



# General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

**100**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 16 July 2024, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Francis . . . . . (Trinidad and Tobago)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

## Agenda item 18 (continued)

### Sustainable development

#### (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

##### Draft resolution (A/78/L.80)

**The President:** The General Assembly will now resume its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 18 to take action on the draft resolution issued as document A/78/L.80. We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/78/L.80.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. Sharma** (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. The statement has also been distributed to Member States.

The requests referred to in operative paragraphs 36, 37, 38 and 40 of draft resolution A/78/L.80 would entail new activities in 2025 and annually thereafter, such as the preparation of proposals related to the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, as well as ongoing

monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements. The adoption of the draft resolution would give rise to budgetary implications for additional post and non-post resources in the range of \$600,000 to \$1 million in 2025 and in the range of \$200,000 to \$500,000 for 2026 and thereafter. Detailed cost estimates would be developed following further internal consultation within the Secretariat.

With regard to operative paragraph 41 of the draft resolution, the request for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Africa to establish small island developing States divisions, within existing resources, would necessitate the shifting of resources by the two regional Commissions from existing organizational units to the new divisions to be established within each Commission, and in that regard, the request, even if implemented within existing resources, would have resource implications, as the two regional Commissions reprioritize and reorganize their resource use in 2026 and beyond.

The attention of the General Assembly is drawn to the views expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as contained in its report A/54/7 and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 54/249, on the use of the phrase “within existing resources” in a number of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, in which the Advisory Committee emphasized the responsibility of the Secretariat to inform the General Assembly thoroughly and accurately about whether there are enough resources to implement a new activity. In this

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instance, the two regional Commissions would strive to meet the request within the existing level of resources but presently are unable to identify activities that could be curtailed to effect that request. Further assessment will be undertaken and presented in the proposed programme budget for 2026 for consideration by the General Assembly, as appropriate.

Furthermore, with regard to operative paragraph 42 of the draft resolution, in the absence of modalities for the comprehensive midterm review and regional preparatory meetings, it is not possible at the present time to estimate the potential costs implications of the related requirements. When the format, scope and modalities of the comprehensive midterm review and regional preparatory meetings are determined, the Secretary-General would assess the budgetary implications and advise the General Assembly in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedures of the Assembly. Once modalities are known, in accordance with established practice, the date of the comprehensive midterm review would be determined in consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management.

Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/78/L.80, entitled “The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity”, 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.

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/78/L.80, entitled “The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity”.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/78/L.80?

*Draft resolution A/78/L.80 was adopted (resolution 78/317).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor to speakers for explanations of position after adoption, may I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to

10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Habet (Belize):** I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

At the outset, CARICOM aligns itself with the statements to be delivered by the representatives of Samoa and Uganda on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

CARICOM extends its warmest congratulations to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for its steadfast and successful hosting and leadership of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, resulting in a robust outcome document (resolution 78/317, annex). The Conference has provided an opportunity for the international community to shift focus from discussions to action. Against that backdrop, CARICOM welcomes the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, which sets out a clear vision to steer the international community’s collaboration with small island developing States (SIDS) for the next 10 critical years.

The vulnerability of the Caribbean region to a diverse set of challenges is well documented. The 2024 hurricane season in the Caribbean is off to an unusually active start. For us, climate change is a lived reality. This reality serves as a testament of the impact of Hurricane Beryl, which caused widespread destruction in Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and neighbouring countries along its path. With that reality in mind, more than ever there is a need to respond swiftly to bolster resilience. The repercussions of climate-related disasters weigh heavily on the development prospects of SIDS. As the challenges faced by SIDS are highly interdependent, a new more holistic approach is needed to address them.

Therefore, CARICOM is pleased with the significant progress made on the multidimensional vulnerability index, which injects new optimism and drive into a much-needed transformation of the international financial architecture, as it will allow for the re-evaluation of access to financing, including concessional financing, through the perspective of its members vulnerabilities. CARICOM is further pleased that its members were able to meet the challenge of reaching consensus on the contours of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States for its adoption. The Agenda adequately identifies the

needs of SIDS, while crystallizing the priorities in a clear framework that will help guide coherent policy action at the global level on how we are to meet those needs. CARICOM remains committed to working with our partners to implement the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS. The adoption of the Agenda signifies a renewed commitment by Member States to work together towards a more resilient and prosperous future. The implementation of the strategies outlined in the Agenda can build a more sustainable and inclusive future for future generations, while at the same time contributing, in a holistic and integrated manner, to the global efforts to achieve sustainable development.

**Mr. Luteru** (Samoa): I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Uganda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to once again congratulate the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda on successfully hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). We also acknowledge the leadership and efforts of all those who contributed to and played an instrumental role in the convening of the fourth International Conference and in achieving its strong outcome document, entitled “The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity”.

As the General Assembly has just adopted the resolution endorsing the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (resolution 78/317), the havoc caused by Hurricane Beryl across the Caribbean region a couple of weeks ago serves as a stark reminder of the grave consequences of unmitigated climate change, and of the painful and irreparable losses and development setbacks that SIDS continue to face in the wake of such disasters. This is a situation that must end. The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States is a concise, focused and action-oriented blueprint that requires us to move away from the business-as-usual approach and to adopt more deliberate actions to address the needs and priorities of SIDS. However, agreeing to a programme of action is only a first step. The question now is: how do we effectively implement the Agenda for SIDS and deliver on its commitments?

First, meeting the sustainable development priorities of SIDS requires our collective efforts. As a special case for sustainable development, we have reaffirmed our commitment to supporting SIDS on their pathway to achieving sustainable development and resilient prosperity. Sustainable partnerships must underpin our international cooperation, and SIDS must be equal partners in them. Such partnerships must involve our development partners, the private sector, civil society, youth, women, persons with disabilities and older persons. Effective and long-lasting capacity-building, economic development and institution-strengthening for SIDS, rather than ad hoc responses, are critical for SIDS to take ownership of their sustainable development and build their resilience. Our States are past the point of tokenism. Concrete action and investment that brings about tangible results are pivotal. For our partners, more discipline will be required to fulfil long-standing commitments. Effective implementation will require more predictable means, including financing, capacity-building, technology transfer, data collection and management, and technical cooperation. The operationalization of the Centre of Excellence for the Sustainable Development of SIDS as a key institution for implementation is a must.

Secondly, we need to track progress of implementation. The work towards a robust plan of action with an accompanying monitoring and evaluation framework will strengthen accountability at all levels and support implementation in a coherent and responsive manner. AOSIS cannot stress enough that the mainstreaming of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda across the United Nations will allow the Organization to be more effective as a key development partner that offers tailored support to SIDS.

Finally, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda is our road map for the next 10 years. However, it will not deliver on its objective if it is not integrated appropriately into the relevant ongoing processes, including the Summit of the Future and the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development. The role of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in the follow-up and implementation of the Agenda remains of paramount importance. In that regard, we welcome last week’s discussions during the dedicated SIDS segment and look forward to using that forum as a platform to advance implementation and international cooperation.

In conclusion, we left the fourth International Conference with a sense of hope and optimism,

albeit cautious optimism. After all, SIDS have found themselves at this juncture before. SIDS will approach the next decade with renewed tenacity and hope. We have every confidence that the United Nations and our partners will provide us with meaningful support on our journey towards resilient prosperity. The time for action is now.

**Mr. Kwoba** (Uganda): I have the honour to deliver this explanation of position on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to express the deep appreciation of the Group of 77 and China to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), held from 27 to 30 May. We also commend the bureau members of the Conference's Preparatory Committee, led by the co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Maldives and New Zealand, for their valued contributions in preparing for the Conference. Furthermore, we extend our gratitude to the delegation of Samoa for negotiating the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS just adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 78/317) on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The General Assembly has adopted resolution 78/317, entitled "The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity", at a critical time, when the SIDS continue to face unrelenting and compounding impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, disasters and natural hazards, health and other social related challenges and economic vulnerabilities, as well as the progressive deterioration in their ability to withstand external shocks and enhance their resilience. The distinct nature and unique vulnerabilities of the SIDS undermine their national efforts to achieve sustainable development, making the SIDS a special case that requires targeted support from the international community to enable them to address those vulnerabilities and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The full implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS remains critical for SIDS in their national efforts to achieve resilient prosperity. Its implementation coincides with the remaining six years for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The situation therefore calls for enhanced global partnership for development

and the adequate provision and mobilization of all means of implementation and continued international support to SIDS so as to enable them to fully implement the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda. We therefore urge the international community, in particular developed countries, to provide the required means of implementation to SIDS in that regard.

Small island developing States, like other developing countries, continue to face an increasing financing gap. Urgent actions must be undertaken to address the financing gap and the increasing debt burden if SIDS are to build economic resilience. We therefore call for urgent reform of the international financial architecture in order to make it more fit for purpose and to respond to the needs of SIDS by facilitating easier access to affordable and concessional financing. It is important that all support provided by the international community to SIDS is in line with their national and regional priorities.

Finally, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its unwavering solidarity with small island developing States and remains committed to support the timely and full implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS within the framework of South-South cooperation. We emphasize that developed countries have an obligation and a commitment to assist developing countries in meeting their development objectives, and we urge developed countries to fulfil all previous and new commitments.

**Mr. Webson** (Antigua and Barbuda): I begin by offering thanks, on behalf of the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda, for the unwavering support we received in hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States. When Antigua and Barbuda decided to host the Conference, we did so with one focus in mind: to ensure that the next 10-year framework for small island developing States (SIDS) is one that will transform all SIDS.

We believe that the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS will undoubtedly transform all SIDS and allow for resilient prosperity. Today, in the General Assembly Hall, we are embarking on a momentous journey, united by our shared recognition of the unique challenges and extraordinary potential that define us SIDS. The adoption today of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (resolution 78/317) begins that road.

At the heart of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda is an unwavering commitment to resilience, sustainability



and transformative development. As we witnessed during Hurricane Beryl, SIDS, are on the front line of climate change. Our islands are the first to bear witness to rising sea levels, increasingly severe weather patterns and the resultant socioeconomic impacts. The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda is therefore not just a road map; it is a framework for hope, a declaration of solidarity and a call to action.

Our Agenda is built upon several critical pillars.

First, we need climate action. We seek urgent global cooperation to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and other agreed climate declarations. That includes substantial financial support and technology transfer if we are to enable our countries to adapt and mitigate climate impacts effectively and to transition towards renewable energy. We cannot afford to wait — the time for action is now.

Secondly, we need sustainable economic growth. Our economies must diversify in order to build resilience against external shocks. It is important that international partnerships assist us in harnessing the potential of the blue economy, promoting sustainable tourism and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises. Entrepreneurship and innovation, fuelled by modern technology and robust infrastructure, will drive our growth. We emphasize that access to finance, fair trade and employment for our citizens is critical for our development.

Thirdly, we need social inclusion and equity. We made it clear that not a single citizen should be left behind. We underscore that education, healthcare, gender and disability equality and the alleviation of poverty are foundational components of our development strategies. Empowering our people ensures the development of a just and prosperous society.

Fourthly, we must ensure the health of our people. We reiterate that responding to pandemics, ensuring healthy lifestyles and addressing non-communicable diseases will allow for our citizens to be equals in our own sustainable development.

Fifthly, we need environmental protection. Our natural resources are not only our heritage, but also our future. The conservation and sustainable management of our oceans, forests and biodiversity are imperative. We advocate stronger international cooperation to combat pollution, unsustainable fishing practices and environmental degradation.

Sixthly, we must enhance disaster risk reduction. We must enhance our capacity to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. Building resilient infrastructure, fostering community preparedness and securing international assistance for post-disaster recovery are critical steps towards safeguarding our future.

The Centre of Excellence for the Sustainable Development of SIDS and the Debt Sustainability Support Service for SIDS are hallmarks of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda, and both must be institutionalized within the United Nations system and fully supported. They offer a different approach for SIDS, one that is SIDS-led, SIDS-owned and tailored to SIDS.

As the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS offers other broad-range development plans and initiatives for small island developing States, it must be taken as a whole and implemented as a whole. We were strategic in our approach to the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS and must be strategic in its execution. As we have just adopted the Agenda, let us remember that our collective action today will shape our world tomorrow.

The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS is a testament to our global determination and our faith in multilateralism. I call upon the Assembly to stand with us as SIDS, not just in words, but in tangible, transformative action. Let us move the Agenda from paper to people. Together, we can ensure that the next 10 years are better for small island developing States than the past 10 years. Together, we can build a resilient, sustainable and inclusive future for small island developing States the world over.

**Ms. Seid (Palau):** We align ourselves with the statement just delivered by the representative of Samoa on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

I would like to begin by congratulating the people and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda on successfully hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). That pivotal event underscored the unity of our island nations in the call for a resilient and sustained development future in the face of unprecedented global challenges. The outcome, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, marks a significant milestone in our collective efforts to secure a sustainable and prosperous future. We now have a new north star for SIDS development, our framework for the next 10 years. We would also like to thank New Zealand and the Maldives for co-facilitating the negotiations of the

Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS and successfully shepherding our collective efforts to develop a succinct and actionable document.

As the Agenda keenly notes, climate change, marine pollution and environmental degradation pose significant threats to our nations, but our islands hold tremendous potential for prosperity — not only for our own nations, but for the global community at large. We have seen leading innovative solutions for ocean conservation and sustainable development come from many SIDS. As we move forward, it is imperative that we enhance our efforts to accelerate climate action in line with our commitment to the Paris Agreement, protect marine ecosystems, combat illegal fishing and promote sustainable fisheries. By doing so, we not only safeguard our livelihoods, but also contribute to global food security, biodiversity and the fight against climate change, for the health of our planet.

In addition to environmental sustainability, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS places strong emphasis on economic resilience and social well-being. It highlights the need for diversified and inclusive economies that can withstand external shocks and provide opportunities for all. Investments in renewable energy, ecotourism and digital infrastructure are just a few of the ways we can achieve those goals. Furthermore, the Agenda recognizes the importance of education, healthcare and social protection in building resilient communities. Ensuring that our peoples have access to quality education and healthcare is fundamental to achieving sustainable development. As the Agenda stresses, access to quality predictable finance is key to achieving those fundamental goals.

Palau is honored to be the incoming Chair of AOSIS for 2025 to 2026, and as we are passed the baton by our esteemed Chair of Samoa before us, we will maintain their dedication and momentum towards the swift implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS. A robust monitoring and evaluation framework is key, and SIDS-led initiatives like the Centre of Excellence for the Sustainable Development of SIDS need to be prioritized so that we can share our challenges and our successes in implementation.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that at the heart of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda are partnerships. None of us can do it alone. Let us all reaffirm our dedication to the principles of equity, inclusivity and sustainability and work together to build

a world in which no one is left behind and in which the unique challenges and contributions of SIDS are fully recognized and supported. Our collective efforts will pave the way for a brighter and more resilient future for all.

**Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives): I align my remarks with the statements delivered by the representative of Uganda, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of Samoa, as Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

As one of the co-Chairs of the Preparatory Committee that facilitated the negotiation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the Maldives congratulates the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda on successfully hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States. We also acknowledge the leadership of Samoa, as the Chair of AOSIS, in achieving the strong outcome document.

Ambassador Schwalger, the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, and I were determined to ensure that the document would remain focused on SIDS, action-oriented and forward-looking. In order to achieve that, we implemented substantial editorial changes and engaged in more than 100 hours of negotiations with Member States. I applaud Ambassador Schwalger for her expertise and skills in steering the negotiations with me throughout the process.

The devastating impacts of Hurricane Beryl across the Caribbean region a few weeks ago underscore the critical importance of early implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS. From the perspective of the Maldives, I will add three points.

First, it is necessary to integrate the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The Maldives requests the United Nations development system agencies to integrate the Agenda into their frameworks and programmes. I therefore wish to request the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to urgently bring the necessary changes to the relevant procedures in order to ensure that implementation of the Agenda at country level begins without delay.

Secondly, we must integrate the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS into national action plans. In that regard, the onus is on SIDS. We must take the leap of faith in the programmes of action that we ourselves

developed and agreed. The United Nations resident coordinators and the resident representatives of funds and programmes, at country level, must start to work with Governments to support them in updating the national planning documents.

Thirdly, SIDS need genuine, mutually beneficial partnerships to address their unique challenges and diversify their economies. The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS identifies specific actions to bridge those gaps, with partnerships serving as crucial catalysts. Partnerships are already enhancing State and productive capacities in SIDS. Those partnerships are providing expertise, innovation and capital to support SIDS. We must replicate such best practices at scale.

**Mr. Meschchanov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me to congratulate everyone here on the adoption of the outcome of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States by the General Assembly.

First of all, I would like to thank both the people and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for their hospitality, which our delegation was able to appreciate. The Russian Federation regards the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States as a success. We would like to express our gratitude to the co-facilitators of the preparatory process for organizing the negotiations on the outcome document. We are grateful to the experts of all delegations who participated in consultations for their professionalism and willingness to seek compromise.

One of the most complicated issues was the potential impact of climate change on the security of their countries. As a result of protracted negotiations, the following language was found:

“We take note of the concerns expressed by small island developing States that the impacts of climate change could have possible implications on small island developing States, including [...], as exacerbated by other factors, security consequences” (*resolution 78/317, para. 6*).

We stress that, in the context of this document, the Russian Federation views this premise strictly as a vision of small island developing States with respect solely to their national security, determined by the geographical specificities of these countries. We do not believe that it is possible to interpret this language

as applicable to other States or related to matters of international peace and security.

We also stress that our position on the question of the link between climate and security remains unchanged. The Russian Federation does not recognize such a direct link. We emphasize that if this issue is raised again in the Security Council, we will continue to regard it as falling outside the Council’s mandate.

Turning now to paragraph 32 (G) (a) (iii) of resolution 78/317, on the use of artificial intelligence for work with demographic data, we note that the reference to international law in this context appears misplaced. Artificial intelligence is a form of information and communications technology (ICT), and the subject of the applicability of existing norms of international law in relation to ICT has not yet been resolved through negotiations on international information security at the United Nations. Accordingly, we reaffirm our position that this matter has yet to be resolved in specialized platforms of the United Nations system.

In conclusion, I wish to stress once again that the Russian Federation supports and will continue to support small island developing States in their aspiration to achieve sustainable development and prosperity. We will help to support the implementation of the 10-year programme adopted.

**Mr. Tōnē** (Tonga): We are pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the Kingdom of Tonga in our national capacity and in alignment with those statements delivered by the representatives of Samoa and Uganda on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

At the outset, we congratulate the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for successfully hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States. We are grateful for the kind hospitality received by our delegation, and we extend our gratitude to the members of the Bureau of the Conference Preparatory Committee, experts and the Secretariat team for their dedication and hard work in preparing the meeting.

We have arrived at a critical juncture where our collective efforts are vitally important to ensuring that what we have endorsed as the outcome document of the fourth International Conference — “The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity” — will be our blueprint for action-oriented development. As

have repeatedly conveyed in previous meetings of the General Assembly and other forums, we call on the need for accelerated global efforts to address climate change, including through considerably increased financing for adaptation and mitigation, recognizing the special circumstances of small island developing States (SIDS) with respect to climate vulnerability. Indeed, we have just witnessed the devastating impacts of Hurricane Beryl across the Caribbean region, and, in that regard, I would convey our condolences to the victims of the hurricane and to those affected by the stark reality of the climate crisis.

Tonga and other developing States require greater access to concessional financing to support our development endeavours and strengthen our resilience against external shocks. Tonga fully supports the review of the international financial architecture in this respect. The small size of our economies brings as a consequence the fact that global events have disproportionate impacts on us. A perfect example is the disruption of supply chains of the last several years. With the cost of imported goods always rising and energy costs spiralling — all of which triggers upticks in inflation — an increasing number of families are being pushed into poverty. However, we are hopeful that with the concise, focused and action-oriented blueprint of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda, players committed to bringing anticipated outcomes to fruition will appear, which we would welcome.

By now we should be able to identify why the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway was not fully achieved and how we can best step up our efforts to positively contribute to an effective implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda. We are encouraged to see our partners take on this enormous task and look forward to further collaborative efforts aimed at achieving the successful implementation of the Agenda. We will continue to be guided by the collective wisdom of our small island developing States as we endeavour to build resilient economies and safe and prosperous societies committed to urgent climate action, with the support of a robust evaluation method devised to manage the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda, while also encouraging strong and genuine partnership.

**Mr. Aiello** (United States of America): The United States is pleased to join consensus on the Antigua and

Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (resolution 78/317). We appreciate the flexibility shown by all delegations throughout the negotiation process. In particular, we thank New Zealand and Maldives for their efforts aimed at reaching a consensus outcome that supports small island developing States (SIDS) in achieving their vision for resilient prosperity and sustainable development. We also thank Antigua and Barbuda for its leadership in hosting a successful fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

The United States notes that the world we face today is very different from the one we faced 10 years ago when we adopted the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. As we adopt the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda, we are also confronting multiple interrelated global challenges, including a worsening climate crisis, growing food insecurity, lingering effects of the coronavirus-disease pandemic and a cost-of-living crisis. With these challenges in the background, we must be bold and creative in following up on and implementing the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda and on our commitments to SIDS. The United States remains committed to working with SIDS to help strengthen their resilience, advance their sustainable development and achieve their vision for flexible and lasting prosperity.

We refer the General Assembly to our full explanation of position posted online on 14 May, which clarifies United States policy positions on consensus documents, the independence of other forums and institutions, trade, reform of the international financial institutions, innovation, technology transfer, energy, debt, concessional finance, climate policy and human rights. Although we sometimes differ on our interpretation of language and preferred approaches, we firmly believe that we all share the same vision for the future — that of an international order where all stakeholders work together to meet our global challenges.

**Ms. Karatepe** (Türkiye): Türkiye is pleased to join the consensus today in endorsing the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (resolution 78/317). We appreciate the dedicated and constructive work of the facilitators, the permanent representatives of Maldives and New Zealand, and their teams. We congratulate them on their able leadership in finding consensus on the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda. Türkiye actively and constructively engaged in the



negotiation process for the Agenda. We also take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for successfully hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

The outcome document of the Conference manifests a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments between the small island developing States (SIDS) and their development partners. Effective implementation of the outcome document will help the SIDS address the current challenges they face and build economies that are resilient to future shocks. It will also accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

*Mr. Lapasov (Uzbekistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

By endorsing the outcome document of the Conference, we have recognized that the SIDS are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which represents the gravest of threats to the survival and viability of their people, natural ecosystems and sustainable development. We take note of the concerns expressed by the SIDS that the impacts of climate change could have possible implications for their security. However, Türkiye is of the view that the negative impacts of climate change should instead be regarded as a risk multiplier and addressed within the context of the sustainable development agenda. The framing of climate change as a security issue — as the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda foresees — can in no way be regarded by Türkiye as acceptance of this linkage in a broader or different context. In line with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, Türkiye will continue to address climate change from a sustainable-development perspective.

On a different note, Türkiye supports the well-being, prosperity and sustainable development of the SIDS, as well as studies that draw attention to the adverse impacts on them of climate change and human activities in the oceans. However, Türkiye dissociates itself from the references made in the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Neither participation in the activities of the fourth International Conference or its Preparatory Committee, nor the approval of the outcome document today, can be construed as a change in Türkiye's legal position with regard to the UNCLOS.

Türkiye has consistently stated that it does not consider the Convention on the Law of the Sea to be the only legal framework that regulates all activities in the oceans and seas. Türkiye believes that the UNCLOS is insufficient to combat modern challenges to the law of the sea fuelled by climate change. Such concerns and objections have also been raised throughout the years by a number of other States.

As Türkiye stated at the fourth International Conference on SIDS, in Antigua and Barbuda, it is committed to supporting the SIDS in their efforts aimed at achieving sustainable development, resilience-building and climate action. We are ready and willing to continue working with SIDS towards implementing the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda.

**Mr. Mott (Bahamas):** The Bahamas aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Uganda, Samoa and Belize on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Alliance of Small Island States and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), respectively.

At the outset, the Bahamas wishes to congratulate the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda on the successful hosting of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States. We also take this opportunity to thank and commend the Conference's Preparatory Committee and its Chairs, for their invaluable contributions and leadership in this important process.

The General Assembly's adoption of the resolution entitled "The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity" (resolution 78/317) arrives at a critical juncture where small island developing States (SIDS) can no longer rely on unfulfilled promises or false optimism. The recent devastating impact of Hurricane Beryl on several CARICOM nations vividly illustrates the detrimental effects of climate change. Today members of the Caribbean Community are faced with the arduous task of reclaiming their shattered lives and livelihoods, all while contending with an international financial architecture that does not consider the vulnerabilities of SIDS and is unfit for purpose.

For the Bahamas — and indeed for all SIDS — the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States is of paramount importance. It acknowledges our vulnerabilities while emphasizing our potential for growth and innovation. The Antigua

and Barbuda Agenda is not merely a set of aspirations. It is a road map for concrete action and transformative change. We particularly welcome the emphasis on reforming the international financial architecture to enable easier access to affordable and concessional finance facilities, which is crucial for our ability to invest in sustainable development and build resilience against external shocks.

The focus on scaling-up climate action and support is also vital. As low-lying island nations and as large ocean States, we are at the front lines of climate change. The commitment to accelerating actions towards the full implementation of the Paris Agreement gives us hope for a more secure future. However, we must stress that the initiatives and plans outlined in the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda should not remain merely theoretical. The success of the Agenda hinges on the principle of shared responsibility, and we must make a concerted effort to execute all action items outlined therein.

The time for rhetoric has passed; now is the time for decisive action. The Bahamas therefore calls on all States Members of the United Nations, international organizations and civil society to work collaboratively towards the full implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda. It is imperative that we ensure that the monitoring and evaluation framework is robust and that we hold ourselves accountable for fulfilling the commitments set forth in the Agenda.

In conclusion, the Bahamas reaffirms its commitment to the successful implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda, and we stand ready to work with our fellow SIDS and the rest of the international community to ensure that we achieve this goal.

**Mr. Melo Gomes Oliveira** (Portugal): First of all, we would like to express our condolences to the victims of Hurricane Beryl. We would also like to congratulate Antigua and Barbuda for organizing the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, and its facilitators, the representatives of Maldives and New Zealand, for the successful outcome document (resolution 78/317).

Allow me to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by this momentous occasion to deliver four brief messages on behalf of my country. First, as stated at the Conference in Antigua and Barbuda, we are committed to the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing

States. The most recent example of this commitment is the launch of the United Nations-Portugal Ocean Fellowship and the facilitation of the draft resolution on the multidimensional vulnerability index (A/78/L.98), which we have successfully undertaken with our colleagues from Antigua and Barbuda. We thank Samoa for its great cooperation and look forward to working with the incoming presidency of the Alliance of Small Island States, Palau, in the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda.

Secondly, as active partners, we are particularly invested in strengthening such key frameworks relating to the small island developing States (SIDS) as the SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS Global Business Network and its Forum.

Thirdly, we look forward to working on the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework to make sure that all parties deliver on their commitments.

Finally, the General Assembly can continue to count on our support nationally and through the European Union (EU), based on the EU Council conclusions adopted on 7 May, including in ongoing key processes towards the Summit of the Future and the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position after the adoption of resolution 78/317.

At this point, on behalf of the President of the General Assembly, I wish to add a note of thanks to the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda for successfully hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States and for providing extraordinary hospitality.

With Hurricane Beryl's recently passage through the Caribbean region and the havoc it has wreaked there, the need is clear for adopting the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States and for fulfilling the Agenda's call to accelerate the operationalization of the loss and damage fund and the implementation of disaster-risk-reduction policies. As the small island developing States (SIDS) continue to experience multidimensional vulnerability, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda should stand as an instrument of recommitment to their sustainable development.

We are at the very start of the Decade of Action designed to lead towards the resilient prosperity of the SIDS. I call on all Member States and stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda as just endorsed by the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 18?

*It was so decided.*

### **Agenda items 27, 61 and 111**

#### **Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/78/765 and A/78/765/Corr.1)**

#### **Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/78/779)**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia, former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

**Mr. Šimonović (Croatia):** In my capacity as former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) at its seventeenth session, I am pleased to brief the General Assembly on the Commission's work from January 2023 to December 2023.

I wish to start by expressing my gratitude to the Vice-Chairs — the representatives of Bangladesh and Germany — for their support and commitment to the Commission's work. I also wish to express appreciation for the representatives of Brazil, Morocco and Sweden, who served as Chairs of the country-specific configurations in Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic and Liberia configurations, respectively. My most sincere appreciation goes to all members of the Commission for their active and fruitful engagement throughout the year and for supporting my delegation in effectively realizing the ambitious agenda that we collectively set for the Commission for its seventeenth session. I also wish to acknowledge the excellent Secretariat support we received from Assistant Secretary-General Elizabeth Spehar and her team at the Peacebuilding Support Office, for which I remain most grateful.

In 2023, the Commission held 20 ambassadorial-level meetings, which included meetings on separate country- and region-specific settings and other thematic priorities. It also carried out three substantive missions, namely, to Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Ethiopia, where it engaged with the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa.

Allow me to highlight some key features of the Commission's work. First, the Commission has engaged in supporting 10 separate country- and region-specific settings, broadening its geographical scope, including by holding meetings for the first time on Canada, Honduras, Mozambique, Nepal and Norway. The Commission also continued its regional engagements in the Great Lakes region, strengthened peacebuilding and implementation of the regional maritime-security framework in the Gulf of Guinea and addressed transnational organized crime, terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel.

Secondly, in accordance with its mandate, the Commission continued to address cross-cutting and thematic issues within the framework of country-specific and regional discussions, which provided an opportunity for countries to share their experiences and good practices in peacebuilding. Such issues as transitional justice, the role of indigenous peoples, education in peacebuilding, and peace and reconciliation efforts were addressed. Similarly, the Commission convened a ministerial-level meeting that was aimed at providing political guidance and building momentum for strengthening multilateral cooperation to address challenges to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The meeting was an opportunity for members of the Commission to study the policy brief entitled "A New Agenda for Peace", which pertained to the work of the Commission.

Thirdly, the Commission continued its advocacy in support of the critical role and voices of women and youth in peacebuilding and sustaining peace throughout the world. In accordance with its gender strategy and action plan, the Commission has continued to place women, peace and security at the centre of its work, including in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.

Gender dimensions of peacebuilding were also integrated into the Commission's country, regional and thematic discussions and engagements, including

during country visits. Similarly, in line with its Strategic Action Plan on Youth and Peacebuilding, the Commission has continued to support the critical role played by young people and youth-led organizations in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Of interest, the Commission held a dedicated meeting on youth, peace and security, during which we heard from the United Nations Youth Envoy, the AU Youth Envoy and youth representatives from the League of Arab States and civil society organizations in Southeast Asia.

Fourthly, the Commission continued to enhance its bridging role with other intergovernmental bodies by providing 16 advisories to the Security Council and 3 advisories to the General Assembly, including through letters and formal briefings. The Commission also provided two submissions and briefings to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and held its annual joint event with ECOSOC on ways to identify and address linkages between peace and development on the ground. The Commission also had informal engagements at the ambassadorial and expert levels to strengthen coordination and cooperation between ECOSOC and the PBC, which was in line with the Commission's approach to promoting coherence and impact for peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development efforts.

Fifthly, the Commission continued to strengthen partnerships with partners outside the Organization by engaging with the World Bank on the activities of the World Bank Group. The Commission also continued its engagement with regional and subregional organizations, notably the AU. To that end, and together with the Chair of the AU Peace and Security Council, I convened the sixth annual informal consultative meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission and the AU Peace and Security Council, which provided an opportunity to further strengthen the partnership between the two bodies in support of peacebuilding efforts in Africa. A joint statement was agreed after the meeting which now institutionalizes the holding of the annual joint consultative meeting between the two bodies.

I also led a successful mission to AU Headquarters, accompanied by both Vice-Chairs and the Chairs of the country-configurations as well as the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, to strengthen our engagement, and we agreed to hold expert group meetings before the annual ambassadorial-level meeting between the Commission and the AU Peace and Security Council. Accompanied by the Vice-Chairs

from Bangladesh and Germany, I also led a successful mission to Mozambique to follow up on the ground on the recommendations from a meeting we had had earlier in the year. The Commission also engaged with participants in the 2023 Dialogue on Peacebuilding which brought together the United Nations and civil society organizations and is committed to ensuring and strengthening participation by civil society representatives in its meetings, considering gender parity.

Finally, the Commission continued its dialogue and efforts to ensure peacebuilding financing by holding a meeting with the Peacebuilding Fund's Advisory Group for the first time. At the meeting, opportunities to build on synergies with the Fund through more regular interactions were discussed.

In conclusion, I wish to commend the representative of Brazil for expertly guiding the Commission's work this year and express the dedication of my delegation, as well as my own as Vice-Chair, to continuing to strengthen the Commission, including through the Pact for the Future and the upcoming 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil, the current Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

**Mr. França Danese (Brazil):** As Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Brazil is grateful to its predecessor, Croatia, whose representative ably chaired the PBC at its seventeenth session. I would also like to recognize the work done by the permanent representatives of Morocco and Sweden as Chairs of the country-specific configurations for the Central African Republic and Liberia, respectively.

The seventeenth session of the Commission clearly set the path for the eighteenth session, with increased and diversified engagements aimed at promoting meaningful actions in support of the countries that engaged with the PBC. Furthermore, in that session, the PBC sought to attract new countries to voluntarily and on a fully nationally owned basis request the partnership of the Commission in support of their peacebuilding and sustaining peace strategies.

The Commission represents a unique forum where countries share their challenges, experiences and best practices in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In just the past few months, we have been privileged to receive the Presidents of Guatemala and Colombia,



the Prime Minister of Sao Tome and Principe, and Ministers from Mauritania, the Gambia and the Republic of Korea. Accordingly, at the Commission, the international community can galvanize multiple platforms and resources in support of national and regional peacebuilding priorities underpinned by national ownership.

In that regard, allow me to elaborate on some of the key features of this year's approach and engagement. First, the Commission continues to prioritize peacebuilding by sustainably addressing root causes and drivers of conflicts and crises. The Commission's work is grounded in the understanding that sustainable peace and security must be anchored on fundamental pillars that are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing, such as sustainable social and economic development, food security, human rights in all their dimensions, the strengthening of State institutions, public security and access to justice. The importance of this interlinkage was evident in our engagement with Sao Tome and Principe, where the strengthening of the institutions of justice, human rights and security backed with sustainable development is acknowledged as a sustaining-peace approach. As Chair, in May 2024, I visited Sao Tome and Principe to explore how the Commission could tangibly support the country's reforms and efforts, including through fostering bilateral, South-South and triangular cooperation.

Secondly, the Commission continues to highlight the universality of peace and foster dialogue on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In today's world, challenges to peacebuilding and sustaining peace are evident at many levels, and no country or continent is immune. This was demonstrated in March 2024, when the Commission engaged with Kenya, Timor-Leste and Norway on their respective prevention and sustaining-peace strategies. By bringing their diverse experiences to the Commission, these countries not only demonstrated the relevance of national ownership, but they also highlighted the importance of collective approaches through whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Thirdly, the Commission remains strongly committed to an action-oriented approach by actively promoting the sharing of success stories and good practices in peacebuilding, sustaining peace and conflict prevention, upon the request of interested countries. In adopting this approach, the Commission

seeks to contribute to a wider and inclusive discussion on the implementation of the resolutions on sustaining peace and on how to improve such implementation. This point is even more relevant now as we are gearing up for the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

Following such an approach, the Commission held a recent meeting on the Gambia to highlight the critical and precise role played by the PBC in convening stakeholders across the international community, the United Nations system, international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations and civil society in support of the country's successful priorities for sustaining peace. This approach was also reinforced by a fruitful engagement of the Commission in March with Mauritania, during which the Mauritanian Government showcased its efforts to sustain peace, in particular its approach to moving inclusive and sustainable development forward by enhancing social protection and basic-service delivery and promoting peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities.

Fourthly, the Commission continues to promote inclusiveness and unity. Inclusiveness is a central pillar not only for the creation of stable and peaceful societies but also for sustainable development. Since its inception, the Commission has been clear about the importance of the role of women and youth in humanitarian, peacebuilding, recovery and development efforts. The Commission has developed specific strategies and plans of action to ensure that youth and women are part of efforts aimed at peacebuilding and sustaining peace in their countries.

In March 2024, for the first time, the Commission held a dedicated meeting with civil society on women, peace and security during this year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women. At the meeting, civil organizations from countries and regions considered by the PBC, together with global peacebuilding networks, highlighted the current challenges and opportunities for women's participation in prevention, peacebuilding and recovery. The Commission intends to continue to ensure and strengthen the participation of civil society organizations.

Fifthly, the Commission continues to enhance its partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations, in support of national peacebuilding outcomes. I recently visited Washington,

DC, where I had the opportunity to address the Executive Directors of the World Bank Group and high-level officials at the Inter-American Development Bank, on the importance of supporting countries that are engaged in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. I underscored how these institutions can better leverage comparative advantages at the field level, notably through joint diagnostics and shared data and capacities. I also drew attention to the fact that projects of the Peacebuilding Fund can become pilot projects to be scaled up as countries show their ability to implement and get good results out of them. In consultation with PBC members, I will continue to work towards that end, as it generates further tangible ideas of how to better link the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and the international financial institutions.

In terms of deepening partnerships, the Commission continues to actively work towards stronger long-term partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. In May, the Commission took a concrete step to strengthen its partnership with the African Union (AU) by formally issuing a standing invitation to the AU to participate in all meetings of the Commission. Later this year, the Commission will hold its seventh annual consultative meeting with the AU Peace and Security Council during which they will continue discussing their collaboration in tackling peacebuilding challenges on the African continent in a coordinated and concerted way.

Lastly, the Commission will continue contributing to the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture, with a view to supporting conflict prevention. I am sure we will also benefit from the discussions at the Summit of the Future as well as the Summit's outcome document, as they will contribute to shaping the PBC we want, namely, a reinforced instrument for the United Nations to achieve its main purpose: bringing the promises of our Charter to life in the real world.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

**Ms. Tolstoi** (European Union): Let me take this opportunity to thank and commend the former and current Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the representatives of Croatia and Brazil, for their leadership in the PBC's work.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries

Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, as well as Andorra, align themselves with this statement.

The world is facing multiple crises, and no region has been spared. To meet these challenges, we need a United Nations support system for conflict prevention that is more coherent, better resourced and better prepared. I wish to take this opportunity to highlight three priority areas, where the upcoming Summit of the Future and the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture provide important windows of opportunity.

Universal responsibility for conflict prevention and the importance of nationally led and owned prevention strategies are the first priority. It is close to a year since we received the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. The EU strongly supports the Agenda and its renewed focus on conflict prevention and sustaining peace as a universal obligation supported by a strengthened United Nations toolbox. In this spirit, we hope that the Summit of the Future in September 2024 signals a strengthened global political commitment to sustaining peace. One deliverable that we hope to see from the Summit is a more systematic focus on nationally led conflict-prevention strategies. Developed voluntarily and based on national ownership, people-centred national prevention strategies are fundamental to addressing the drivers of violence and armed conflict. These strategies could be presented at the Peacebuilding Commission to support the PBC's bridging and convening role.

We must dispel the myth that conflict prevention is something intrusive and negative, when in fact it is a universal responsibility that we have all signed onto as signatories of the United Nations Charter. In this context, it is especially noteworthy and commendable that several countries have already stepped forward to present their national prevention and reconciliation efforts at the PBC. National prevention strategies also provide an entry point for systematic engagement with the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and potential support through the PBF.

My second point concerns financing. We know that conflict prevention is cost-effective, but peacebuilding still suffers from an alarming funding gap. Conflicts are on the rise but development assistance for peace is at a record low. In December 2023, the General Assembly unanimously acknowledged the necessity

for adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding (resolution 78/257). We are encouraged by that substantial, ambitious and balanced resolution, which provides much-needed assessed funding to the PBF. Yet more is needed, including through voluntary contributions. It is essential that the upcoming review of the peacebuilding architecture includes concrete proposals on how to meet the challenges to financing for peacebuilding. At the operational level, the Peacebuilding Fund has proved to be a useful instrument in supporting coordinated efforts across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. However, it is necessary to broaden the Fund's donor base and strengthen the relationship between the international financial institutions and regional development banks and the PBF.

The EU and its member States provide more than 60 per cent of the PBF's financing. While the PBF will benefit from assessed contributions, and while we welcome wider engagement with its work, we must jointly ensure that the autonomy, independence and uniqueness of the PBF are preserved. The PBC could also play a greater role in mobilizing resources for sustaining peace with its power to convene Member States, United Nations country teams and international financial institutions.

Thirdly, we would like to see increased interaction and complementarity between the PBC and the Security Council. This interaction has intensified in the past couple of years. We have seen record numbers of PBC advice being sent to the Security Council, and briefings by the PBC Chair to the Security Council have become more frequent. We have also seen countries on the agenda of the Security Council engage with the PBC and greater attention being given to programmatic activities in peacekeeping operations.

Efforts to sustain peace are also an integral part of peacekeeping operations transition strategies. Closer cooperation with the PBC is key to enhancing the inclusion of peacebuilding components in United Nations peacekeeping and to the full, effective and meaningful engagement of women and youth in peacebuilding activities. Timely advice between the Council and the PBC on this point is therefore very important. More operationally, a more regular, free-flowing and sequenced interaction between the PBC and Security Council would facilitate the partnership between the two bodies and ensure the relevance of PBC advice. Finally, United Nations briefers could interact with the

PBC on the peacebuilding components of field-based United Nations missions and their mandates.

**Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa): I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission for organizing today's joint debate to take stock of the progress made by the United Nations in advancing peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

We are encouraged by the continued achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission as illustrated in the report on its seventeenth session (A/78/765 and A/78/765/Corr.1). These achievements demonstrate the increasing role and importance of the Commission in continuing to support the needs of Member States undergoing peacebuilding processes. Notwithstanding these achievements, the Commission holds much untapped potential in other vital areas.

The Commission has the capacity to offer more support to transitions of both peacekeeping and special political missions, prevention of violent outbreaks and restoration of constitutional and democratic order, expanding partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and advancing inclusive economic initiatives. In this regard, the review of the peacebuilding architecture provides a platform to further enhance the working methods of the Commission.

Increasing the visibility of the Commission, its engagement with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and improved use of its Vice-Chairs, are all enhancements that South Africa would support. The cooperation of the Commission and regional organizations in supporting approaches to locally owned and led peacebuilding and sustaining peace is vital and should therefore be strengthened and maintained on a regular basis within existing frameworks and in consultation with the countries concerned.

We note the positive engagement on gendered approaches to peacebuilding and on increasing the participation of women in efforts to sustain peace. Further engagement on the Commission's support for regional organizations in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda is emphasized to address existing gaps and challenges.

The Peacebuilding Fund remains an important source of funding for United Nations peacebuilding activities. South Africa welcomes the use of assessed contributions towards peacebuilding,

as this would strengthen the role of the Commission in supporting peacebuilding initiatives.

The first ever meeting with the Fund's Advisory Group took place in 2023, and the Commission met to discuss the Fund in April 2024. We encourage further meetings of this kind to monitor and evaluate the impact of selected projects of the Fund. We also encourage Fund recipients to share their experiences and lessons learned as well as the impact of the Fund on their peacebuilding processes. However, in support of maintaining the voluntary nature of the Commission, this should not become a prerequisite for funding. Countries that receive funding could even request Commission advice without holding an ambassadorial-level meeting on their country. This could be considered in the review for inclusion in the next set of twin resolutions that would guide the Commission's work for the following five years.

We support the Fund's priority windows of regional approaches, facilitating transitions and the empowerment of women and youth. It is also our view that the private sector can play a critical role in financing peacebuilding activities through peace-positive investments. We reiterate the call made in resolution 76/305 for the Secretary-General to develop a strategy for resource mobilization from the private sector in support of financing for peacebuilding.

Let me conclude by reaffirming South Africa's commitment to supporting United Nations efforts to promote conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We are ready to contribute to capacity-building initiatives, share best practices and collaborate with fellow Member States and the Peacebuilding Support Office in these collective endeavours.

**Mr. García Toma** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We meet in this Hall after realizing that the first condition for living together in peace is to summon everyone's will to preserve it, hence the importance for the work of peacebuilding and sustaining peace of the preparation of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its seventeenth session (A/78/765 and A/78/765/Corr.1) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/78/779). These documents point to the convergence of comprehensive strategies to help achieve effective post-conflict recovery and provide for ongoing assistance to the Security Council in the formulation of its peacekeeping mandates.

We affirm that assisting political processes in countries affected by violence should be oriented towards building solid institutions, for which the consent of the recipient State and the involvement of civil society and international financial organizations are essential. Indeed, eradicating all forms of violence by delegitimizing it in the minds of people and institutions, as peace takes the form, the shape and the aroma of a culture, requires a global effort.

We share the vision of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Ms. Rosemary A. DiCarlo, with regard to the role of the special political missions, which is becoming increasingly relevant, as is the growing role of the United Nations Police, in its work of approaching and helping civilian populations. We appreciate the importance that the Commission attaches to the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, the latest iteration of which, for the year 2025, we have been working on.

Peru agrees that new approaches are necessary for measuring and preventing conflicts, based on the commitment of Member States to the collective security system, giving due weight to the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth in transition processes. In this context, we recognize the importance of the work of the Peacebuilding Fund aimed at supporting communities and local governments in preventing potential violence. It is inarguable that true peace, genuine security and a stable order can only be sustained with a society clad in justice.

Finally, let us not once again allow the adage to come true that says that, when the time where it is possible to do something is over, that is when we sadly realize that it was indeed possible to do something. Peace exudes nobility and altruism, which is why it holds a place in the minds and hearts of good people. For peace to emerge, it is essential for the Organization to vigorously promote among the peoples of the world a sense of genuine governance and a renewed social contract based on trust, inclusion and living together with values.

**Mr. Szczerski** (Poland): As we have just commenced the informal phase of working on the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture, we must seize the moment and work collaboratively with all stakeholders to develop a shared vision for the future of peacebuilding. That being said, in addition to aligning myself with the statement made by the representative of



the European Union, in its capacity as observer, I would like to highlight three areas that Poland considers particularly important.

First, we consider it important to raise awareness of the worth of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), of which Poland is a proud member, has demonstrated its value in preventing conflict escalation. However, these successes often go unnoticed. Improved communication strategies are needed to showcase the PBC's positive impact and encourage further investment in its preventive efforts. By highlighting success stories, the PBC can garner greater support and solidify its position as an important partner of the Security Council and a vital tool for global peacebuilding.

Secondly, it is important that the advisory role of the PBC in relation to the Security Council be enhanced. To achieve lasting peace and effectively prevent conflict relapse, we believe deepening cooperation with the PBC's expertise in post-conflict recovery is crucial. The Security Council can substantially strengthen its ability in these areas through such collaboration. Currently, the PBC provides written advice on potential conflict situations, but a lack of follow-up leaves room for uncertainty. Establishing clear communication protocols, including feedback mechanisms, would ensure that the Security Council is receiving the most relevant information and that the PBC's approach is refined to better support conflict-prevention efforts.

Thirdly, and finally, it is crucial that greater resources be mobilized. We commend the decision to use assessed contributions to fund the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). However, we acknowledge that assessed funding should complement, not replace, voluntary contributions and innovative funding mechanisms. Further discussion is therefore needed on how to best leverage the synergies between public and private investment to maximize support for peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives.

Understanding that actions speak louder than words, we are significantly amplifying our support for peacebuilding efforts. We are increasing our contribution to the PBF to \$100,000 this year, a nearly threefold increase from our previous commitments. This substantial investment reflects our belief that tangible contributions are crucial for achieving lasting peace.

In conclusion, let us not forget the devastating cost of conflict. We must prioritize preventive measures and

invest heavily in peacebuilding. This is the most effective path to lasting peace and a world free of violence.

**Mr. Laursen (Denmark):** I am pleased to deliver the statement on behalf of the Nordic countries, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark.

We meet today, only a few months away from the Summit of the Future, hopefully a moment in time to reinvigorate multilateralism and to strengthen the ability of the United Nations to deliver on its mandate. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture, including the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, plays a crucial role in this, supporting opportunities for peace through nationally owned and locally driven initiatives.

As we negotiate the Pact for the Future and have embarked on the review process of the peacebuilding architecture, the Nordics continue to stand ready to listen to the views and opinions of the most fragile and conflict-affected States, in order to keep their needs at the very centre of the process. It is clear that the demand for United Nations support in that area continues to be high. We see that when the demand for support through the Peacebuilding Fund outpaces available resources and when new countries come to the Peacebuilding Commission to discuss national peacebuilding priorities.

Going forward, the Nordics would like to make the following five recommendations.

The first is to invest in peace. It is crucial that we ensure adequate, predictable and sustained peacebuilding financing, not least through the Peacebuilding Fund, which continues to be in need of substantial voluntary contributions. It is fair to say that every penny invested in prevention saves many dollars in conflict management.

The second is to prioritize prevention. To sustain peace and avoid further escalation and crisis, we must prioritize prevention. The United Nations is well placed to support national capacities for peace and prevention strategies.

The third is to partner with civil society. For peace to be sustainable, it must be locally owned and anchored. Civil society organization participation and dialogue between civil society organizations and the United Nations on peacebuilding are key.

The fourth is to foster inclusion. We must promote women's full, equal and meaningful participation, including by having women representatives in the deliberations of the Peacebuilding Commission; accelerate the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda; and ensure that the peacebuilding architecture review is based on the voices of affected people and countries.

The fifth and final recommendation is to enhance coherent approaches. We must further leverage the potential of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in transition settings, in environmental peacebuilding, in climate justice and in bringing the United Nations system together.

It is not an easy time to build peace and prevent violent conflict. Therefore, it is important that we act jointly. Multilateralism with the United Nations at its core is key. The Nordics see the important results of the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission and stand ready to collaborate on strengthening the peacebuilding architecture further.

**Mr. Geisler** (Germany): I would like to once again congratulate last year's Chair, Croatia, on a very successful 2023 Peacebuilding Commission annual session. It was an honour and great pleasure for us to serve as one of the Commission's Vice-Chairs. Germany is also very encouraged by the current Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) Chair, Brazil, and its strong leadership and commitment to continuing on the path of strengthening the impact and visibility of the Commission and paving the way for an ambitious peacebuilding architecture review.

Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and would like to make the following three additional points.

First, despite its solely advisory and bridging role and limited access to conference services, the Peacebuilding Commission has established itself as an increasingly relevant and action-oriented United Nations forum. More and more Member States from all regions of the world engage with the Commission and seek its advice or share their experiences, and that is increasingly so at the highest levels of Government. We should recognize that by providing the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office with adequate resources and means.

Secondly, in order to deliver on the expectations of Member States that engage with the Peacebuilding Commission and present their national prevention and peacebuilding approaches, we need to further increase its impact on the ground and ensure a more direct connection between the political support provided by the Commission and access to financial resources. Last year, Ambassador Leendertse chaired the first official PBC-Peacebuilding Fund meeting with the Fund's Advisory Board. Many Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) beneficiaries have presented their peacebuilding objectives and achievements in the PBC since. We should continue to strengthen the interlinkages between the Commission and the Fund, while ensuring the PBF's continued flexibility. The year 2023 was also the year of the establishment of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs' new Peacebuilding Impact Hub. We will continue to support the Hub's work and hope that it will take up a leading role in helping us to understand what works and effect positive change on the ground.

Thirdly, as part of the Peacebuilding Commission's success story, the demand for peacebuilding financing continues to increase. We need to jointly work on ensuring sufficient funding for the Peacebuilding Fund and develop new avenues to generate additional resources for peacebuilding. The introduction of assessed contributions was a very important step, signalling our joint commitment to United Nations peacebuilding. Yet the amount committed has already been surpassed by the increase in demand. Germany has so far voluntarily contributed more than \$300 million to the PBF and will continue to do so. However, in view of the skyrocketing demand, the PBF's donor base will need to be expanded.

Equally important, new funding sources need to be unlocked to complement the Peacebuilding Fund's catalytic effect. Together with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Capital Development Fund, Germany has launched the Investing for Peace initiative. The initiative seeks to blend private sector investments from development finance institutions with donor funds, so that those investments benefit peace and peacebuilding. We encourage partners to join the initiative.

In conclusion, the Pact for the Future will give new impetus to our quest to make the United Nations peacebuilding efforts more impactful and sustainable. The peacebuilding architecture review will be a critical

opportunity to operationalize those decisions. From the prevention of conflicts to the transitioning out of United Nations peace operations, we need a strong peacebuilding architecture that ensures coherence between partners and programmes and fosters inclusive national ownership. Germany stands ready to play an active role in supporting efforts in that regard and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission going forward.

**Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking the President for having convened this joint annual debate dedicated to the presentation of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its seventeenth session (A/78/765) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/78/779). I would like to pay a warm and special tribute to the Chair of the Commission, Ambassador Sérgio França Danese of Brazil, for his remarkable, committed and distinguished leadership. Moreover, I wish to thank the Chairs of the country-specific configurations for their continued efforts in advancing peacebuilding and sustaining peace in their particular geopolitical contexts.

As a diplomatic crossroads that brings together key regional and international actors, the Peacebuilding Commission has achieved a string of notable successes, and it has now therefore become an essential player at the United Nations, working tirelessly for more effective and proactive multilateralism and a new era for peace.

In 2023, the Commission has undertaken significant efforts, including conducting more than 20 meetings, four visits on the ground, 49 final outcome documents and 16 Security Council advisory opinions, in addition to its involvement in 10 specific country contexts in different regions. True to its commitment to the promotion of the universality of peace and peacebuilding, the Commission has worked together with countries striving to prevent conflict and build peace. Its initiatives have been focused on sharing success stories and best practices, with a view to advancing political dialogue; strengthening governing institutions; investing in sustainable development, human rights, peace and security; and further encouraging the participation of both women and young people in decision-making processes as key actors for change, in line with national priorities, as needed.

The Peacebuilding Commission has also promoted the systematic inclusion, in its meetings, of the

private sector, international financial institutions and multilateral development banks, given the importance of investment in sustainable development in tackling the root causes of instability and fragility. We congratulate the Commission for that new development. The achievements of the Commission are also attributable to the constructive and commendable work of the Peacebuilding Support Office, which has sought enhanced partnerships with various peacebuilding actors, specifically through the launch, in November 2023, of the first dialogue between the United Nations and civil society organizations on peacebuilding. This made a concrete positive impact on peacebuilding on the ground.

The Kingdom of Morocco remains committed to making peacebuilding a genuine catalyst for security and development within the United Nations through regional and international cooperation and through the promotion of equitable and prosperous multilateralism for the benefit of all. As Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, we seek to support the efforts of the Government of the Central African Republic, under the stewardship of President Touadera, for the implementation of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and the joint Luanda road map, which remains key to entrenching stability and surmounting security-related challenges.

In that regard, we are undertaking initiatives with bilateral and multilateral partners in the Central African Republic to raise the necessary funds to bridge the financing gap for the organization of local elections — the first to be held in the country since 1988. This will be a critical step for consolidating democratic gains.

In that connection, I would be remiss if I did not thank Ms. Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, for her cooperation and, above all, for the meeting held last week to organize the tripartite approach between the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Chair of the Configuration and host country for countries that could potentially contribute to the financing of local elections. I wish to thank Ms. Spehar and her staff.

We are also committed to supporting the efforts of the Central African Republic to bring about a paradigm shift from a protracted crisis and pure humanitarian

assistance in the country to sustainable investment in long-term socioeconomic development. Through these projects in the Central African Republic, the Peacebuilding Fund plays a critical, decisive role in intercommunal relations and in ensuring their access to peace dividends, socioeconomic development and, especially, reconciliation among communities, tribes and various population groups.

In that regard, we welcome the General Assembly decision to establish, beginning in 2025, a \$50 million fund based on mandatory assessed contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund, in order to ensure more predictable, sustainable financing for such projects (resolution 78/257). Morocco is proud to have contributed to that resolution and, above all, for having fought to secure the necessary financing. The New Agenda for Peace offers a valuable road map for political and financial investments in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, national capacity-building and peace infrastructure.

It is therefore critical to underline the close links between conflict prevention and sustainable development, which are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. We hope that the review of the peacebuilding architecture in 2025 will allow us to devise innovative working methods for the Commission and upgrade its composition and support capabilities so that it can build a more effective collective security architecture and best fulfil the missions entrusted to it. We trust that the Summit of the Future will be an opportunity to confirm the Peacebuilding Commission's progress and development in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the regions and countries riven by conflict and internal tensions.

**Mr. Gaouaoui** (Algeria): I thank the President for convening today's annual joint debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and the Peacebuilding Commission for their reports (A/78/779 and A/78/765, respectively).

During last year's joint debate, many of us were still stressing the urgency of getting funding from assessed contributions. We aim to ensure predictable and sustainable financing for United Nations peacebuilding activities. That goal is now a reality: \$50 million will be provided annually in assessed funding to the Peacebuilding Fund. Although the Secretary-General's recommendation was to provide \$100 million, it is still a significant contribution that could increase in future. The Fund remains one of the primary funding sources for United Nations peacebuilding activities. However,

with increased demand from States and the decline in contributions, the Peacebuilding Fund has reached its lowest liquidity level since its inception. In the light of these financial difficulties, Algeria is considering making a voluntary contribution to the Fund. We invite others to do the same.

We commend the achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission during its seventeenth session, such as the growing number of countries engaging with the Commission. That growth confirms the Commission's bridging power, which has not yet been harnessed to its full potential. We encourage the Peacebuilding Commission to continue forging closer ties with international financial institutions, regional development banks and regional organizations, such as the African Union. Such collaboration can create significant synergy and increase resources for peacebuilding.

We commend both the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund for putting women and peace and security at the centre of their work. Before concluding, let me say that we must take the opportunity of the Summit of the Future and the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture to advance the conflict prevention and peacebuilding agenda. The Commission and the Fund have shown that they can make a positive difference in the lives of thousands, if not millions, of people affected by conflict worldwide. Their roles should therefore be strengthened. Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador França Danese of Brazil, and to the two Vice-Chairs, Croatia and Kenya, for their excellent work so far this year.

**Mr. Kiboino** (Kenya): I thank the President for convening this important debate. Kenya commends the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) for their impactful initiatives and activities over the past year. The initiatives undertaken by the PBC and the PBF during the year under review have demonstrated the feasibility of implementing projects whose positive impact on conflict prevention, reconciliation and community empowerment is visible and tangible.

My delegation acknowledges the significant impact of the Peacebuilding Fund's three priority windows of supporting cross-border and regional approaches, facilitating transitions and fostering inclusion through women's and youth empowerment. Those targeted



efforts have provided essential focus and continue to yield tangible results on the ground.

We also appreciate that the PBC has consolidated its work on the identified seven priority areas, resulting in meaningful country-specific and regional engagements, as well as addressing cross-cutting and thematic issues. We further commend the PBC for its enhanced advisory role, offering critical guidance to the Security Council and the General Assembly on peacebuilding, sustaining peace and addressing the root causes of conflict.

With the increased effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions, which have motivated more requests by Governments, organizations and communities, the increasing demand on the PBF is not a surprise. Kenya is pleased to note that the quest for adequate and predictable financing for peacebuilding is incrementally coming to fruition with the adoption of resolution 76/305 and subsequent resolution 78/257, which enable the use of assessed contributions for peacebuilding activities starting in 2025. The proposed modest contribution from the assessed contributions must, however, never negate the importance and the need for Member States to make voluntary contributions to the PBF.

Kenya welcomes the recommendations contained in the reports of the Secretary-General, to make the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund more effective, and wishes to lay emphasis on the following three areas.

The first is coordination of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund with other peacebuilding initiatives at the national, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts. Such coordination should be aligned and linked to innovative financing. Funding by international financial and development institutions should be designed to complement and support the work of the PBF.

The second is the importance of strengthening national and regional ownership. Competent and legitimate Governments are indispensable actors in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The PBC and the PBF should embed that understanding into their programmes and methodologies, ensuring that their efforts are tailored to support and enhance national capacities. Additionally, the PBC and the PBF should be responsive to regional organizations, which, owing to their proximity to crises, are often better positioned to address them effectively. In that regard, we welcome the

strengthening of partnership between the PBC and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

The third is the need to ensure that the overarching objective of peacebuilding projects remains to facilitate sustainable peace. The endeavours of the PBC and the PBF must operate with a keen awareness of the imperative to foster sustainable development. Those efforts should be geared to building resilient societies and reducing the risk of recurrence of conflict. By prioritizing long-term stability and development, the PBC and the PBF can ensure that their initiatives not only address immediate needs, but also lay the foundation for enduring peace and prosperity.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Kenya's unwavering commitment to and support for peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts, by not only the United Nations, but also regional organizations, national Governments, non-State actors and indeed every peacebuilder.

**Mr. Mahmoud** (Egypt): Allow me, at the outset, to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Sérgio França Danese, the Permanent Representative of Brazil and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for the exceptional leadership demonstrated throughout his tenure in 2024. I would also like to thank Ambassador Ivan Šimonović, the Permanent Representative of Croatia, for his excellent work in chairing the PBC in 2023. The unwavering dedication and profound expertise of Ambassador Sérgio França Danese have played a pivotal role in enhancing the Commission's capabilities, especially with regard to its critical functions of bridging divides, providing thoughtful advisories and facilitating pivotal discussions.

During its seventeenth session, the Commission has made significant strides in advancing its mandate. With concerted efforts by Member States and international financial institutions, we have navigated complex conflicts and post-conflict situations with the aim of establishing enduring peace. Our engagement in various countries has reinforced the notion that peacebuilding is not a one-size-fits-all endeavour; it requires customized solutions that respect the unique cultural, social and political fabrics of different societies.

Going into the 2025 comprehensive review of the peacebuilding architecture review, our collective conscience is drawn towards refining our methodologies and reinforcing our commitment in alignment with the ambitions set forth in the New Agenda for Peace and the forthcoming Summit of the Future, in addition to elevating the effectiveness of the Peacebuilding

Commission based on the efforts that were exerted during the seventeenth session.

In that regard, Egypt believes that we should first encompass a more comprehensive understanding of peace that goes beyond traditional frameworks to embed conflict prevention and address the root causes of conflict, economic disparities and strengthen the peace, security and development systems all together. In that context, implementing a peacebuilding strategy that respects national ownership might require capacity-building for local institutions, promoting transparency and accountability and offering support for justice and security sector reform. It is necessary to balance the immediate peacebuilding needs with strategic long-term goals, bearing in mind that to operationalize the notion of national ownership, the Peacebuilding Commission should encourage and support self-led peace initiatives.

Secondly, it is imperative that we recognize the achievement of the General Assembly in allocating \$50 million in assessed funding for the Peacebuilding Fund as a major milestone in conflict prevention. However, we must not become complacent with that initial step. We should strive to build upon that groundwork by broadening the resource pool and seeking additional avenues of support and by enhancing our operational capabilities to ensure that those resources are effectively utilized in preventing conflicts. The Peacebuilding Commission can more effectively harness the potential of the Peacebuilding Fund, resulting in a strategic, efficient and accountable deployment of resources. It is also high time the great efforts of the secretariat of the Peacebuilding Commission, led by Assistant Secretary-General Elizabeth Spehar and her able team, receive recognition for their tireless efforts. They are doing a great job.

Thirdly, the Summit of the Future has directed our attention towards the necessity of strengthening multilateralism, which translates into bolstering partnerships among international actors for peacebuilding. The Commission should actively seek to enhance cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, financial institutions and the private sector, tapping into a broader range of resources and expertise.

Fourthly, to improve the work of the Commission, it is also crucial to incorporate a more inclusive approach to peacebuilding. That involves scaling up efforts to engage women, youth and local communities in all stages of

peace processes. We are doing that as we speak, but we also need to deepen the level, magnitude and ambitions.

Fifthly, the link between peacebuilding and peacekeeping is integral to the broader spectrum of conflict resolution and sustainable peace. While peacekeeping seeks to halt violence and maintain a ceasefire, peacebuilding works to prevent the recurrence of conflict by addressing root causes and building resilient societies.

In advancing those objectives, significant emphasis needs to be placed on strategy coherence, funding mechanisms and strengthening the PBC's cooperation with the Security Council, as well as on exploring avenues to do the same with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

Finally, as we look ahead, let the combined foresight from the New Agenda for Peace and the Summit of the Future serve as a launching pad for the Peacebuilding Commission's endeavours. Let us fortify our resolve, refine our tools and rejuvenate our partnerships to not only navigate the complex terrains of contemporary peacebuilding, but also to lead the way into an era defined by enduring peace and human security.

**Mr. De Martin Topranin** (Italy): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's joint debate on the annual report (A/78/765) of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Secretary-General's report (A/78/779) on the Peacebuilding Fund.

Italy aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union and would like to add some remarks in its national capacity.

The peacebuilding architecture review takes place in a challenging time, due to the lack of trust among the membership and the struggle to find convergence. However, we must seize this opportunity and find common ground on some building blocks where wide consensus is within reach.

First, there is the universality of conflict prevention, grounded in human rights, the rule of law, the women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda. Secondly, I stress the importance of national prevention strategies. Thirdly, I highlight the need to allocate more financial resources for peacebuilding. Those starting points can be the bedrock for the peacebuilding architecture review.

The New Agenda for Peace, the ongoing negotiations for the Pact for the Future and the idea itself of conflict

prevention all point to a stronger role for the Peacebuilding Commission because of its ability to analyse the situation on the ground and identify potential drivers of conflict. But the key concept of conflict prevention must be implemented wisely, respecting the national ownership of the peacebuilding process and each specific path towards peace.

With regard to the Peacebuilding Commission's working methods, substantial progress has been achieved in recent years. At the same time, we should ask ourselves what more the Peacebuilding Commission can do to enhance the Security Council's engagement with the PBC's advice.

To make that qualitative leap, the PBC's guidance and advice must fully reflect previous interactions with the States involved. From the management of the PBC's meetings to the outcome documents we agree upon, we must genuinely respect the positions and aspirations expressed by the countries addressing the Peacebuilding Commission, including on issues that may be sensitive, such as climate change. Only in that way can the Commission truly respect the national ownership of the peacebuilding process and contribute to forging a new social contract spanning generations.

As to peacebuilding financing, Italy considers the decision of devoting assessed funding to the Peacebuilding Fund, while still delivering on voluntary contributions, as an irreversible step. That is why Italy, a strong promoter of assessed contributions for peacebuilding, has also simultaneously doubled its voluntary contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund. We also welcome the ongoing initiatives aimed at measuring the impact of peacebuilding initiatives.

My final comment is on the recent decision to extend a permanent invitation to the African Union (AU) to participate in the Commission's meetings. Italy has been advocating such a decision, and we welcome it with great satisfaction. The AU's participation in the PBC's meetings is consistent with the Commission's goals and will bring the added value of a key actor. We look forward to working together within the PBC.

**Mr. Cisneros Chávez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the past and current Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as Assistant Secretary-General Elizabeth Spehar, for preparing and introducing the report (A/78/765) on the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). We also take note of the annex on the working methods of the Commission, which contains

recommendations for improvements that deserve a proper analysis.

Mexico believes that the Peacebuilding Commission is a key tool for strengthening the prevention capacity of the United Nations and for contributing to peacebuilding in post-conflict situations. It is one of the most complete and relevant United Nations reform initiatives, and we must harness its full potential. The PBC should therefore have a greater role in advising and participating in the development and implementation of peacebuilding strategies, in close collaboration with national authorities and regional organizations. Its work must even be extended to countries that are not currently part of its agenda.

In addition, it is essential that the Commission strengthen its coordinating role and relationship with other United Nations organs, in particular the Economic and Social Council and United Nations agencies, in order to promote system-wide internal coherence. Such coherence is essential to successfully addressing the structural causes of conflicts. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's proposal in his New Peace Agenda to enhance the PBC's role.

Given that the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture will take place next year, Mexico would like to highlight four priorities for that exercise.

The first priority is promoting greater synergies between resident coordinators and United Nations country teams in order to improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding strategies, which allow for a rebuilding of the social fabric and respond to the interests of host societies and Governments.

The second priority is reaffirming the role of the Peacebuilding Commission to provide proactive, constant and, above all, substantive advice on aspects that could affect security and development issues. That should form part of a broader preventive approach and complement other tools of the Organization such as special political missions.

The third priority is encouraging regional organizations to make use of preventive diplomacy and early warning approaches and mechanisms.

The fourth and final priority is promoting national, regional and multilateral efforts that contribute to the full participation of women and young people in mediation and conflict resolution.

In line with the importance that Mexico attaches to peacebuilding, my delegation will actively participate in the discussions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture next year. We call on all Member States to cooperate during those negotiations so that we can be increasingly effective in preventing conflict and creating conditions conducive to development, governance and inclusion that will break cycles of violence and lay the solid foundations for sustainable peace.

**Mrs. González López** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Placing prevention at the heart of United Nations efforts and investing politically and financially in peacebuilding and sustaining peace is urgent and essential in order to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this joint plenary debate and appreciate the presentation by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the reports prepared for the General Assembly's consideration of this important agenda item (A/78/765 and A/78/779).

In the face of the enormous challenges of making peace a reality for the millions of people affected by violence and conflict, we commend the role played by the Commission, whose advisory, liaison and convening functions in support of peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts have been critical. Throughout 2023, its work covering 10 regions and a variety of cross-cutting themes denotes its relevance and its increasingly important role within the Organization. We recognize the broadening of the Commission's geographic scope and the sustained collaboration, since its creation, with 31 different countries and regions.

We also recognize the Commission's work in strengthening synergies within the United Nations, taking into account that, during 2023, it provided advice on more than 20 occasions to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In the same vein, its role in improving coordination among various United Nations entities, both in the field and at Headquarters, as well as among humanitarian, development and peace actors, remains key to fostering system-wide coherence at the United Nations and increasing the impact of peace initiatives.

The full, equal and meaningful participation of women is critical in the areas of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We commend the integration of the perspectives and priorities of women peacebuilders into the Commission's country-specific, regional and

thematic activities. We urge the Commission to continue to include such considerations in its presentations to the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

We also encourage the Commission to continue to advocate for the fundamental role of young people and youth organizations in building and sustaining peace, and to promote the institutionalization of the youth and peace and security agenda at all levels.

With respect to strengthening the Commission, it is vital to ensure the diverse and equitable representation of all regional groups in its overall structure. It should also continue to be a forum for sharing experiences and successful practices in peacebuilding. In that regard, we underscore the importance of contributions from countries that have experienced post-conflict recovery, as stipulated in the Commission's founding resolution (resolution 60/180).

We appreciate the recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission presented in the annex to the report (see A/78/765). In line with the importance of increasing its visibility, we are pleased that the Committee on Information agreed in May to develop a communications strategy on the Commission and to enhance the visibility of its work in collaboration with the Department of Global Communications.

In addition, we would like to reiterate a recommendation that, in our view, is crucial. We urge Member States to communicate to the organs they represent about those activities of the Commission that are relevant to their agendas. In doing so, we not only broaden the visibility of the Commission, but also clarify its impact and relevance within the Organization.

The critical importance of the Commission's activities underscores the urgent need to allocate additional resources to it. That will allow us to respond effectively to the growing demand for support to countries and regions.

Our candidacy for election to the Commission — to be voted upon in the General Assembly during its eightieth session — reflects our desire to contribute significantly to those global efforts.

We recognize that, in the context of profound crises, the demand for peacebuilding support has increased. In December 2023, the General Assembly took a momentous decision by adopting resolution 78/257 to finance the Peacebuilding Fund in response to the Secretary-General's request of March 2022. That decision, together



with resolution 76/305, highlights the need for continued investment in peace as a central pillar of the work of the United Nations.

In El Salvador, the Fund has been instrumental. It has played a relevant role in supporting peacebuilding efforts, making important contributions to the strengthening of national institutions, the generation of public policies, the promotion of transitional justice and the generation of decent work opportunities and social reintegration, among other areas. Its contribution to inclusion through the empowerment of women and youth in El Salvador has been significant, with the implementation of initiatives to strengthen their participation in decision-making processes on violence prevention, social coexistence and the expansion of civic space at the local level. In addition, the Fund has been instrumental in promoting essential cross-border initiatives that address the complex dynamics of human mobility. Those initiatives have facilitated the peaceful and sustainable integration of both migrants and their host communities.

We value the support of the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, the efforts of which have been instrumental in advancing those initiatives in our country. We reiterate our firm commitment to continue ensuring that those actions are reflected in substantial improvements in the quality of life of all Salvadorans. Furthermore, we welcome the results of the assessment of the projects financed by the Fund, which contributed significantly to addressing the peacebuilding challenges faced by my country.

While recognizing the clear and concrete benefits of investing in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, we are concerned about the large gaps and challenges that persist in achieving sufficient, predictable and sustained funding for peacebuilding. We note that, despite regulatory advances, the Fund recorded the lowest level of liquidity in its history. We therefore encourage States and all actors to do everything they can to invest in prevention and peacebuilding.

In conclusion, El Salvador reaffirms its willingness to continue helping to strengthen the role of the United Nations in establishing, consolidating and sustaining a just and lasting peace for all.

**Mrs. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the presentation of the reports on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) (A/78/765) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) (A/78/779) during 2023 and the convening of today's meeting to discuss those reports and building and sustaining peace.

On this occasion, we would like to begin by recalling that, according to the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, all States Members of the United Nations have undertaken to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which, in the past, has brought untold sorrow to humankind. We also agreed that one of the purposes we set for the United Nations was to maintain international peace and security and, to that end, to take effective collective measures to prevent and eliminate threats to peace. However, in the past two years, we have seen an escalation of conflicts at the global level, including the unjustifiable humanitarian catastrophe in Palestine, which has led to an erosion of the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter. Member States must therefore commit to abide by the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, without exception. And when stubborn reality sets in and conflicts arise, the parties involved must respect the laws of war and humanitarian principles, which are one of humankind's most precious achievements. Any other attitude simply represents a return to the law of the jungle and barbarism.

As one of the advisory bodies of the United Nations system, the Peacebuilding Commission provides guidance on eradicating the root causes of armed conflict and thus overcoming violence and ensuring the rule of law. From that perspective and bearing in mind that prevention and peacebuilding are part of the essence of our Organization, the Commission is a key tool available to the international community in the overall context of the peace agenda — a fundamental pillar of our Organization. As such, the Commission must have everyone's full support.

President Petro Urrego's Government of change is moving with determination towards peacebuilding, under the "total peace" approach. As an example, in the multilateral arena, we rely on the coordinated work carried out by the Security Council and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, through their advice and support and the involvement of Colombia in their sessions and meetings. We would like to highlight, in particular, the Commission's 11 July meeting regarding Colombia, in which President Petro Urrego presented the Government's peacebuilding priorities, shared with the members of the Commission the successes and challenges on the path towards peace and reiterated the standing request for international support for the "total peace" policy. Colombia enjoys the Commission's comprehensive support for its

national peacebuilding priorities and hopes such support will continue.

Colombia has benefited from the efforts of the PBC and the PBF, which have supported our work to overcome violence and achieve reconciliation in Colombia. The PBF has worked in harmony with the PBC to address critical peacebuilding opportunities, connecting the development, humanitarian, human rights and peacebuilding pillars. The Fund has invested \$57,345,291 in Colombia since 2014. In that context, with the Fund's assistance, the United Nations system has supported concrete efforts to fulfil the commitments of the 2016 Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, regarding the reintegration of ex-combatants, territorial peace initiatives in prioritized regions, transitional justice and innovative financing for peace.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Fund, which highlights Colombia's experience and the central role of political, technical and financial support from the international community and regional banks in advancing peace. With its experience and the lessons it has learned, Colombia will continue to contribute to all processes aimed at strengthening the PBC, particularly the five-year review of the peacebuilding architecture, which should be completed in 2025. Everyone can continue to count on us.

**Mrs. Shino (Japan):** I thank the President for convening this meeting. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) for facilitating the work of peacebuilding.

The root causes of conflict depend on the context of each situation, and there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. But there will still be some lessons we can learn from and ideas that we can share. The root causes are often intertwined and should be resolved comprehensively, ensuring the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture should support such efforts coherently by leveraging the uniqueness of the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), including their convening, bridging and catalytic roles.

To begin with, I would like to discuss a few points regarding the PBC.

First, we should seek to address challenges across a wider geographical scope. Many challenges are

transnational and transborder, such as terrorism, the illicit trade of weapons and drugs, water scarcity and migration. Any Member State or any region can utilize the PBC's convening power to gain political and financial support from the United Nations system and beyond, including from international financial institutions, national donors and possible South-South and triangular cooperation. Regional and cross-border meetings can also be enhanced, such as the Sahel meetings on transnational organized crime, terrorism and violent extremism. I encourage my colleagues here to further engage with countries and regions that could benefit from the opportunities provided by the PBC, by highlighting the effectiveness of that platform.

Secondly, we welcome continued thematic engagements such as on youth, peace and security; women and peace and security; the role of education; transitional justice; climate-related challenges; and national prevention. Japan hopes to see more good examples of prevention and early warning presented and discussed at PBC meetings. In addition, on thematic meetings, the PBC can invite a wider range of stakeholders within and outside the United Nations system, to share their knowledge and best practices.

Thirdly, we would like to call for enhanced engagement between the General Assembly and the PBC on peacebuilding-related matters. We should also strengthen the utility and timing of the PBC's advisory role to the Security Council. As an informal coordinator between the Security Council and the PBC, we would like to call on Council presidencies to request PBC advice at the earliest possible time and PBC members to constructively discuss and reach consensus in a timely manner. Also, each Council member should consider incorporating the advice into its position, as well as Council outcomes. The General Assembly is in the international public eye, whether or not the Council is utilizing PBC advice properly.

I would like to continue by addressing the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), to which we contributed more than \$14 million from 2020 to 2024.

First, the PBF's comparative advantages over other funds are its agility and flexibility in responding to peacebuilding needs on the ground. Those characteristics are indispensable for delivering its projects and must be maintained.

Secondly, we should further pursue strengthening the catalytic role of the PBF as seed funding. In that vein, the PBSO needs to identify projects that have been

particularly successful and require further investment, and appropriately visualize and publicize them to catalyse additional projects by, inter alia, agencies, funds and programmes, international financial institutions and bilateral donors. To that end, I suggest utilizing the Peacebuilding Impact Hub, as well as the General Assembly and the PBC, especially to enhance visibility. Inviting potential donors to PBF donor visits could be another idea.

Thirdly, we must strengthen the system-wide coherence of all the United Nations' relevant activities conducted by different entities, including peace operations and agencies, funds and programmes. The synergy of all those activities will be maximized when they are coordinated and share a greater common goal. The humanitarian-development-peace-nexus approach should be strengthened not only on the ground but also at the Headquarters level.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Japan's full commitment to advancing conflict prevention and sustaining peace, including at the upcoming 2025 peacebuilding architecture review.

**Mr. Gala López (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): We take note of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission for 2023 (A/78/765) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/78/779).

The importance of a General Assembly debate on peace is underscored by the genocide being waged by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people before the eyes of the world.

That is against an international backdrop of continuing armed conflicts, unconventional wars and frequent violations of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, such as interference in the internal affairs of States, including through attempted regime change, the imposition of unilateral coercive measures and the promulgation of politically motivated unilateral lists and certifications, such as the United States list of alleged State sponsors of terrorism.

Sustained and lasting peace requires the eradication of the root causes of conflict, in particular the problems of social and economic development that affect our nations, especially those in the South, that derive from the existing unjust international order.

It is inconceivable that exorbitant resources continue to be wasted on ever more sophisticated killing devices while official development assistance pledges continue to go unfulfilled.

Peacebuilding activities should be carried out from the early stages of peacekeeping operations to help post-conflict countries develop and strengthen their national sustainable development strategies.

National Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing peacebuilding and peace-sustaining strategies. The role of the United Nations is to assist them in their efforts in that regard, as requested and within the framework of the functions and mandates accorded to its organs. That should be done in accordance with the Charter of the Organization and with full respect for international law, as well as on the basis of the consent of the recipient State and respect for national ownership and priorities.

It also requires complete respect for the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the political independence of countries, the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs and the rejection of the threat or use of force. Only in that way can the building and maintenance of peace be supported objectively and impartially.

We reiterate our support for the call for increased funding for United Nations peacebuilding activities to ensure sufficient, predictable and continued funding for those activities. At the same time, such activities must not divert or affect resources allocated to development.

Convinced that lasting peace requires an international environment founded on respect for multilateralism and international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as respect for friendly relations and cooperation among countries, I would like to conclude by reaffirming Cuba's permanent commitment to the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace — our region's contribution to the promotion of peace.

Hate speech and the use and threat of force must be banished forever.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the joint debate on these items for this meeting. We shall continue the debate at 3 p.m. in this Hall, after action on all of the scheduled items as indicated in the Journal of the United Nations.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 27, 61 and 111.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*