitted for consideration and adoption by the General Assembly should genuinely and effectively contribute to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Respect for the Charter, international law and the constitutional order that is chosen by Member States in sovereign fashion will always be a touchstone for our delegation's actions.

Preventing the international community from remaining passive vis-à-vis genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, without any politicization or manipulation, is a goal to which

Cuba is firmly committed. The Dayton Accords made it possible to put an end to the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which killed more than 100,000 people from different ethnic groups, nationalities and religions, and laid the foundation for a multi-ethnic State in which Bosnians, Croats and Serbs could live in harmony with one another.

It is the responsibility of the Assembly and of the international community to contribute in every way possible to promoting peaceful multi-ethnic coexistence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is therefore vital to consolidate peace and stability in that country and in the region of the Balkans.

Cuba supports constructive dialogue and cooperation among parties, which contributes to the promotion of trust and genuine reconciliation. We do not support initiatives that could lead to an escalation of tensions or ethnic divisions.

Geopolitical ambitions should not jeopardize regional security and stability. Cuba rejects the fact that the proposed text (A/78/L.67/Rev.1) invokes doctrines such as the responsibility to protect, which lack consensus in the General Assembly and which have been manipulated in the past for political reasons, jeopardizing the sovereignty of States and undermining the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

We will continue to promote observance of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the victims of which, as agreed by the Assembly in resolution 69/323, are remembered internationally every 9 December. We will always advocate for constructive dialogue, cooperation, mutual understanding and peace.

Mr. Reyes Hernández (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): If I may, I should like to begin this statement by expressing the most categorical rejection by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of atrocity crimes, regardless of where, when or by whom committed.

As a State party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Rome Statute, we energetically oppose impunity with regard to genocide and advocate in favour of initiatives that serve to sanction it as well as national reconciliation, confidence-building and the restoration or maintenance of peace, as necessary.

This is not the first time that we have before us the difficult task of considering a draft resolution on this important issue. Almost 10 years ago, in 2015, a similar initiative was put to the Security Council. At that time, our country was a member of the Council. At that time, Venezuela abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2015/508 (see S/PV.7481) and argued the following.

The proposed draft resolution did not enjoy consensus among the very peoples and authorities of the region, who are essentially those responsible for directly promoting, with the support of the international community, the process of peacebuilding and fostering political stability in that region. We also pointed out at the time that the draft resolution, rather than contributing to reconciliation, would actually deepen the divisions between the Bosnian, Serb and Croatian peoples living in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which must build a common future based on peace, solidarity, dialogue and respect for diversity.

The considerations that we expressed in 2015 remain fully valid today. The victims of Srebrenica deserve a commemoration based on consensus, accepted by the parties involved and welcomed by the international community as a whole.

Venezuela advocates for reconciliation and peace in the Balkan region. The function of the United Nations is to promote understanding among peoples, and in that regard we urge that the work begun at Dayton continue through the implementation of the General Framework Agreement, which was the result of a political consensus among the parties involved.

Finally, we respectfully call for all those considerations to be kept in mind when the time comes to take a decision on draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, which is before the Assembly today.

Ms. Pichardo Urbina (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”.

Nicaragua has always condemned genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Here in the General Assembly, it is increasingly obvious that there is no limit to the use of double standards by the Western world. Our General Assembly continues to

be the victim of manipulation and instrumentalization with the goal of advancing the political agendas and specific interests of the Western countries.

Nicaragua believes that promoting and imposing unilateral actions or initiatives on specific peoples, as does this draft resolution, which does not enjoy national consensus in Bosnia and Herzegovina, does not support the reconciliation process in that country, nor does it contribute to a climate of unity in the general region, since it does not represent all the views of the inhabitants of that country.

NATO's historical responsibility and participation in those tragic events cannot be ignored. Twenty-five years ago, NATO bombed Yugoslavia indiscriminately, leaving thousands of people dead or wounded — a weapon of the West to invade and destroy sovereign nations in other parts of the world, leaving death and destruction in its wake in all countries that fall victim to NATO's military machine.

And neither can Europe ignore or try to erase from history the greatest genocide committed against our indigenous peoples in today's America and against our brothers in Africa in the process of conquering, colonizing and enslaving our ancestors. Our ancestors were visible to the Western world as it invaded, colonized and destroyed our culture and the worldview of our indigenous people, thereby committing one of the greatest genocides in the history of humankind, destroying millions of human lives and extracting valuable minerals and resources that served to enrich the Western Powers.

Genocide is being perpetrated against the Palestinian people before the eyes of the world. The very European countries that are promoting the draft resolution are denying an attempt to eradicate our Palestinian brothers and sisters even as they continue to supply the weapons, financing and resources that make it possible to continue to commit those crimes.

Given those initiatives, a multipolar and polycentric world is more necessary and urgent than ever in order to ensure just and genuine peace and security. It is time to reconnect the rights of peoples with a United Nations that represents everyone.

Nicaragua advocates for a world of genuine and true dialogue and peace, justice and solidarity, and brotherhood and goodwill, enabling us to meet one another with all our differences and enrich our agreements.

Finally, given the double standards of the West, a question must be asked. Would the Western countries support and co-sponsor a draft resolution on a genocide committed by the colonizing Powers in our America? For all of those reasons, Nicaragua will vote against the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Germany because not only does it not contribute to peace and reconciliation in the region but will exacerbate the situation.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt had hoped for the adoption of draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1 by consensus in the same spirit that inspired previous resolutions commemorating genocide, which reflect constructive cooperation and mutual respect among nations and aim to preserve the collective memory and promote the culture of peace and reconciliation. Cooperation and consensus are the essence of multilateral action and must remain the key pillar in the adoption of such resolutions, which relate to our human values and universal principles.

Egypt's delegation objects to the course of action that was taken in putting forward the draft resolution and to the rushed negotiating process thereon. That casts doubt on the true intentions behind it at this critical time. The absence of a positive environment for discussing such issues increases the risk of reviving old conflicts and disputes. It also portends a negative impact on political stability in the Balkan region. Our efforts should have been geared towards promoting a dialogue dominated by justice and transparency in order to preserve the collective interest and strengthen constructive cooperation among countries.

Egypt is displeased because certain countries, including sponsors of the draft resolution, used the draft as a pretext to politically target specific countries. While they pay lip service to international law and human rights concepts in relation to the situation in the Balkans, they remain silent in the face of and, even worse, at times support flagrant violations of human rights, international law and international humanitarian law in certain ongoing conflicts in other parts of the world.

Egypt reiterates its commitment to promoting political and diplomatic dialogue as the key dispute-resolution mechanism in the Balkans. We firmly believe that solutions cannot be imposed from the outside through biased resolutions or unilateral dictates. Understanding the historical and political

challenges specific to that region requires ongoing efforts and a constructive dialogue that would enable the peoples and the countries of the Balkan region to reach an agreement of their own free will, one that enjoys the acceptance and support of all concerned parties. That is the optimal means to move forward towards a bright future for the benefit of all the peoples of the Balkans.

In conclusion, Egypt intends to vote in favour of the draft resolution commemorating the Srebrenica genocide, free of any political tensions. Our vote is in line with our steadfast and established position reflecting our commitment to international law and to the Charter of the United Nations. It also reflects our commitment to deep-rooted human and moral values and is in line with the principles and decisions adopted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. That will underline our solidarity and commitment to promoting international awareness of crimes against humanity and addressing threats to international peace and security.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): The United Arab Emirates is delivering this statement in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”.

In 2012, the remains of a baby girl were identified in Potočari. She had been murdered in the Srebrenica genocide, in July 1995. Her mother, a survivor, gave her a name so that when she was buried next to her father, two uncles and grandfather, her tombstone would not be empty. Fatima Muhić was the youngest of the more than 8,000 Bosniak Muslims who were murdered during those dark days. She was just two days old.

What took place in Srebrenica was a genocide. That is a settled fact acknowledged by the highest international courts. Among the wars in the Balkans, the Srebrenica genocide has been well documented and serves as a reminder of horrors that no community should have to endure.

In word and deed, the United Arab Emirates has consistently stood in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who faced unimaginable horrors in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We were among the first to respond with humanitarian assistance. Our troops served in the Balkans, and since then we have supported all our partners on the path to recovery and reconciliation.

Of course, we strongly endorse the content of this draft resolution. The victims and how and why they were murdered must never be forgotten. Their families deserve the utmost respect and closure on this matter.

The creation of educational initiatives, the condemnation of the glorification of war crimes and their perpetrators, the identification and dignified burial of remaining victims of the genocide and the prosecution of those perpetrators who have yet to face justice are efforts all worthy of our full support. We strongly condemn any and all attempts to deny or minimize the genocide in Srebrenica.

With that in mind, we underscore our severe misgivings about the timing and process of the draft resolution. We are deeply troubled at the fact that discussions surrounding the draft have, regrettably, demonstrated significant politicization.

Unfortunately, the peace in the Balkans is fragile. Efforts to resolve long-standing disputes have stalled, and in some cases significant gains have been reversed. Actors in the region have failed to carry out their commitments, and, as a result, inter-ethnic tensions are on the rise. It is crucial that we all remain focused on promoting the unity and reconciliation that the region so desperately needs. The memory of Srebrenica must not be exploited for political gain or become a cause of deepening divides.

Diplomacy should have been given more time. The gravity of the crimes involved demand that we do not allow the urgency of politics to overshadow the importance of unity in our pursuit of justice and remembrance. That is the reason that the United Arab Emirates intends to abstain on the draft resolution. Our vote should be understood only in the context of the destabilizing impact that adopting the text could have in the Balkans.

Our abstention is intended to underscore the need to lower regional tensions and encourage de-escalation. Long-festered, historic wounds cannot be healed without genuine efforts towards reconciliation. We believe that fostering lasting peace and stability requires thoughtful and inclusive dialogue, especially to prevent the recurrence of similar crimes.

We also take this opportunity to strongly urge all the region’s political and community leaders to consider the risks to peace and stability and to avoid incitement. They must recommit to de-escalation following action

on today's draft resolution. We encourage all parties to live up to their responsibility to preserve and build on the hard-won gains in the Balkans.

Today's vote, and the lead-up to it, must be a reminder of the urgent need to promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence and to prevent the resurgence of hatred and intolerance.

Mr. Luemba (Angola): The Republic of Angola condemns all crimes against humanity and other violations of international law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed by whomever and wherever. Angola acknowledged that the event that took place in Srebrenica on 11 July 1995 was extremely grave and amounted to the crime of genocide, as recognized by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice.

However, Angola firmly believes that peace, reconciliation and unity must be protected at all costs once it is achieved. After 30 years, we cannot ignore the continuing improvements in the level of reconciliation and cooperation among the three different communities that form Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that, together, are building a society willing to forgive and move forward to build a brighter future for their populations. We believe that the reconciliation process in the Balkan region is still very fragile, and we feel that this initiative may harm the region and is likely to exacerbate regional tensions and undermine the country's delicate process of national unity and reconciliation.

We also have some concerns about the process, including transparency and inclusivity. We would have preferred a resolution that took stock of the positive developments and brought to the table aspects that address genuine reconciliation, deal with the past as lessons to be learned and seek a future-oriented approach by encouraging, facilitating and accelerating the process of reconciliation and cooperation, promoting stability and sustainable development in the region. For those reasons, Angola will abstain in today's voting process.

Mr. Mukongo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to explain my delegation's upcoming vote on the draft resolution concerning the establishment of the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Srebrenica Genocide (A/78/L.67/Rev.1).

My delegation fully understands the rationale of any move to politically recognize the existence of genocide wherever atrocities have been committed with the intent of destroying, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. But it stresses the highly consensual nature of such a step.

In the present case, as we all know, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a sensitive post-conflict zone, where ethnic tensions and internal political problems persist. That highly sensitive issue should prompt us to exercise greater caution.

It is clear that the draft resolution has not met with consensus among the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has come to our attention that no discussions or agreements of any kind took place prior to the submission of this draft text. Such a decision deeply divides the country's ethnic communities. As it stands, the draft resolution is seen as a provocative act by representatives of one community against another.

It also highlights the lack of consultation at the regional level, which calls into question reconciliation among the peoples of the region and threatens its stability. This draft resolution will be counterproductive and will not strengthen peace or heal the wounds of the past. On the contrary, it will only deepen the divisions among those nations and generate new waves of tension in the Western Balkans. We, the General Assembly of the United Nations, should avoid that.

On another note, the recognition of genocide must be based on objective criteria, avoiding selectivity, politicization and double standards, for we cannot recognize the genocide of some and deny that of others.

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to remind this Assembly of the atrocities taking place in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The statistics are sickening. The Secretary-General's recent report of 14 May, on the protection of civilians (S/2024/385), states that in 2023 alone, 219,000 Congolese civilians were wiped out — take note, 219,000.

What is more, as we meet, Rwanda is preparing an insidious genocide of the Hutus in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. As proof of that, Rwandan leaders recently stated in a foreign media interview that the Rwandan army would not leave the Democratic Republic of the Congo until the Congolese Tutsis are given back their territories and their rights

are guaranteed. Those extremely dangerous statements bear out the recent attacks by the Rwandan army, the Rwanda Defence Force, on the Mugunga internally displaced persons camp in North Kivu, which resulted in the merciless slaughter of innocent civilians, mostly women and children.

This Assembly cannot be unaware that a veritable, unspoken human and economic genocide is taking place in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, with more than 11 million dead and 7.2 million internally displaced. Those repeated aggressions against the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been ongoing for almost 30 years.

My delegation is astonished to note that some perpetrators of those systematic atrocities in the east of my country — people whose hands are stained with the blood of the Congolese whom they slaughter on a daily basis — are among the sponsors of this draft resolution, as if they felt compassion only for the people of Srebrenica. That is scandalous and disturbing. We hope that this General Assembly will soon consider adopting a just position and taking appropriate and coherent action given the ongoing tragedy in the east of my country. The Democratic Republic of the Congo will therefore vote against this draft resolution.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritania, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, Myanmar, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania,

Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Antigua and Barbuda, Belarus, China, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Eritrea, Eswatini, Grenada, Hungary, Mali, Nauru, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Syrian Arab Republic

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam

Draft resolution A/78/L.67/Rev.1 was adopted by 84 votes to 19, with 68 abstentions (resolution 78/282).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Marshall Islands informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: Before giving floor to speakers in explanation of vote or position after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Prabowo (Indonesia): My delegation wishes to deliver an explanation of vote after the voting on resolution 78/282, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”.

For Indonesia, the sanctity of life and of humanity takes precedence over any other consideration. We therefore take a principled and unwavering stance against genocide. The resolution just adopted is a profound reminder of the pain and suffering endured by more than 8,000 lives in Srebrenica nearly 30 years ago. It is a call for all of us to protect the most vulnerable and ensure that such atrocities are never repeated anywhere or at any time.

Nevertheless, as we look to honour the victims of that dark chapter in history, we are compelled to apply the lessons from Srebrenica to the present day. Before our eyes, a genocide is unfolding in Gaza. Livestream 24/7, we are witnessing the systematic subjugation, maiming and killing of the people in Gaza. More 35,000 lives have been lost, mostly women and children, with 80,000 predicted to remain under the rubble. Some 1.1 million people are on the brink of famine, and, with the assault of Rafa, there is nowhere safe for the 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza. If there is one thing that we must learn from Srebrenica, it is that inaction is not an option.

The late Kofi Annan said: “The tragedy of Srebrenica will forever haunt the history of the United Nations”. And here we are, following two emergency special session resolutions, three Security Council resolutions and two provisional measures of the International Court of Justice on Gaza, as the United Nations remains paralysed, unable to influence the situation on the ground. Therefore, as a principled position over that grim and sobering circumstance, Indonesia voted in support of the resolution.

Let us not tarnish the solemn memory of Srebrenica with our inaction in Gaza. If we do not want history to repeat itself, we must all be firm in upholding international law and the Charter of the United Nations. I emphasize that we must reject double standards. We must place on ourselves a sense of responsibility and commitment to justice and humanity.

Despite our support, we regret that this resolution had to be put to a vote. Such an important moment of remembrance should have been a unifying moment for the sanctity of the memory of the victims. We truly wish that this resolution could have been approached differently, with a more inclusive negotiation process, to reach a consensus text. Consensus would have made such a remembrance forward-looking — a remembrance that embraces all in sincerity and lays a

solid foundation for reconciliation. Indonesia therefore continues to emphasize that such a remembrance must be accompanied by comprehensive, inclusive and forward-looking reconciliation efforts to create conditions conducive to sustainable peace and stability for the true benefit of the people of the region and beyond.

Mr. Iravani (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the numerous delegations, permanent missions, international organizations and regional groups that, at the various levels, expressed their condolences and sympathy to the people and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in mourning the loss of the President and the Foreign Minister. Mr. Raisi, Mr. Amir-Abdollahian and their deceased companions were highly respected and loved by the Iranian people.

This week, millions of Iranians across the country demonstrated their profound respect for those distinguished figures, including at the funeral ceremony. Their tireless efforts in serving the Iranian people were exemplary of their firm dedication to their beloved nation. Their contribution to development, human dignity and cooperation, as well as to strengthening peace and security and friendly relations in the region and beyond, will be remembered. They will remain an everlasting source of inspiration for our people and anyone who aspires to just causes of noble purposes in the world.

As for resolution 78/282, I would like to mention that the Islamic Republic of Iran has been clear in rejecting atrocious crimes, in particular the catastrophic events that took place in Srebrenica. Our vote in favour of the resolution adopted today manifests our conviction in supporting and sympathizing with the victims of the Srebrenica genocide in 1995. Honouring and remembering the victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina should unite people and inspire the global rejection of atrocious crimes. It should also promote both justice and forgiveness for future generations.

Through our support, we also pay tribute to our fallen heroes — several Iranian nationals, who were martyred for the valuable objective of assisting the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the course of those unfortunate events. Regrettably, at the time, the international community failed the world’s conscience, leaving innocent people to fall victim to the most serious crimes. The Srebrenica massacre was indeed a dark page in the history of humankind and the United Nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its principled position in supporting peace, stability and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkan region in the spirit of dialogue and understanding, while the peaceful coexistence of all people of the country and the region, regardless of their ethnicity and religion, could be maintained and strengthened. We further reiterate the importance of respecting the territorial integrity of the countries in the region. We highlight the necessity for an inclusive and good-faith approach to preserving peace and enduring stability. That endeavour must encompass all individuals, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Speaking of atrocity crimes, I would like to mention that we have not forgotten that millions of Iranian people, almost one fourth of the Iranian population at the time, suffered genocide from 1917–1919 due to a certain foreign country's political agenda, which caused severe deprivation of food and vital resources, leading to a large-scale famine and starvation.

Let us also not forget that those who lost their lives in Srebrenica were not only victims of egregious crimes incited by individuals, but they were also victims of power politics and failures by certain Western countries, including those who were in the form of peacekeepers at the time of the occurrence of that tragedy.

The fact remains that the countries that should bear responsibility, together with NATO, for the failure that plunged Srebrenica into catastrophe in 1995 are now among the sponsors of this resolution. That sobering fact, coupled with the current developments at the international level, in particular the catastrophic situation in Gaza, should make all of us doubtful of the real intentions of certain Western countries, as the situation of Palestine has proven to reveal the stark manifestation of the chronic double standards and selectivity of a few.

The current catastrophic situation in Palestine and the binding orders rendered by the principal judicial organ of the United Nations on the matter are the topics most relevant to the discussions with respect to the present resolution. We regret that that very relevant and important matter has been ignored. Nevertheless, the adoption of this resolution should serve as a reminder of the responsibilities that the United Nations owes to each and every single Palestinian woman, man and child. We believe that the United Nations should not make the same mistake that it made in 1995. The painful lessons of the past to be learned, which have indeed cost heavy tolls, should compel humankind to avoid, prevent and stop the recurrence of similar catastrophes.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in English*): Before I make my explanation of vote, I would like to raise one issue. Consider it a point of order, and I count that you, Mr. President, will deduct the time allotted to me for my explanation of vote from the remarks I will make now.

Before the voting, you, Mr. President, gave the floor to the “distinguished representative of Serbia”. I would like to remind you that he is not “a distinguished representative of Serbia”. He is the President of the Republic of Serbia. I think that you, Sir, should have recognized that, respected his high office and addressed him accordingly. Now I come to the explanation of vote.

(*spoke in Russian*)

Today we saw a sad page in the history of the General Assembly. A group of delegations, led by Germany, decided to abuse the powers of the General Assembly and adopt, under the guise of a resolution on the establishment of a commemorative day (resolution 78/282), a political declaration, whose purpose is, despite the sponsors' claims to the contrary, to demonize one of the peoples of the Former Yugoslavia and undermine the Dayton Peace Agreement and Security Council resolution 1031 (1995), which endorsed the Agreement. Not surprisingly, the non-consensual resolution, which was adopted by a vote, not only fails to call for the full implementation of the Dayton Agreement, but it does not even mention it. The result of the voting was not what the sponsors had expected. Look at the numbers: more United Nations Members did not support the resolution than those that did.

Among the sponsors of the draft resolution was the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who exceeded his authority in the matter. According to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is part of the Dayton Agreement, before being put forward this resolution should have been approved by all members of the presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

That is yet another confirmation of the consistent policy of some Bosnian elites and their Western sponsors towards undermining the role of the presidency as the supreme voice of the consensus position of the multi-ethnic society of Bosnia and Herzegovina on key issues for the State. Let us recall that the concept of balancing the interests of the three constituent peoples and the two entities lies at the heart of the Dayton Peace Agreement, which put an end to the deadly civil war in Yugoslavia.

The sponsors of the resolution misled the members of the General Assembly from the outset. They claimed that it was aimed at reconciliation while concealing that it lacked one essential element, namely, the consent of all peoples and entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The very fact that the draft resolution was introduced and discussed stirred up tension in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkans as a whole. That is confirmed by mass demonstrations in Banja Luka, letters from, and statements by, the Serb member of the Bosnia and Herzegovina presidency, Željka Cvijanović, and Serbian representatives at the Security Council meetings on 30 April and 15 May (see S/PV.9621 and S/PV.9626). The statement made by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on 22 May also shows that the issue under discussion today has a legal dimension.

It is completely unacceptable to draw parallels between the adopted resolution on Srebrenica and the resolution on the genocide in Rwanda (resolution 58/234). Before being considered in the General Assembly, the draft resolution on Rwanda had been agreed upon internally in the country and then in a regional group — the African Union. With the resolution on Srebrenica, we saw nothing that could count as an attempt to agree on common approaches. Instead, the group of friends drafted and put forward the draft resolution as a finished product on a “take it or leave it” basis, with a couple of rounds of formal consultations.

All calls by responsible United Nations Members, including Russia and Serbia, to return the issue of the Bosnian war commemoration day to the national level for discussion by all three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to achieve a unified position in the region were rejected. At the same time, the list of co-sponsors includes Germany, the United States, France, Great Britain, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein and even New Zealand. Even the Netherlands, whose so-called peacekeeping battalion played a shameful role in the Srebrenica tragedy in 1995, did not hesitate to join the list.

One thing is clear: the sponsors of today’s resolution are acting deliberately, pushing Bosnia and Herzegovina towards a confrontation, without regard for the price that it paid during the civil war in the 1990s. The war killed 100,000 people and saw many bloody tragedies against not only Bosniaks, but also Serbs and Croats. It seems that that is being done so that the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina never reconcile. We view such actions as a threat to peace and security in the country and the region as a whole.

All of that is cynical and hypocritical. But, even more surprisingly, the main sponsor of the resolution is Germany. The country that unleashed two world wars in the twentieth century, murdered millions of people in concentration camps, was responsible for mass crimes in Africa and took a very active part in the collapse of Yugoslavia and the bombing of Sarajevo in 1995 is now trying to lecture others from the General Assembly rostrum on the importance of national reconciliation. We are convinced that Germany has no moral right to even mention the term “genocide” in relation to anything other than its own heinous crimes. We recall that the United Nations itself, within whose walls we are gathered today, was created because of the crimes of Nazi Germany and in order to prevent such crimes against humanity from recurring once and for all.

We would also like to note that, with such a step, the sponsors of the resolution destroyed the status quo, based on resolution 69/323, which proclaimed 9 December as the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide, which opened a Pandora’s box. We must recall that there is no General Assembly resolution on genocide and other crimes of Nazi Germany against the peoples of the Soviet Union during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Those crimes of the Nazi regime claimed the lives of 27 million Soviet citizens. Many European peoples suffered too, including Serbs, who were affected very severely. We have not forgotten that, and we will not forget it. No one, and nothing, is forgotten.

We cannot disregard the statements made by a number of representatives on the importance of respecting the decisions of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Court of Justice. The ICTY and its successor, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, which were established to ensure impartial justice, have utterly failed in that task. Their biased and politicized decisions have done nothing to promote sustainable reconciliation in the Balkans. The ICTY and the Residual Mechanism only deepened the divisions in the Balkans. They placed responsibility for the events of the 1990s almost exclusively on the Serbs, ignoring the many crimes of the other parties to the conflict. As a result, the voices of Serb victims were never heard, and no justice was served. For the ICTY and the Mechanism, it was as if the Serb victims of those crimes did not exist at all. That is not how real justice works.

That is not to mention that the ICTY's body of evidence was largely based on questionable legal notions invented by the Tribunal itself. Its decisions are thousands of pages long, but the subjective element of the crime of genocide was deduced from a witness's retelling of a single phone call, and only from one end of the line.

The International Court of Justice did not go into details and simply accepted the findings of the ICTY at face value. A number of ICJ judges explicitly pointed to that in their dissenting opinions to the judgment of 26 February 2007.

We have repeatedly heard that the resolution before us was merely meant to bridge a gap, reaffirm the decisions of the international courts and promote long-term national reconciliation. However, the bitter irony is that today's vote clearly showed how divided the international community is on both Srebrenica and the aforementioned decisions. The adoption of this resolution is a Pyrrhic victory for its sponsors. What have they achieved? If the authors sought to split the General Assembly, which we had warned them about in advance, they have succeeded brilliantly.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): Brazil abstained in the voting on resolution 78/282, concerning the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica. The vote does not imply or raise any doubt whatsoever about the nature of the massacre of Bosnian civilians in Srebrenica in July 1995. In 2004, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia defined the massacre as genocide. In 2007, the International Court of Justice also recognized the massacre as genocide.

Much less therefore, our position on the vote today means the slightest variation on Brazil's firm and clear condemnation of the genocide in Srebrenica. Here and now, we reiterate such condemnation in the strongest terms. Our abstention was based on an assessment of the circumstances surrounding the submission of, the consultations on and the response to resolution 78/282. We were, and remain, concerned about the acrimony and deep division that it has caused at the United Nations and in the region, especially in Bosnia Herzegovina. Resolutions of this kind are supposed to bring the international community together in helping parties to overcome conflicts, celebrate the memory of victims, strengthen the cause of justice and build lasting peace. In other words, such resolutions are meant to help to heal wounds and assist former enemies to move forward.

Unfortunately, the circumstances around the resolution that we voted on today did exactly the opposite. We felt that we could not be part of that. We deeply regret it. It is our hope that all parties concerned, in full acknowledgement of the horrors of the past, will redouble their efforts to build a future of peace. In so doing, they will be certainly assisted by us all.

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): Viet Nam condemns crimes of genocide in the strongest term and has carried out concrete efforts and actions to end genocide and the impunity of that crime. That is founded on our utmost respect for the value of human life, our unwavering commitment to protecting civilians and Viet Nam's consistent policy to uphold the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

As a party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, we take our national obligations under the Convention and other relevant international commitments very seriously. During our tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2020–2021, Viet Nam chaired the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals and supported the mandate and activities of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. We joined consensus in adopting resolution 69/232, on the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime, at the Assembly's 69th session.

We firmly believe that peace, stability and development are essential prerequisites to eradicate the root causes of genocide. It is therefore a matter of priority to promote national reconciliation, dialogue and unity among the peoples and groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region, and thus contribute to the stability and development of the region.

The General Assembly is the best forum to promote consensus and solidarity among Member States in the fight against genocide and other atrocity crimes. The proclamation of an international day should help to unite, not to divide, the parties concerned in the country, as well as States in the region. Nevertheless, it is clear that consensus has not been reached on that matter in that context.

With that in mind, my delegation abstained in the voting on resolution 78/282. We call on parties to continue to engage in dialogue in order to reach a common understanding and approach on this issue that will garner universal support from the international community.

Ms. Barnor (Ghana): Ghana regrets that, as a result of the absence of national and regional consensus on the presentation of resolution 78/282, it had to abstain in the voting on the intention to declare 11 July of each year as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica.

Our regrets are two-fold. First, the acts of genocide committed in and around Srebrenica in 1995 stand as one of the worst atrocities committed in the Former Yugoslavia during the wars of the 1990s and should serve as the rallying point for the multi-ethnic society of Bosnia and Herzegovina to heal the wounds of the past and forge a national reconciliation for the future of the country. Secondly, the absence of national and regional consensus on this important initiative has undermined its credibility as a reference point for a genuine reflection and commemoration that can serve the cause of peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Indeed, Ghana is of the belief that the collective remembrance of historical events such as the Srebrenica genocide should hinge upon a broad national and regional acceptance and solidarity and should reinforce the nation-building and conciliatory efforts that have been ongoing in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the Dayton Accords. As we continue to honour the victims and survivors of Srebrenica, we are reminded of the words of the former Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, who said: “Their grief cannot be assuaged, and must not be forgotten”. For Ghana, therefore, our long-standing commitment and support for the principles of international law and international humanitarian law remain unbroken, and our unequivocal condemnation of the heinous crimes that occurred against the 8,000 young men and boys in Srebrenica in July 1995 continues to hold. Their stories cannot be relegated to the annals of history, nor their sufferings and pain obscured by national and regional discord. Instead, what they have gone through should serve as a unifying factor, through which all Bosnians can come together, in defiance of ethnic and religious divides, to build a future based on social cohesion and mutual respect.

To conclude, Ghana remains supportive of all attempts in Bosnia and Herzegovina to promote interreligious and inter-ethnic reconciliation. It is crucial that all relevant actors in the country work towards fostering an atmosphere of national unity, peace and security. We once again stand in solidarity with the victims and survivors of the Srebrenica genocide, and we

reiterate the need for international cooperation to ensure that present and future generations are liberated from the scourge of genocide.

Mr. Khng (Singapore): Singapore voted in favour of resolution 78/282, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”, in line with Singapore’s consistent support for international law, given the rulings of the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia that the Srebrenica massacre was a genocide.

However, we are disappointed that the resolution, intended to rally the international community, was not only unable to garner consensus, but may also rekindle divisions within and between countries.

In that regard, we urge the core group and sponsors of the resolution to take into account the concerns and sensitivities of all peoples whose communities suffered losses in the Bosnian war in commemorating the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica. We also urge other Member States submitting draft resolutions on commemorative days or years to continue the long-standing practice of seeking consensus to reflect the unity of the United Nations and the international community.

Ms. Cano Franco (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Faithful to its commitment to the principles established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Panama reaffirms its condemnation of any event recognized by the relevant international bodies as an act of genocide. Such actions contravene international humanitarian law and the fundamental values of humankind, leaving an indelible scar on our common history. Consistent with that commitment, Panama supported resolution 69/323 of 2015, with which this Assembly proclaimed the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of Victims of Crime of Genocide and of Prevention of this Crime. The adoption of that resolution by consensus is a testimony to the value attached to such expressions of recognition of those who were victims of acts that are repudiated by the international community. Establishing a day of commemoration and reflection is a timely way to raise awareness of the immense human tragedy that atrocity crimes cause and the urgent need to prevent their recurrence in any region of the world. Providing the families of victims the opportunity to have a specific day to honour and commemorate their loved ones is

a way to dignify their memory and an opportunity to renew the shared commitment to preventing such actions from being repeated and moving towards the genuine reconciliation of the affected parties.

The deceased, the survivors, the relatives and those who inflicted harm are all victims. There are victims and shared suffering, which needs to be recovered from. Reconciliation and dialogue are the only path — the only way to heal the wounds and look each other in the eye, in the hope of overcoming divisions. It is not a time to blame or point fingers at anyone. We should focus on the victims and the need to perpetuate their memory. We recognize that reconciliation processes are difficult and lengthy. We must renounce resentment and open the door to healing and the building of peaceful and prosperous futures, which requires the will and political commitment of all parties concerned.

Panama remains steadfast in respecting the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. We abstained in the voting on resolution 78/282, which was just adopted, as we believe it essential that all parties involved in the events that this resolution wishes to highlight move towards a path of understanding and dialogue on issues that still suffer open wounds, and that only the will of the parties concerned can resolve them. If the foundations are not laid to move in that direction, the goal of reconciliation and of this resolution will be missed.

Mr. Vegas Torres (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have previously pointed out that resolutions submitted under the agenda item “Culture of peace” should elicit the consensus of the membership, as it is an issue that is closely linked to one of the purposes of the United Nations. Peru therefore participated constructively in the negotiation process of resolution 78/282 and maintained channels of dialogue with all the parties concerned, which it encouraged to adopt a position seeking a negotiated solution among the parties.

Unfortunately, that was not possible, and, for the first time, we Member States had to vote on a resolution that seeks to commemorate the victims of genocide and encourage reflection in that regard. Against that backdrop, my delegation would like to raise a number of points, which seek to clarify our position.

First of all, Peru reaffirms its principled position of full respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations. In that context, we continue to support

the work of international judicial bodies, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice.

In that regard, Peru recalls that both courts issued judgments in which they clearly determine that acts of genocide were committed in Srebrenica in 1995, in addition to other international crimes committed during the conflicts in the territory of the Former Yugoslavia.

Bearing in mind that the Statute of the International Court of Justice is an integral part of the Charter of the United Nations and that the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia operated on the basis of Security Council mandates under Chapter VII of the Charter, all Member States must recognize its judgments and act accordingly, which means carrying out the required actions to implement them within the respective scope of each party. The same applies to all obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Having clarified that, I would like to provide some additional considerations that Peru took into account in determining how it should vote.

Any measures to prevent and punish the crime of genocide must be immediately and unequivocally supported, including through a vote, if necessary. Those measures include, for example, the adoption of resolutions calling for the necessary actions to be taken to that end, or even resolutions that establish coercive measures under Chapter VII of the Charter to prevent the commission of that crime, or that create an accountability mechanism, particularly with regard to the prosecution and punishment of those responsible.

However, a resolution concerning the reflection on, and commemoration of, an act of genocide that has already taken place, and for which there is already a competent tribunal to prosecute and punish the perpetrators, and which has already fulfilled that function, is of a different nature. In order for resolutions concerning reflection and commemoration to adequately fulfil their objective, they should be adopted by consensus, as that would foster a climate that enables the focus to be on commemorating the memory of the victims and raising awareness so that similar events are not repeated in the future. That should be the sole objective of resolutions of this nature. Peru therefore regrets that, for the first time, a resolution of this kind had to be adopted through a vote.

Peru advocates multilateral dialogue as the best way to achieve consensus in support of global stability, while

respecting the sovereignty of States and non-interference in internal affairs. With regard to implementing the resolution, Peru calls for the next steps to be addressed in a consensual manner. For the parties concerned, that should include full respect for the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton Accords, and other relevant agreements that have been adopted.

Mr. Sekeris (Greece): Greece acknowledges the importance of resolution 78/282, which establishes the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, a tragedy that left our region with a deep and painful wound.

In that regard, Greece reiterates its respect for the relevant decisions of the independent international tribunals regarding Srebrenica, including the International Court of Justice's judgment of 26 February 2007, stating that genocide was committed in Srebrenica.

In the same vein, Greece remains committed, both nationally and internationally, to the fight against genocide denial and the crime of genocide. However, in the context of the current serious challenges, which threaten peace and reconciliation in the Western Balkans, we need initiatives that promote de-escalation and unity, and which pave the way towards a common future for the whole region. Yet the resolution just adopted risks being misinterpreted as a message that could undermine efforts towards regional reconciliation and a common European future.

The timing of this resolution is also a cause for concern, as it was submitted right after the recent European Council decision to start accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, opening a discussion that could jeopardize the positive momentum created by that decision of the European Union.

Greece reiterates that the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens, and indeed that of the Western Balkans, can exist only within the European Union.

Mr. Sabanovic (Montenegro): Allow me to briefly share Montenegro's position in the light of today's voting. As we all know, the cross-regional core group, jointly chaired by Germany and Rwanda, presented resolution 78/282, entitled "International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica", for consideration for adoption by the General Assembly.

Bearing in mind that 2025 will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, the resolution proposed designating 11 July as the annual International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995

Genocide in Srebrenica. The resolution unequivocally condemns any denial of the Srebrenica genocide as a historical event and urges Member States to uphold the established facts, including through educational programmes, to prevent denial, distortion and future genocides. It also condemns acts that glorify individuals convicted of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide by international courts, including those responsible for the Srebrenica genocide.

Recognizing the significance of the resolution and all judgments of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia mentioned in the text that determined that acts committed in Srebrenica constitute acts of genocide, as well as the resolution on the Srebrenica genocide adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro in 2021, Montenegro thoroughly examined its content, including its political and legal implications. As a multicultural and multi-ethnic society, Montenegro places significant value on the culture of remembrance and good-neighbourly relations, demonstrating sensitivity to, and understanding of, issues essential to peaceful coexistence, cooperation and reconciliation in the region. In addition, those values align not only with one of our key foreign policy objectives of full membership in the European Union, to which Montenegro is 100 per cent committed, but also with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations related to peace, justice, respect, human rights, tolerance and solidarity. All proactive approaches and our contributions to such a sensitive topic, resulting from extensive communication within the core group, aim to prevent any misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the text.

On that note, let me emphasize that the two suggestions that Montenegro proposed in relation to the preambular part of the resolution aim to achieve precisely that in order to clearly and unambiguously emphasize that the individualized character of accountability for the crime of genocide and prevent the misuse, be it legal or political, of this resolution for labelling a people or a community as genocidal. In addition, they contribute to preserving and fostering unity in diversity, which, being the motto of the European Union, not only points to the European perspective of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also clearly states the importance of maintaining stability within the existing framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which can be achieved only through promoting dialogue and the eradication of polarization, on the basis of international law and the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Montenegro strongly believes that, through those suggestions, we made a significant contribution to

ensuring clarity and preventing the politicization and misinterpretation of the essence of the resolution. Consequently, it certainly contributed to enhancing the overall confidence in casting one's vote on the proposed text of the resolution.

In conclusion, Montenegro demonstrates compassionate respect for the victims and approaches this sensitive topic by actively promoting peace, reconciliation and the development of friendly relations and cooperation between nations as the only viable foundation of a common, prosperous future.

Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone): Informed by our difficult experience of a decade of armed conflict, characterized by the perpetration of some of the serious crimes of international concern, and our transitional justice process, including the investigation, trial and conviction of those who bore the greatest responsibility for the atrocity crimes, by the Special Court of Sierra Leone, my country voted in favour of resolution 78/282, which, through its adoption, *inter alia*, designates 11 July as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica.

Similarly, owing to the valuable lessons learned in our path to reconciliation and inclusion, guided by the road map for national healing and cohesion charted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, we regret that the resolution did not enjoy the necessary consensus at both the domestic and the international levels, recalling, for instance, the solidarity of the international community in the adoption of resolutions 58/234 and 69/323.

In noting the challenged process issues, and having considered the spirit, intent and provisions of article 27 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the delegation of Sierra Leone wishes to make the following critical observations.

First, we acknowledge the finality of the judicial finding of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) that the Srebrenica massacre was genocide, as affirmed by the International Court of Justice, agreeing with the finding of the ICTY in application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The matter is therefore settled on the basis of law, and Sierra Leone is compelled by its commitment to accountability and therefore supportive of efforts to not only commemorate but also end impunity for international crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and aggression.

Secondly, Sierra Leone further acknowledges that the judicial finding on the Srebrenica genocide does not impose any collective responsibility. The ruling of the International Court of Justice does not attribute collective responsibility. We will therefore reject any attempt to attribute collective responsibility. In drawing on our transitional justice experience, we emphasize the importance of our integrated justice and reconciliation process in achieving Bosnia and Herzegovina's vision for a diverse, inclusive, peaceful and prosperous State, addressing the legitimate concerns raised by the relevant parties in an inclusive manner. That may include acknowledging all the serious crimes committed by all sides in the conflict as a necessary step towards lasting reconciliation among all ethnicities. We know that today's action seeks to preserve a country's shared determination to, *inter alia*, the education of future generations and the operation of necessary accountability mechanisms to prevent the events that led up to, surrounded and occurred in Srebrenica in 1995 from ever happening again. On that basis, we affirm our support towards the reconciliation, peacebuilding and sustainable development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Thirdly, Sierra Leone is mindful of the fragile peace and security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its intricate governance structure, as outlined in the 1995 Dayton Accords. We are further mindful of the consensus basis of the functioning of the Presidency. We therefore deeply regret the absence of consensus and inclusion and the reported lack of consultation in the national process, thereby implicating the necessary unanimous solidarity of the General Assembly.

Let me conclude by reiterating our commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Dayton Accords, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, essential to ensuring peace and security among the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and all the peoples and nations of the world.

Ms. Andrews (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Saint Vincent and the Grenadines abstained in the voting on resolution 78/282, entitled "International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica".

We acknowledge that after the devastation wrought by the wars in Yugoslavia, including the Srebrenica genocide, as recognized by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International

Court of Justice, the Balkan region still suffers the consequences of those wars. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is concerned that the lack of inclusivity within the process and the lead-up to the submission of resolution 78/282 may adversely impact the ongoing efforts towards reconciliation in a region where peace and harmony are already fragile.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines supports initiatives that can strengthen the process of reconciliation and peace, while avoiding politicization and adopting an inclusive approach that garners the support of all parties.

In the light of the sensitive, complex, historical and geopolitical nature of the issue at hand, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines emphasizes that it is prudent for dialogue and confidence-building initiatives to be prioritized at this moment in order to avoid the emergence of new tensions and the deepening of existing divides within Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider Balkan region.

Mr. Ladeb (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Tunisia voted in favour of resolution 78/282, on the Srebrenica genocide, based on its firm belief in, and adherence to, the principles of international law, international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations, as well as human rights principles, in particular the right to life and to self-determination.

While Tunisia stresses the need for concerted efforts by the international community to prevent the recurrence of such atrocities, we emphasize the importance of dealing with all situations in a responsible manner, free from political considerations, selectivity and double standards. Such resolutions serve as landmarks in affirming the international community's commitment to international legitimacy and humanitarian instruments and in upholding the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations for safeguarding human rights. That must not be limited only to the element of remembrance, but it must also be a motivation and incentive for peoples never again to be subjected to such violations. While we understand the positions and reservations of various parties, we underscore the need for this resolution to be a factor towards promoting stability and reconciliation in the Balkan region.

In that context, Tunisia reiterates its call on the international community and the Security Council to shoulder their legal and moral responsibilities so as to put an end to the ongoing and escalating war crimes and genocide, to which the Palestinian people have been subjected at the hands of the occupation forces for eight

months. They have claimed the lives of more than 35,000 martyrs, with tens of thousands injured and nearly 2 million forcibly displaced persons.

We also call for the occupying Power to be compelled to implement United Nations resolutions and held accountable for all its crimes against the Palestinian people.

Mr. Vasconcelos Y Cruz (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to express Mexico's solidarity with, and respect for, the victims and survivors of the 1995 genocide that took place in Srebrenica, as well as all victims and survivors of the Balkan conflict of the 1990s and its aftermath.

Mexico recognizes the importance of reflecting on those crimes and commemorating the victims. Likewise, my country recognizes the judgments issued by both the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Mexico rejects the denial of the genocide committed there and the glorification of war criminals. Srebrenica is a living reminder that genocide does not happen overnight but is the result of a series of actions that escalate into genocide.

We regret that such a sensitive issue was put to a vote and was not the result of consensus. We also regret that resolution 78/282 was not accompanied by a due process of inclusive consultations, particularly with the States of the Balkan region. We are concerned that the initiative does not have the full support of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mexico believes that inclusive dialogue among all concerned States and relevant actors in the region is the cornerstone for resolutions such as this for contributing to reconciliation and strengthening efforts to ensure the right of victims to truth, justice and reparation.

For those reasons, my country abstained in the voting. We call on all the States of the region to redouble their efforts to deepen dialogue in pursuit of reconciliation and peace.

Mr. Galbavy (Slovakia): Slovakia abstained in the voting on resolution 78/282. Before all else, I wish to place on record that Slovakia remains firmly committed to international law and norms prohibiting genocide and mass atrocities and to closer international cooperation to ensure that those crimes do not occur in the future. In that regard, the Slovak Republic fully supports the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice and

respects their verdicts regarding the genocide that took place in Srebrenica in July 1995.

The stability and prosperity of the Western Balkans has always been among the key foreign policy priorities for the Slovak Republic since our independence in 1993. Our policy towards the Western Balkans not only is consistent with the international community's commitment to peace and stability in the region, laid down in the relevant United Nations documents and political declarations, but also reflects the promise and the reality of a tangible European Union (EU) membership perspective for all Western Balkan countries in the near future.

We base our relationship and cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans on the principles of transparency, predictability, dialogue, understanding, recognition, partnership and good-faith services. All of that is with the aim of contributing positively to the long-lasting consolidation of otherwise fragile inter-ethnic reconciliation.

It is with concern that we observe the recent negative dynamics across the Western Balkans region, such as the growing challenges to the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, secessionist rhetoric in one part of Bosnia and Herzegovina and challenges on the EU path of other countries in the region, often related to growing political polarization and interethnic tensions.

While acknowledging the importance of addressing historical injustices and promoting reconciliation sooner rather than later, we believe that the modalities, the timing and the inclusiveness of the process are equally important for its outcome and overall impact.

We hope that, moving forward with caution, engagement and in dialogue will eventually break the cycle in which the past suffering is used as the justification for new or renewed conflict. Therefore, we encourage all parties to engage in constructive, well-intentioned and proactive political initiatives that prioritize lowering tensions and healing historical wounds and in good faith towards reconciliation and building bridges between communities.

In conclusion, the Slovak Republic remains committed to international law and justice, peace, stability and prosperity in the Western Balkans.

Mr. Aldahhak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation reiterates its condolences for the victims of the events that happened

in Srebrenica in 1995 and expresses its sympathy with their families. While we reaffirm our rejection of human rights violations and the resulting human suffering, we also stress our categorical rejection of the politicization of human rights issues, the submission of biased draft resolutions and the utilization of international mechanisms as a means to target specific States. Today my country's delegation found itself compelled to vote against resolution 78/282, which deals with painful events that took place in Srebrenica nearly three decades ago, for two main reasons.

The first reason is the shortcomings in the process of drafting the text, which were not characterized by transparency and openness but were carried out behind closed doors and without prior consultation or adequate coordination with the relevant parties or consideration of their concerns. That prevented the achievement of consensus on the resolution in a way that would avoid any attempts to stir up tensions or open past wounds, reawakening underlying friction and destabilizing stability in the service of the political agendas of some Western countries.

The second reason is that some Western countries that sponsor the resolution, spearheaded by Germany, are today openly engaged in supporting the Israeli occupation entity politically, militarily and financially to enable it to carry out genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity along with grave violations against the Palestinian people in Gaza. All members are aware of the death toll among civilian martyrs and injured people, amounting to tens of thousands, the majority being women and children. That affirms the false allegations of such States, their bad intention and their efforts to divert attention from their direct involvement in the genocidal acts being committed by the Israeli occupation forces for eight months in occupied Palestine. Of course, such acts are an extension of their crimes over nearly eight decades.

We will never see those Western States take the initiative to present a resolution to provide justice to the Palestinian victims of the genocide, hold the Israeli occupation authorities accountable for their crimes, talk about the crimes committed by NATO in the Balkans or the so-called illegitimate international coalition, established under the false pretext of combating the terrorist organization Da'esh. Those acts of aggression by that illegitimate coalition have claimed the lives of thousands of innocent civilians in my country, Syria, including when the illegitimate coalition destroyed the

city of Raqqa, toppling it onto the heads of its people, where they are buried under the rubble.

All that exposes the malicious intentions of those States, their politicization of humanitarian issues to serve their own agendas, which my country strongly rejects and condemns.

Today's vote shows that more than 100 Member States chose to either vote against or abstain in the voting on the resolution or were absent for the vote because of their legitimate concerns about the resolution, double standards, politicization and manipulation of human rights issues. Such practices should be avoided in the United Nations.

Mr. Vichankaiyakij (Thailand): Thailand joins the international community in reiterating that acts of genocide constitute the most heinous crime and grievous human rights violation, as well as threats towards peace and security among nations. Thailand once again reaffirms its commitment to preventing and punishing the crime of genocide. We attach the utmost importance to holding the perpetrators accountable.

Our commitment is reflected in the adoption of the 2004 and 2020 resolutions on the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda (resolutions 58/234 and 74/273), as well as our co-sponsorship of the 2015 resolution on the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime (resolution 69/323).

While recognizing that the acts committed in Srebrenica in 1995 amounted to the crime of genocide, as established by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and the International Court of Justice, and reaffirming our strong opposition to impunity for genocide, Thailand believes that a resolution on this particularly important issue should be adopted by consensus, as has been the practice in the past. Thailand also supports a more inclusive drafting process and consultation among the relevant parties, with a view to expressing solidarity with all victims and families of those affected and to preventing the recurrence of such a crime. It is for that reason that Thailand decided to abstain.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Thailand's support for our efforts to promote peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Pakistan voted in favour of resolution 78/282, designating 11 July as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica. This tragedy was among the most appalling episodes in recent human history and was acknowledged as genocide by both the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice. There was a clear legal determination by the International Court of Justice to establish the commission of the crime of genocide in Srebrenica in July 1995. Numerous resolutions of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) underscore the steadfast support of OIC member States for maintaining the unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty and international standing of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That support is grounded in the commitment to upholding Bosnia and Herzegovina's internationally recognized borders, fostering its ability to function autonomously, fulfilling its obligations and preserving its multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious character.

It is imperative that the United Nations be resolute in its commitment to preventing the recurrence of the genocides committed in Srebrenica and Rwanda. The international community must remain vigilant in detecting and responding to any signs of a similar pattern of targeting ethnic groups or religious minorities being manifested in certain States today.

Mr. Alwasil (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): We hoped that resolution 78/282 would be adopted by consensus. My country's delegation regrets that consensus was not reached on a resolution pertaining to an international day. Today we voted in favour of the resolution because it has a human dimension. That resolution should allow for the commemoration of the tragic events, which were internationally described as genocide. It also expresses our solidarity with the families of the victims and stresses our moral and legal rejection of the crime of genocide, whatever it is and wherever it occurs.

We call on all to learn the lessons of the past and look positively towards the future to ensure that such a tragedy and crime are never repeated. Peaceful coexistence should be supported among the people of the Bosnia and Herzegovina without discrimination or prioritizing any ethnicity or religion over another. That will serve the interests of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as all its neighbours in the Balkan region.

My country stresses the need to preserve the humanitarian dimension and inclusiveness of such resolutions to ensure that they achieve their purposes. Otherwise, that will inevitably and negatively affect their noble goals and credibility. Moreover, they will be politically exploited in an irresponsible manner. That will also go against the good intentions of those who support and vote in favour of such resolutions. It might also exacerbate disputes and drive Member States to uncover the past and revive conflicts and tragedies that nobody wants to recall.

For that reason, we stress that the motives for such resolutions should be purely humanitarian. We all do not want a recurrence of the 1995 genocide in Srebrenica. Likewise, we should all stop the genocide that continues as we meet in this Hall today under the agenda item “Culture of peace”, in which the Israeli occupation forces have been perpetrating their atrocities for more than seven months. To date, more than 35,000 Palestinians, the majority women and children, have been killed by air strikes, destruction and systematic starvation, resulting in a major humanitarian disaster, which is worsening day by day.

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia): Armenia would like to make the following statement in connection with the adoption of resolution 78/282, entitled “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica”.

Genocides are dark stains on human history. They constitute the type of crime that transcends borders and devastates communities. The Armenian people understand deeply the pain and suffering that genocide inflicts. Our history compels us to advocate for justice, accountability and remembrance. Armenia has consistently worked on advancing multilateral efforts towards the universalization of the Genocide Convention, combating denialism and promoting education and remembrance of past crimes.

Armenia has consistently worked to contribute to the prevention agenda and to uphold the values of humanity and justice. Genocide prevention, accountability for past crimes, the right to truth and guarantees for non-recurrence should guide the United Nations system in addressing a multitude of grave violations, which can lead to war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and other atrocity crimes.

Armenia has traditionally sponsored resolutions on genocide prevention and commemoration, having

introduced the first resolution at the Commission on Human Rights in 1998 (resolution 53/43). Subsequently, the scope and substance of the resolutions on the subject have been fundamentally enriched. At the forefront of our efforts stand the recurrent resolutions on genocide prevention, which we have been submitting at the Human Rights Council, as well as the General Assembly, towards establishing the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime. Resolution 69/323 stands as a cornerstone of our collective efforts to raise awareness and honour those who fell victim to past inaction, as well as to stress the importance of a collective tribute and respect for victims, survivors and descendants of all genocides, crimes adjudicated in international courts of law and those crimes whose perpetrators never received justice.

We are strongly convinced that the recognition and condemnation of genocides, commemoration and tribute to the dignity of their victims constitute the cornerstone of genuine reconciliation among communities, peoples and States. Yet we note that the submission of resolution 78/282 and certain procedural aspects created deeply divergent positions, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina but also within the international community.

The prevention of genocide is a critical responsibility entrusted to the international community, and every effort must be made to avert such crimes. Armenia emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect and the Special Adviser have the necessary resources and capacity to effectively carry out their mandates. It is essential that their actions be guided by the principles of objectivity, impartiality and integrity.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Armenia’s commitment to working with the international community to strengthen mechanisms that prevent genocide. In doing so, we honour the memory of the Srebrenica victims and reaffirm our resolve to support efforts to prevent genocide and mass atrocities wherever they occur.

Mr. Leal Matta (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala wishes to emphasize the importance that we attach to the judgments of the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, which declared that there was genocide in Srebrenica. We commend

their work. We recall that genocide is a crime under international law, which shocks the conscience of humankind and is of paramount importance for all nations gathered here. Accordingly, we all committed to preventing and punishing it.

As a country that promotes peace and respects international law and the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, we believe that the atrocities committed in the past must not be forgotten. Commemoration is an essential act to dignify the victims, promote justice, prevent other similar atrocities, educate future generations so as to foster solidarity and reconciliation among the parties concerned and ensure non-repetition.

Guatemala abstained in the voting on resolution 78/282, on the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica. We believe that consensus among stakeholders is essential for a resolution of this kind, since it reflects a stronger collective position and commitment to historical memory and universal humanitarian values.

Mr. Merabet (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation abstained in the voting on resolution 78/28, before us today, on the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica. We hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus in tribute to the victims of that nearly 29-year-old human tragedy. In that regard, the delegation of my country would like to underscore the following important points.

First, Algeria stresses its unwavering commitment to, and respect for, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Moreover, following its independence, Algeria acceded to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Secondly, Algeria condemns in the strongest terms all crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the 1995 genocide in Srebrenica, which claimed thousands of innocent lives.

Thirdly, Algeria emphasizes its steadfast and sustained support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That reflects its positions towards that friendly country, including in the Security Council.

Fourthly, in that context, Algeria believes that the 1999 Dayton Peace Agreement remains the only framework that can preserve peace and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina until reconciliation, along with the desired progress and prosperity, are achieved.

Algeria is also convinced that overcoming differences among political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region as a whole, which is inevitable, can be achieved only through joint action, peaceful coexistence and integration in a spirit of cooperation, constructive dialogue and mutual respect.

Mr. Al Rubkhi (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Sultanate of Oman stresses its firm position related to the crimes of genocide. We support efforts to reflect on such crimes and to hold the perpetrators accountable in accordance with the provisions and principles of international law.

We believe that the 1995 Srebrenica genocide within the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina must not be subject to interpretation or scepticism. We reiterate our support for an international day to commemorate that genocide, in line with the decision of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. It is important that the international community take all legal procedures and measures to prevent the recurrence of similar crimes.

Mr. Oddone (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Genocide is a manifestation of barbarism that has been a part of humankind since its presence on the planet. No one is, or can be, neutral towards it. Argentina has not been neutral towards genocide in the past and is not now. Its prevention is a State policy. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide is enshrined in our national Constitution with equal legal status, and we are committed to all international prevention initiatives.

Sadly, Argentina is among the countries that had to suffer atrocity crimes. We know how painful it is to look back and how difficult it is to achieve reconciliation and remembrance. We firmly reject the denial of such humanitarian catastrophes, while we support with equal strength efforts to ensure that justice is done and that the perpetrators are identified and punished. No reconciliation is possible if those processes are not dealt with.

At the same time, we understand that the right way to approach remembrance as a guarantee of non-repetition is to encourage a truth process through dialogue. That

must include the obligation to carry it out, but without binding deadlines. Societies need to take their time. Tragedies of this kind are rifts that mark a before and an after in their history. Only on the basis of consensus, deep reflection and boundless patience can remembrance become a powerful tool for prevention.

While the positions of the parties remain so divergent, and we have to vote, our prevention work will not be useful. We believe that it would have been fitting to have convened a broad process of deliberation instead of such a vote so as to move in the direction proposed by the draft resolution and achieve consensus language. Perhaps that would have taken more time, but it could have led to better results for the future. It is never too late to try, and we are willing to join such a process. As always, Argentina was willing to move forward in fighting for human rights.

For the reasons stated, the Argentine Republic abstained in the voting.

Ms. Horváth (Hungary): Hungary strongly deplores the events that unfolded 30 years ago in front of our eyes. We sense that the international community is united in that respect. We continue to empathize with the heartbreak of war victims and their families and sympathize with their misery.

The tragedy of 1995 unfolded in Hungary's close vicinity. Let us hope that, in this case, history will never repeat itself. Hungary is determined to foster peace and prosperity in the Western Balkan region and remains vigilant against the escalation of any tensions.

It is in that context that we pose the question: does resolution 78/282 focus on the maintenance of stability in the region, or does it create further divisions that will reopen old wounds? Hungary is not convinced that this resolution is instrumental in promoting peace and stability in the Western Balkan region. We are of the view that such initiatives should only be taken on board and placed on the agenda of the General Assembly if they do not result in, directly or indirectly, any disturbance of peace and stability of the Western Balkans. All of our endeavours must focus on building bridges and trust, not division. For those reasons, Hungary was unable to support this resolution,

In conclusion, we wish to convey our greatest appreciation to the President of the Republic of Serbia, who is here with us today. We commend him not only for promoting development in our neighbouring country,

Serbia, but also for the fact that the Hungarian community can always count on him.

Mr. Kattanga (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania welcomes the adoption of resolution 78/282, entitled "International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica", by the General Assembly today. It is undeniable that the genocide took place in Srebrenica in 1995. That was confirmed by the International Court of Justice, as well as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. In that regard, there is no doubt about the occurrence of genocide in Srebrenica.

Indeed, the appalling and inhuman acts that led to the massacre of some 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica deserve the recognition of this Assembly, just like the victims of the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda and of the Holocaust before that. Tanzania sees no harm in the family of nations designating days for the commemoration of and reflection on genocide and other heinous crimes, which should serve to give meaning to the international instrument that our countries have voluntarily codified and ratified.

Tanzania voted in favour of the resolution as a matter of principle — a principle of its foreign policy pertaining to defending and promoting justice and human rights. Based on that principle, Tanzania has relentlessly advocated and vigorously fought against colonialism, racism and apartheid in Africa and elsewhere in the world. Similarly, Tanzania unequivocally denounces all forms of discrimination based on, inter alia, race, sex, religion and political orientation. Genocide and other mass atrocity crimes are often the result of such discrimination and lack of regard for other people's dignity.

Tanzania's vote today is also in line with its obligations emanating from the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998, the Protocol for the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and other international and regional human rights instruments.

Tanzania's commitment to the prevention of mass atrocity crimes is remarkably unquestionable. In addition to being party to the legal instrument just mentioned, Tanzania hosted the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and is currently hosting the International

Residual Mechanism for both the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the ICTR. Tanzania also spearheaded the regional forums on the prevention of genocide and was the first country to establish a national committee for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities.

Despite today's milestone, we remain gravely concerned and utterly disturbed by attacks against civilians that amounted, or could amount, to genocide. This resolution would have meaning for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the people of the world if we truly unite to prevent genocide wherever it takes place or is likely to take place.

Any action contrary to that taken by Tanzania today would have been an affront to the principles and obligations to which I have just alluded. That is the explanation of our vote.

Mr. Endoni (Nigeria): Nigeria abstained in the voting, not because we did not recognize the horrors of the past. We recognize the devastation and ills perpetrated against the people of Srebrenica, which was adjudged as genocide. However, Nigeria has always noted that there is no alternative to political dialogue in achieving lasting peace. On that basis, we took the position to abstain, first, to call for continued engagement in peace efforts towards collectively healing the wounds of the past; secondly, to seek a regional consensus that will ensure collective appreciation with a view to further appeasing the people of the region; and, thirdly, to call for inclusivity in peace efforts, devoid of politics, sentiments and discrimination.

Although the resolution was adopted, that is, without consensus, Nigeria wishes to stress that peaceful coexistence can be achieved only in an atmosphere in which everyone agrees to build bridges.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

The exercise of the right of reply has been requested. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

President Vučić: I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me an opportunity to summarize what has just happened and to reiterate once again that we were right when we spoke about divisions that this type of resolution will cause and inflict not only in the region from which

I come but even here in this Hall. As members will recall, it has never happened at the General Assembly that a vote on the genocide issue was not adopted by unanimity. That has never happened. It is happening for the first time because some people wanted to use their great political power to politicize this important topic, and they did. It does not matter how many times we warned them to use transparency and inclusiveness and to put the resolution through the entire process. They did not want to listen to us. In the end, the result was the following: 84 countries voted in favour of resolution 78/282, and 87 countries that were present here did not vote in favour. In any single national parliament, such a motion would have failed. This is the only place in the world where it has been adopted.

I wanted to reply to some claims that we heard here. People from some countries emphasized the importance of amendments as if they were necessities or significant contributions. That was a significant contribution only to greater confusion. They just wanted to save their face with those amendments to deceive some Member States as to the legal nature of this issue. Once again, we will mention the issue of legal liability because they were insisting that this was not against any nation or any people. It was exactly about that, because all those who were indicted over the issue of the Srebrenica crime or genocidal massacre, or whatever it is called, have already been convicted and sentenced to prison.

What was the purpose of this resolution, particularly after we adopted a resolution in 2015 (Security Council resolution 508 (2015)). The only intention was to lay moral and political guilt on one side and one nation — the people of Serbia and the Republika Srpska, as a part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That was the only intention. To be honest, if we are talking about legitimacy, it failed. If we are talking about the great victory of those who voted in favour, I cannot add anything else. I just wanted to say that those who wanted to stigmatize the Serbian people did not succeed, and they will never succeed. They wanted to put a mark on our forehead, and they failed. They will always fail. I am proud that I had a chance today to defend the right of small countries to speak publicly and loudly against the very powerful, not insulting anyone, bowing my head before the victims, admitting all our mistakes and all the terrible crimes that some of our compatriots committed, standing proudly here before the Assembly as a dignified Serb who knows that throughout our history, as a nation, we have experienced

the most difficult wars and greatest suffering in the region of South-East Europe, not only the Balkan area.

But I can assure you, Mr. President, starting from tomorrow, we will commence the dialogue with our Bosnia compatriots within Serbia, because we have a significant minority of Bosnian people in my country, and we will not only maintain and keep the peace, tranquillity and stability of my country, but will improve our relationship now that this is behind us. We will work on developing peace and contribute to that.

Finally, we would like to say many thanks to all those that did not vote in favour of this resolution and to all those that voted in favour, as they opened our eyes. In particular, we say many thanks to the Serbian people, who were reunited more than ever. Nothing could have ever united the Serbian people more than what has happened here today. We stand strong and very proud that we had an opportunity to represent the country of the brave.

Mr. Rwamucyo (Rwanda): Honouring and remembering the victims of genocide is a must. Genocide is a stain on our collective memory, the crime of all crimes, and we must all work to ensure that such heinous crimes of genocide never happen anywhere again.

I had not intended to speak because resolution 78/282 was about the 1994 genocide in Srebrenica and in honour and memory of the victims. However, the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo used this occasion to make baseless allegations against my country, Rwanda. It is sadistic and insensitive for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to use this occasion when we are focusing on the memory of victims of genocide and to use this platform to make abominable allegations. That amounts to the trivialization and denial of genocide.

I want to categorically denounce the allegations of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 1994, Rwanda suffered the most tragic genocide of the twenty-first century. More than 1 million innocent Rwandan Tutsis were massacred in heinous crimes of murder and horrific genocide. The perpetrators of the genocide went to what was then Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, where they continue their genocidal activities by targeting Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese Tutsi.

Since 1994, there has been a systematic genocide of Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese Tutsi in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo supports and collaborates with the genocidal Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), which continue to perpetrate that genocide. The Congolese Tutsi have been systematically murdered, hounded from their ancestral lands, raped and scattered as refugees for almost 30 years now in places such as Rwanda, where there are over 100,000 refugees, Uganda, Kenya and other parts of our region.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a perpetrator of genocide against its own citizens. That is abominable. The activities of genocide and ethnic cleansing of Congolese Tutsi must be condemned in the strongest terms, and the perpetrators of those crimes, including officials of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congolese army officers of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo, their FDLR collaborators and Rwanda Defence Force splinter groups, which pose an existential threat to Rwanda, must be condemned and brought to justice to account for their crimes.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo must take full responsibility and ownership of external contradiction and internal problems. Externalizing them, including on a platform like this, and blaming its neighbours will not take away its internal problems. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo bears full responsibility for protecting all its citizens, without discrimination and without turning them against each other. Turning away from that responsibility would be an act of cowardice and irresponsibility for any State. Rwanda is a peaceful country that wants to see peace prevail in our region, and we are committed to making our contribution to the realization of peace in our region.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.