



# Security Council

Eightieth year

**9919**<sup>th</sup> meeting

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*Provisional*

*President:* Mr. Gerapetritis/Mr. Stamatekos/Mr. Sekeris . . . . . (Greece)

*Members:*

Algeria. . . . .	Mr. Bouchedoub
China. . . . .	Mr. Li Linlin
Denmark . . . . .	Mr. Ruge
France . . . . .	Mr. Di Mascio
Guyana . . . . .	Mr. Alkins
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Republic of Korea . . . . .	Ms. Juyeong Jang
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Tretiakov
Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. Kamanda
Slovenia. . . . .	Mr. Ponikvar
Somalia . . . . .	Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. McIntyre
United States of America. . . . .	Ms. Ring

## Agenda

### Maintenance of international peace and security

Strengthening maritime security through international cooperation for global stability

Letter dated 9 May 2025 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2025/300)

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*The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.*

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

I now give the floor to the Minister of Transport, Communications and Works of Cyprus.

**Mr. Vafeades (Cyprus):** Allow me to commend the Greek presidency of the Security Council for convening this open debate on the increasingly urgent issue of maritime security — a matter that lies at the intersection of global peace, economic development, environmental protection and human security. I wish also to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and the other two distinguished briefers, Mr. Bueger and Ms. Travlos, for their meaningful statements.

Cyprus aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

As a small island State with a distinct role in maritime activities, the Republic of Cyprus is very aware of the indispensable part that our seas play in ensuring security, prosperity, sustainable development and environmental protection.

In recent years, security threats and challenges at sea have multiplied, requiring enhanced collective action. We witness deliberate violations of the sovereign rights of States through the conduct of illegal drilling and unauthorized surveys in their maritime zones by third countries. At the same time, maritime routes are increasingly instrumentalized for smuggling and human trafficking, deliberately aimed at destabilizing regions and undermining the rule of law. Such challenges are compounded by non-State actors involved in piracy, trafficking and maritime terrorism, threatening critical infrastructure and jeopardizing security, global trade and the environment. With 90 per cent of commerce at sea, attacks in critical areas, like the Gulf of Aden, can disrupt supply chains, cause shortages and trigger environmental disasters.

Cyprus firmly believes that a coordinated, holistic and multidimensional approach — at the national, regional and international level — is essential to effectively address those threats. The existing body of international law provides a robust foundation that must be rigorously upheld and further reinforced and, as such, there is no need for new legal instruments.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which codifies customary international law and is thus binding on all States, provides the legal framework for all activities on the oceans and seas, including countering illicit activities. Within the framework of the International Maritime Organization, we can further enhance coordination and implementation.

To translate those commitments into results, Cyprus proposes four strategic priorities.

First, States Members of the United Nations must adopt comprehensive national strategies, aligned with the international framework to counter terrorism, transnational organized crime, migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Those strategies should be supported by strong legal and judicial mechanisms to criminalize and prosecute such offences.

Secondly, we must strengthen regional and international cooperation through joint naval exercises, maritime patrols and regional task forces and, of course, improved intelligence-sharing.

Thirdly, common standards must be established for defence technologies, and investments must be made in training and capacity-building in the maritime domain, especially in vulnerable regions and for developing States.

Fourthly, it is essential to follow up on ongoing multilateral processes, such as the Global Digital Compact (General Assembly resolution 79/1, annex I), and explore how emerging technologies — including artificial intelligence — can bolster maritime security and cybersecurity for public authorities and maritime stakeholders.

Cyprus reiterates its commitment to advancing maritime security through partnership, shared responsibility and respect for international law. We therefore urge all United Nations Member States that have yet to accede to UNCLOS, the Protocols for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf or the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction to do so without delay.

By upholding those foundational legal instruments and translating our commitments into coordinated action, we can protect international navigation, secure global trade and supply chains and contribute to lasting global stability.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

**Mrs. Lora-Santos** (Philippines): The Philippines congratulates Greece for assuming the presidency of the Security Council. We thank the Secretary-General, Ms. Melina Travlos and Professor Christian Bueger for their briefings.

As an archipelagic State and a maritime nation, the Philippines considers maritime security as a top national policy priority. Our country's fate and our people's livelihoods are tied to the oceans. Central to our understanding of maritime security is the integration of the human security dimension and the prioritization of human rights at sea, including of seafarers' rights.

There are hundreds of thousands of Filipino seafarers serving in the world's shipping fleets. Seafarers and fishers face challenges through violence and harassment, as well as detention and abandonment at sea. Meanwhile, seafarers face threats as a result of armed attacks against commercial vessels. Seafarers are at the heart of shipping. We must promote their well-being and protect their rights.

Our concept of maritime security has always been broad, encompassing not only transnational crimes, but also illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, marine pollution, climate change, inter-State disputes and other emerging and developing threats.

The past decades have seen a rise in activities in the ocean, including the proliferation of missile and drone technologies and the illicit flow of arms, as well as in the challenges of protecting critical maritime infrastructure from an increasingly complex threat landscape. The Philippines is committed to addressing those threats. To us, ocean governance, including maritime security, is key to achieving sustainable development, human rights, peace, stability and health. We must seek sustainable pathways for human activities in the ocean. Consequently, the Philippines understands maritime security as a cross-cutting concern and an integral element of the United Nations peace and security architecture — and it must be approached as such. At the national level, we have worked to strengthen our institutional and legal frameworks to respond swiftly and effectively. We adopted legislation consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), notably the Philippine Maritime Zones Act and the Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act. Regionally, we are involved in initiatives to combat piracy and transnational crime. We have enhanced our maritime domain awareness through technological advancement and institutional coordination, notably via the National Coast Watch Centre.

The nexus between maritime security and the state of the marine environment generates tensions. There have been infringements on our lawful rights and entitlements under international law and acts of aggression against our vessels and personnel. Those include dangerous manoeuvres, collisions and the use of water cannons, among other things, in addition to other actions causing significant damage to the marine environment.

Cooperation in maritime security is premised on upholding the rule of law in the oceans. Adopted in 1982, UNCLOS is the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. It underpins the rules-based international order in the seas. We must collectively reject attempts to revise or reinterpret UNCLOS to serve unilateral interests, as such attempts serve only to undermine it. As the constitution of the oceans, UNCLOS comprehensively allocates the rights of States to maritime zones. UNCLOS and its implementing agreements — the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement and the recently adopted Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction — are the pillars of that constitution.

We recognize the significance of the South China Sea in international trade, as a major waterway for the world's maritime commerce. Maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea is of fundamental interest to the international community. The Philippines aspires for the South China Sea to be a sea of peace, security, stability and prosperity. The growing number of incidents in the South China Sea must be addressed urgently. We take part in the negotiations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China towards a code of conduct on the South China Sea. All parties must exercise self-restraint and refrain from destabilizing activities.

The Philippines reaffirms its commitment to its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, as amplified by the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. Disputes must be resolved peacefully, in accordance with international law, UNCLOS and the valid and legally binding 2016 South China Sea Arbitration award. All of that must be taken into account as part of an overall cross-cutting approach to maritime security under the United Nations system. The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) stressed the call for more coordinated global efforts to secure our oceans through stronger maritime governance, environmental stewardship and measures to prevent the escalation of conflicts at sea. We must do our part and move forward towards a more robust global maritime security architecture.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Oman.

**Mr. Al Kathiri (Oman)** (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Sultanate of Oman is pleased to express its sincere appreciation to the friendly Hellenic Republic for its judicious presidency of the Security Council this month and for its valuable initiative of convening this high-level meeting at a time when challenges related to the security of maritime navigation are increasing, with manifold implications for international peace and security.

We join the representatives of those delegations who took the floor before us in welcoming the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, and other high-level representatives participating in this meeting. We highly value their presence and their contributions, which enrich our discussion of this important topic. We are also pleased to thank the Secretary-General and the other briefers for their comprehensive presentations and constructive statements in support of the international community's efforts in this vital area.

With its vital geopolitical location overlooking three strategic maritime flats, the Sultanate of Oman, for decades, has played an active role in supporting the security and safety of regional and international maritime navigation, recognizing that those waters constitute a vital artery for global trade and energy, and also acknowledging the legal, security and humanitarian responsibilities that they entail. It established the Oman National Hydrographic Office, which contributes to facilitating safe navigation and providing accurate data for shipping and maritime transport vessels, in addition to the Maritime Security Centre, which is regarded as a cutting-edge model in the region for immediate coordination on and response to maritime threats and emergency incidents, in cooperation with national military and civil authorities and the competent regional and international centres, based on a vision built on prevention, rapid reaction, data analysis and the promotion of timely information exchange.

The Sultanate of Oman has also been eager to harmonize its national legislation with the relevant norms of international law, foremost among them the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is based on the principle of the freedom of navigation, guarantees the responsibilities of coastal and transit States and lays the legal foundations for the settlement of maritime disputes. In terms of capacity capacities, the Sultanate of Oman continues to invest in modernizing its maritime infrastructure in order to build a resilient system capable of withstanding recurring risks. Convinced of the importance of joint regional action, Oman recently hosted the eighth iteration of the Indian Ocean Conference, which focused on ways to enhance cooperation and integration in the management of maritime security.

The Sultanate of Oman firmly believes that the security of seas and waterways is one of the main pillars of maintaining regional and international stability, ensuring the freedom of navigation, sustaining international trade, maintaining food and energy security and promoting sustainable development. The increase in cross-border threats — such as maritime terrorism, piracy, human and drug smuggling, organized criminal activities and illicit trafficking, along with the environmental consequences of climate change and attacks on maritime infrastructure — necessitates well-considered, collective responses that reflect the spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In that context, it is worth mentioning the pivotal role played by the Sultanate of Oman in the mediation that led to the ceasefire agreement announced on 6 May 2025 to ensure the freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab Al-Mandeb Strait, which represents a constructive step through which Oman seeks to calm regional tensions, promote maritime stability and ensure navigation and the smooth flow of international shipping.

Against that backdrop, the Sultanate of Oman stresses the importance of strengthening adherence to international law, in particular, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as the comprehensive legal framework for all activities in the seas and oceans. We stress the need for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and for cooperation with the International Maritime Organization and other competent bodies. The Sultanate of Oman also stresses the need to build the national capacities of developing countries, especially in the areas of maritime surveillance, information exchange, emergency response, infrastructure protection and combating organized crime, through carefully studied collective initiatives and effective partnerships.

My country also considers modern technology to be an important tool to enhance maritime awareness and improve the capacity of States to respond to challenges in a timely manner through the use of satellites, data analysis and artificial intelligence. We also underscore the importance of addressing the worsening effects of climate change and environmental degradation, which constitute multiplying factors for

maritime security risks, and we call on the international community to develop integrated international strategies for the protection of the marine environment. Lastly, Oman stresses the importance of constructive dialogue and preventive diplomacy as a means of achieving collective security, settling disputes, building confidence among States and creating a safe and stable climate for maritime, commercial and economic activities.

The foreign policy of the Sultanate of Oman is based on the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and respect for international law. We will, therefore, remain a responsible partner in enhancing maritime security, ensuring stability in international corridors and supporting multilateral efforts to find effective and comprehensive solutions to the challenges facing the seas and oceans in order to maintain international peace and security and serve the interests of all peoples.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

**Ms. Pavluta-Deslandes (Latvia):** Let me thank the Secretary-General and the briefers. I also thank the Greek presidency for its leadership. Latvia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union. I wish to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Threats to maritime security encompass many elements, from undermining the safety of maritime infrastructure to attacks against international shipping, such as piracy and illicit maritime activities. However, I would like to focus on three aspects, namely international and State responsibility, the role of flag States and the private sector and the importance of the marine environment.

Safe, responsible and sustainable use of the world's oceans and seas is a responsibility shared among all States Members of the United Nations; small or large, coastal or landlocked, continental or insular.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea has created a comprehensive framework regulating all ocean spaces. Together with other international conventions relating to maritime conduct, it forms a set of universally applicable rules governing activities on the oceans and seas, and it is the duty and responsibility of all Member States to respect it as part of the body of international law.

We welcome the recent Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and urge all stakeholders to respect internationally agreed rules and standards. We encourage United Nations Member States to ratify the Agreement at the upcoming third United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice.

Maritime security is not just a collective responsibility; it is also the duty of every individual State to ensure adherence to international law and the implementation of good practices at home. Flag States have a responsibility to effectively exercise their jurisdiction and control over ships flying their flag. It is in the interests of those States to prevent negligence or intentional damage committed by their vessels as a consequence of failure to comply with obligations under the law of the sea.

In order to ensure accountability and compliance, all actors must commit themselves to high standards and best practices. Governments manage ports, maritime authorities, vessel registration, coastal security and safety measures within their jurisdiction. Meanwhile, the private sector, including owners, operators and managers, is responsible for conducting responsible and shipshape business. That includes due diligence, obtaining insurance against accidents and spills, using tracking devices as prescribed by the International Maritime Organization guidelines and adhering to international law. We commend the participation of the briefers from the private sector, since they are important partners in ensuring maritime safety and security.



Unsafe shipping practices lead to significant risks to the marine environment, ecological safety and security. Vessels ignoring basic safety standards or operating without valid insurance have a greater chance of causing catastrophic oil spills, threatening irreversible damage to the environment. We call on all States to practice safe seafaring by employing seaworthy vessels equipped with appropriate technologies and valid insurance.

In conclusion, Latvia reaffirms its commitment to ensuring maritime safety and security for global stability.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Malta.

**Mrs. Frazier** (Malta): I begin by thanking Greece for organizing such a timely discussion. I also extend my gratitude to the briefers for sharing their invaluable insights with us. Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union.

The maritime domain is a cornerstone of the livelihood of humankind, habitat, resources and transport routes for up to 90 per cent of intercontinental trade. It connects States and regions and makes otherwise distant nations neighbours. Humankind depends on a safe, sound and secure maritime domain in order to preserve peace, enhance international security and stability, generate economic growth and prosperity, secure the energy supply and preserve ecological diversity and coastal livelihoods.

No one can doubt that the maritime domain is today facing serious and complex challenges that are, firstly, geopolitical. Attacks against merchant shipping have demonstrated the increasing vulnerability of global shipping to proxy wars and disputes. Secondly, we are also witnessing the increasing threats to commercial shipping posed by technological advancements. Looking to the future, more sophisticated attacks against shipping and ports are a possibility.

Seafarers must also continue to be protected. Regional States, coastal response agencies and independent navies must therefore continue to work together to combat piracy on a regular basis, which also requires consistent international support.

That challenge is even more pressing since transnational terrorist groups carry out criminal activities to finance their operations. That is why we believe that in order to address the illicit activities of piracy and robbery at sea, it is important to work towards finding sustainable solutions to the environmental degradation exacerbated by climate change, with close coordination among all actors, and with priority being given to locally led solutions.

Added to those challenges are growing threats to our maritime security. We are witnessing the emergence of vessels operating outside the international regulatory framework, often without valid insurance coverage. Furthermore, we are increasingly concerned about the use of deceptive shipping practices — such as automatic identification system manipulation, ship-to-ship transfers and false documentation — that significantly undermine maritime safety and the integrity of our seas.

Incidents of damage to undersea cables are also a threat to our global security. Nearly 99 per cent of the world's data communication occurs via undersea cables. That infrastructure underpins the global exchange of critical information. Damage to those cables disrupts international networks, leads to widespread economic losses and, amid intensifying geopolitical competition, is used as leverage to escalate crises.

However, those challenges also present us with opportunities. That is why Malta, in collaboration with international partners, has taken measures to counter such threats. I am pleased to inform the Council that Malta, together with Antigua

and Barbuda, have partnered to establish the Global Centre for Maritime Sanctions Monitoring, tasked with providing capacity-building to flag registries and monitoring implementation of Security Council sanctions and crimes at sea. The Centre has just been established in Valletta and seeks to reach initial operating capability in October 2025.

Malta will continue to work with partners to promote respect for the basic principles of maritime passage, security and safety, as well as protection of the oceans, and to strengthen its role as a global maritime security provider and to promote international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Furthermore, we strongly oppose any unilateral action that could undermine regional stability and the international rules-based order and urge all States to resolve disputes through peaceful means in accordance with international law, in particular UNCLOS, including its dispute settlement mechanisms.

In conclusion, we need to listen to regional perspectives on maritime security. Regional actors are most acquainted with the aspects of the issue. It is therefore up to the international community, and the Council, to support the regional initiatives developed to enhance maritime security. Maritime security can only be achieved if we join forces in order to strengthen maritime governance in pursuit of the rules-based, sustainable use of seas and oceans.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Mr. Iravani** (Islamic Republic of Iran): We congratulate Greece on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council and thank it for convening this timely open debate.

The freedom of navigation is a cornerstone of international law, and maritime security is essential to its protection. Together they support global peace, stability and the uninterrupted flow of trade. Today, however, those principles face serious and growing threats, from piracy, transnational organized crime and trafficking, to cyberattacks on maritime infrastructure. Those challenges are further exacerbated by unilateral coercive measures, the continued military presence of certain Powers, acts of aggression and the politicization of maritime security under the guise of safeguarding the freedom of navigation.

As a major coastal nation bordering the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, Iran has long contributed to the safety and stability of the Strait of Hormuz. Our naval forces also play a key role in securing strategic corridors, including the Bab Al-Mandeb Strait and the northern Indian Ocean, ensuring safe passage for commercial and oil vessels and contributing to regional and international maritime security.

Iran has consistently emphasized that enduring maritime stability requires inclusive regional cooperation. Unfortunately, unilateral coercive measures — particularly the extraterritorial sanctions imposed by the United States — undermine collective efforts. Those illegal actions have severed legitimate trade ties, led to the unlawful seizure of Iranian oil cargo and violated international law and the Charter of the United Nations, threatening the safety of global navigation. Maritime security must not be selective or subject to unilateral interpretations. It must be upheld universally and based on international law, non-discrimination and full respect for State sovereignty. Iran remains fully committed to international maritime law and cooperates with all responsible stakeholders to ensure that sea lanes remain open, secure and governed by the rule of law, not by the rule of force.

Before concluding, we categorically reject the baseless and politically motivated accusations made by the representatives of the United States and the Israeli regime. Those accusations are not only misleading, but they also deliberately attempt to



distort the realities in the region in order to deflect attention from the root causes of instability and insecurity in the Red Sea and beyond. The allegation that Iran is violating the United Nations arms embargo on Yemen is entirely unfounded. Iran has consistently rejected any involvement in activities that would contravene the relevant Security Council resolutions. Resolution 2216 (2015) has been repeatedly misused by the United States to justify its unlawful unilateral measures beyond the Council's mandate.

Let me be clear: the root causes of instability in the Red Sea and the wider region come from Israel's ongoing atrocities in Gaza and its continued aggression and occupation across the region, carried out with full United States support and complete impunity. That reality cannot be ignored or deflected by disinformation. The Security Council must address those underlying causes and uphold the international legal order on which global maritime peace and security depend.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

**Mr. Montalvo Sosa** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Greece for its leadership in convening this debate on an issue that is essential for international peace and stability. I am pleased to see you presiding over this meeting, Mr. President, which is of historic importance for your country.

Oceans, which cover more than 70 per cent of the planet, are not only vital for biodiversity and climate regulation but also sustain global supply chains, international trade and the livelihoods of millions of people. The international legal framework, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, remains the indispensable basis for maritime governance. The full implementation of the existing legal instruments and respect for international obligations are essential to protecting maritime security.

However, the growing threat of transnational organized crime continues to undermine that security. Piracy, illicit trafficking in arms, drugs and persons, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and acts of marine terrorism are just some of the threats that continue to evolve and diversify, compounded by their interconnectedness with other crimes and the use of new technologies. Transnational organized crime not only compromises the security of maritime routes and port infrastructure, but it also affects economic stability, facilitates illicit activities and puts people's lives and safety at risk. That threat has demonstrated its ability to adapt, using new technologies to expand its reach and sophistication.

As the Secretary-General stated this morning, no region is exempt from this problem, and the situation is getting worse, which requires a coordinated international response. No single State can meet this global, complex and interconnected challenge. The fight against organized crime in the maritime environment requires effective and sustained multilateral cooperation. It is essential that we strengthen the interoperability between maritime surveillance and control systems, improve mechanisms for the exchange of information and promote joint operations that allow for the effective prevention, detection and punishment of crimes. Prime Minister Mitsotakis summed up that idea in one sentence this morning: global problems require global solutions. It is also essential for us to address the structural causes that fuel maritime crime, such as poverty, inequality and institutional weakness. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of maritime and judicial authorities to act effectively in the face of such threats, ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law.

In 2023, during Ecuador's presidency of the Security Council and on its initiative, a declaration was adopted that recognizes the importance of enhancing international and regional cooperation to counter transnational organized crime, piracy and armed robbery at sea (S/PRST/2023/6). Transnational organized crime

constitutes a serious and persistent threat, including to maritime security, which has been mentioned repeatedly during this debate. It is an issue that must be considered in a more systematic manner and with a vision that transcends operational aspects. Combating it requires political determination, resources and a renewed commitment to international cooperation. Only through collective effort can we ensure that our oceans and societies are spaces of peace, security and development.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

**Mr. Massari (Italy):** I thank the delegation of Greece for convening this meeting.

I align myself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to add some further remarks in my national capacity.

Maritime threats pose significant challenges, not just to coastal States and local communities, but also to the international community as a whole. Those threats — such as piracy, terrorism and various illicit activities, including migrant smuggling and the trafficking of arms and drugs — have wide-ranging implications for security, the economy and the environment. They undermine global stability and restrict the freedom of navigation, all to the benefit of terrorist groups and transnational organized crime.

Considering those challenges, we recognize the importance of the Security Council's role in addressing maritime security in a holistic manner and across different regions. That effort must be grounded in existing international legal frameworks. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) serves as the legal framework within which all activities in seas and oceans must be conducted. Alongside it, other key conventions — such as the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, 1988 — provide a strong legal basis for Member States. Building on that foundation, the Security Council can further enhance international cooperation at sea, offering additional guidance to address maritime insecurity. In that context, we acknowledge the significance of previous Security Council decisions, including presidential statement 15 of 2021 (S/PRST/2021/15) and resolution 2634 (2022), with the latter specifically addressing the threat of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea.

Italy remains firmly committed to turning the Security Council's recommendations into concrete action. We support efforts to strengthen the capacity of Member States to take effective measures against transnational organized crime at sea and to share best practices for preventing and combating terrorism, while working closely with regional and subregional organizations. Last year, under Italy's presidency of the Group of Seven, we hosted an informal meeting of the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea in Rome, to support the development of the regulatory and capacity-building framework of the countries and the regional institutions that are part of the Yaoundé Architecture. The implementation of the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships and Illicit Maritime Activity in West and Central Africa, together with the regular presence of naval units from several European Union countries, including Italy, and the continued support from the international community have all played a crucial role in reducing piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea. That tangible progress is a clear demonstration of the value of close cooperation among local, regional and international actors.

The Red Sea region also demands heightened attention, especially in view of the recurrent attacks on international merchant and commercial vessels. Italy is actively engaged in Operation Aspides, working to protect vital shipping lanes in accordance with UNCLOS and resolution 2722 (2024).

In the same spirit, Italy supports a multilateral approach to ensuring the stability of the Indo-Pacific region. That region is of critical importance to the global economy and the resilience of international supply chains. It is also essential for the effective resolution of challenges that affect the shared interests of the international community, including climate change and the transition to sustainable energy.

In conclusion, Italy remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding the freedom of navigation globally and reinforcing the international law of the sea.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

**Mr. Miarka** (Poland): I would like to begin by thanking the Greek presidency for convening this important debate, and I express our gratitude to Secretary-General António Guterres and the other briefers.

Poland supports the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union (EU). I would now like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Ensuring maritime security is a complex task that requires a broad interdisciplinary approach. It calls for enforcing legal frameworks, strengthening infrastructure and resilience and fostering international cooperation. We are pleased that discussions to identify the right tools are ongoing in various formats, including in the EU and NATO as well as regionally. In that respect, Poland supports close cooperation in the Baltic Sea region, including the work being done within the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Now is the time to enhance and reshape the organization's political pillar, with an emphasis on broader regional security. To that end, the Polish presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States will focus on strengthening regional resilience.

Threats to maritime security have destabilizing consequences, and Russia's hybrid campaign targeting the critical undersea infrastructure of other Baltic States is a case in point. It poses a major risk to both individual countries and global security. We should spare no effort to clarify the legal status of such acts under international law. We cannot forget that all actions taken by States and international organizations must respect international law, with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) being the guiding principle. Improved international legal cooperation, including data-sharing, coordinated investigations and legal accountability, can significantly bolster the protection of offshore infrastructure, preventing sabotage and cyberphysical attacks against it. Under no circumstances should activities aimed at jeopardizing the safety of navigation and creating environmental risks be tolerated. In that context, Poland condemns Russia's use of the shadow fleet, which causes disruptions in the Baltic and North Seas and obstructs other maritime routes. When vessels sail under false flags or without insurance, they violate the international law of the sea and maritime law. Aware of the potential attribution difficulties, they continue to target infrastructure with impunity. All States are responsible for overseeing the vessels flying their flag and must ensure that those vessels meet safety and environmental standards.

Poland believes that, while the law of the sea, maritime law and international law have limitations in protecting critical undersea infrastructure, they still offer tools that can be applied. To that end, legal precision and the uniform application of existing legal frameworks are essential. The protection of critical underwater infrastructure must be proactive, focusing not only on prevention and response, but also on effective deterrence.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Yamazaki** (Japan): I wish to express Japan's gratitude to Greece for taking the initiative to hold this timely meeting on such a critical topic. I also thank the briefers for their meaningful inputs.

As a maritime nation, Japan views the safety and security of the seas as vital, both for itself and for the international community as a whole. We all benefit from oceans, as they connect us for commerce and transportation, provide us with natural resources and play an essential role in the conservation of biodiversity. Therefore, thorough respect for the rule of law at sea is in our common interest. In that regard, I would like to reiterate the universal and unified character of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and reaffirm its irreplaceable role in setting out the legal framework that governs all activities in the oceans and seas.

I wish to draw the Council's attention to the Indo-Pacific Ocean, which comprises one third of the entire ocean on the Earth. In 2016, Japan proposed a vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific, consisting of three pillars: first, the promotion and establishment of the rule of law, the freedom of navigation and free trade; secondly, the pursuit of economic prosperity by improving connectivity; and thirdly, a commitment to peace and stability through capacity-building. Looking at the reality in the Indo-Pacific region, unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion have been continuing and gathering strength in the East China Sea and the South China Sea. We once again reiterate our strong opposition to such attempts. We express our appreciation to those that have shown a commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea, in accordance with international law. Against that backdrop, I call for all Member States to stand firm and speak out on upholding the rule of law at sea, maintaining the freedom of navigation and overflight and resolving conflicts peacefully, in accordance with international law as reflected in UNCLOS.

Maritime peace and security can be achieved through collective and inclusive efforts by Member States. In particular, there is a growing need to enhance maritime domain awareness in order to respond to emerging threats in the ocean, such as illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, piracy, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, the smuggling of migrants, ship-to-ship transfer, natural disasters, submarine cable disruptions and marine pollution. Those threats can be effectively addressed through joint efforts by the relevant countries, as all oceans are connected and inseparable. That is why Japan is committed to enhancing the capacity-building efforts of those countries in need.

In conclusion, Japan will continue to cooperate with the international community to maintain and reinforce the free and open international order based on the rule of law so that the nations and peoples of the world can live in peace, stability and prosperity. Japan is determined to lead global efforts to that end.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): We join others in thanking Greece for convening this very important and timely high-level debate. We also thank the Secretary-General and the briefers for their insightful presentations this morning.

Since the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982, it has become the cornerstone of ocean governance. Singapore's position on UNCLOS is well-known. It is the constitution for the oceans and it sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. As an international maritime and shipping hub, maintaining open maritime lines of communication is paramount for Singapore. Allow me to offer our perspectives on those issues.

First, geostrategic contestation has increasingly led to incidents at sea among competing naval forces. As stated in the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), all efforts to address maritime security threats must be carried out in accordance with international law, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations and UNCLOS, alongside relevant instruments consistent with UNCLOS. All maritime claims must be in accordance with the relevant rules of UNCLOS, which

are comprehensive, and all freedoms, rights and obligations set out in UNCLOS must be respected and adhered to. Any attempt to reinterpret or selectively apply UNCLOS runs the risk of undermining the legal stability on which the global maritime community relies.

Secondly, regional conflicts can spill over to surrounding maritime areas. For example, the attacks by the Houthi forces on vessels in the Red Sea have disrupted trade and threatened the freedom of navigation. During such crises, a coordinated international response is essential to restore the free flow of shipping. To that end, Singapore participated in Operation Prosperity Guardian in the Red Sea in 2024, as a member of the 46-nation Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).

Thirdly, piracy remains a scourge of the seas. Given the transboundary nature of piracy, multilateral cooperation is crucial. Singapore has participated in multinational counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden with the CMF. Regionally, we host the Information Sharing Centre and the Information Fusion Centre established in connection with the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, which enable rapid information-sharing to respond to incidents at sea. Singapore also supports capacity-building for coastal States to enhance maritime domain awareness and response capabilities.

Fourthly and lastly, we must guard against emerging threats. Cyberattacks pose serious risks to our global maritime infrastructure. A secure and resilient rules-based cyberspace is key to maritime security. International cooperation is necessary to set robust norms and standards. Damage to subsea cable networks can also disrupt connectivity. Annually, there are between 150 to 200 submarine cable incidents worldwide, with more than 50 cable cuts in the Asia-Pacific region and Indian Ocean. Governments must work with industry to strengthen cooperation and adopt international best practices for cable protection and repairs. In our region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is working to update the 2019 ASEAN Guidelines and fortify our regional submarine cable network.

Those complex maritime security challenges demand that we act together, to ensure the continued peace, stability and the freedom of our oceans.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

**Mr. Aron (Indonesia):** Indonesia commends the Hellenic Republic for convening this meeting and warmly welcomes His Excellency Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. We thank the briefers for their valuable insights.

Today's meeting is, indeed, significant, not only for islands and archipelagic States, like Indonesia, but also for the world at large.

Since time immemorial, the interconnectedness of the maritime domain has created a vital lifeline for humankind. That also means disruption in one part of the ocean can ripple across the globe, especially as the maritime domain is increasingly exposed to complex security threats, from territorial disputes to transnational organized crimes, from geopolitical tensions to environmental degradation.

To ensure peace, stability and the safety of navigation at sea, my delegation wishes to highlight three points.

First, upholding international law must be central to our efforts. We must be guided by the constitution of the oceans — the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) — which must remain the primary legal framework governing the oceans, including in our collective response to countering illicit activities at sea. Our collective experience shows that resolving disputes in accordance with UNCLOS has proven not only effective, but also instrumental in building mutual trust and confidence among States. For that reason, we must avoid unilateral claims



and coercive actions that undermine regional security and the integrity of our shared maritime order.

Secondly, regional cooperation and coordination must be strengthened. The transboundary and cross-sectoral nature of maritime challenges means no country, regardless of its capacity, can address them alone. In South-East Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has helped to transform a region once prone to conflict into a zone of peace, stability and prosperity. Indonesia is committed to contributing actively to regional efforts, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the ASEAN Regional Forum. Indonesia also champions the ASEAN Maritime Forum and will benefit from the ASEAN Maritime Outlook to identify areas of collaboration and promote common principles in advancing maritime cooperation.

Thirdly, we must build an inclusive and resilient maritime security architecture. The importance of security in the maritime domain requires us to build a strong foundation to effectively address challenges at sea. Confidence-building measures, capacity-building programmes, humanitarian coordination and codes of conduct that are rooted in dialogue and mutual respect must be fostered. In our region, the maritime security architecture is built upon the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. It provides us with a clear principle — that the ocean must serve as a bridge, not a battleground; an ocean of peace, instead of a sea of suspicion.

From Jakarta to New York, from the Straits of Malacca to the Mediterranean Sea, we are bound by the tides of interdependence. Indonesia stands ready to sail forward — with all partners — towards a maritime domain that is peaceful, secure, just and resilient for generations to come.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

**Mr. Briz Gutiérrez** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala thanks the Greek presidency for convening this open debate, which allows us to reflect on the current challenges to international security and peace in the maritime domain. It also acknowledges and appreciates the concept note prepared for this meeting, especially its third paragraph, in which mention is made of economic resilience, the well-being of nations and sustainable development.

Although our country has a relatively small coastline, it has a privileged position with access to the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. That geographical feature, while beneficial, can also be a source of threats.

In particular, Guatemala is concerned about the increase in transnational threats emerging in the maritime space, specifically drug trafficking, human trafficking and arms trafficking. In addition, illegal fishing, pollution and the unsustainable exploitation of resources remain significant threats, especially for coastal and island States. All those illicit activities not only affect collective security but also undermine the economic development of our countries.

From that perspective, Guatemala reiterates its commitment to strengthening multilateral mechanisms aimed at ensuring the freedom of navigation, combating transnational crime and promoting effective maritime governance and underscores the importance of safeguarding legitimate uses of the oceans.

We also appreciate the cooperative efforts of the Office of Legal Affairs, through assistance programmes to meet the strategic capacity needs of developing States in the field of ocean governance and the law of the sea.

Guatemala recognizes that maritime security is an inseparable element of sustainable development. In that regard, it is essential to support developing countries in strengthening their maritime, technological and logistical capabilities. Maritime security is a common good that must be preserved with responsibility, solidarity



and strategic vision. From its coasts on the Pacific and the Caribbean, Guatemala reaffirms its willingness to be an active partner in making the seas safe, sustainable and peaceful.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

**Mr. Hoang Giang Dang** (Viet Nam): I thank Greece for convening this timely open debate on a critical matter of global importance.

Over the past years, maritime threats have grown in complexity and scale to encompass a wide range of challenges, including piracy, armed robbery at sea and the sabotage of maritime infrastructure. In addition, climate change has brought about new risks, such as sea-level rise, extreme weather and shifting trade routes, which exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. The implications of those threats to international peace and security are profound. In order to address those challenges, we must adopt a global and holistic approach that integrates advanced technology, robust legal frameworks and enhanced international cooperation.

First, practical cooperation to ensure global and regional maritime security should be strengthened. Collaborative naval patrols in high-risk areas can deter piracy and other illicit activities. Advanced technologies in surveillance, detection and response capabilities should be leveraged and adopted. States must work together to invest in training personnel, while establishing international data-sharing agreements and ensuring equitable access for developing nations. At the same time, in view of the heightened risk of cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, such as ports and shipping lanes, international cybersecurity protocols and public-private partnerships are essential to address vulnerabilities and ensure the resilience of maritime infrastructure.

Secondly, there is a pressing need for greater multilateral coordination, especially among United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and in synergy with regional mechanisms. The Security Council should uphold its primary role and responsibility in maintaining international peace and security and continue to make important and concrete contributions to enhancing maritime security.

Thirdly, existing legal and regulatory frameworks and tools must be enhanced to effectively address evolving threats. The policies, regulations and conduct of States at sea must be in line with international law, especially the Charter of the United Nations and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The Convention establishes a comprehensive framework of law for the oceans, within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. States must fully uphold their legal obligations under the Convention, respect the sovereignty, interests and legitimate economic activities of the relevant States and settle disputes through peaceful means, in line with international law. They must also respect diplomatic and legal processes and ensure the freedom, safety and security of navigation and overflight without resorting to acts that would complicate the situation or create tension.

As a coastal State, Viet Nam welcomes all efforts and initiatives that promote maritime safety and security. We have been working closely with the relevant partners, bilaterally and multilaterally, to prevent and combat crimes at sea and to ensure maritime security in the East Sea, or South China Sea. Viet Nam has engaged actively and constructively in mechanisms led by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote maritime cooperation and security. We maintain regular joint patrols and information-sharing mechanisms with neighbouring countries, including China, the Philippines and Malaysia, for maritime law enforcement and emergency response.

In order to maintain peace, stability and the freedom of navigation and overflight in the region, as well as to facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea, Viet Nam is committed to working with ASEAN and China to fully and effectively implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and to advance negotiations towards a code of conduct for the parties in the South China Sea, consistent with international law, in particular UNCLOS.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Montenegro.

**Ms. Radulovic** (Montenegro): Montenegro aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (EU) and wishes to make a few remarks in its national capacity.

We thank Greece for convening today's debate and for putting a much-needed spotlight on maritime security, which is of key importance for global peace, sustainable development and economic resilience.

We recognize that transnational organized crime, terrorism, trafficking in persons and arms and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing represent serious challenges to maritime security and global supply chains. They are compounded by emerging risks — cyberthreats, hybrid threats and the disruption of critical maritime infrastructure, such as energy and data cables, which are vital to global commerce and digital connectivity. Montenegro is home to one such strategic link, namely, the undersea electricity interconnector with Italy.

In response to those threats, as a credible member of the international community, Montenegro continues to strengthen its maritime capabilities. We have launched the most ambitious naval modernization project to date — the purchase and construction of two patrol vessels, in cooperation with France. That will strengthen our national capacities, in addition to contributing to broader security by enabling us to participate more actively in collective maritime operations, as one of the ships will be dedicated exclusively to that.

In addition, in June, Montenegro will host the 2025 naval exercise to be conducted as part of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative to strengthen interoperability, information-sharing and operational readiness to counter maritime threats in the Adriatic-Ionian basin. For several years, Montenegro has also been a part of European Union Naval Force Operation Atalanta, countering piracy in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean. In addition, in cooperation with Albania — and very soon with Greece — Montenegro is contributing to international efforts to enhance situational awareness, strengthen capacities and deter maritime terrorism in the Mediterranean.

We strongly believe that strengthening maritime security requires multilateral action based on international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Montenegro reaffirms its unwavering commitment to upholding UNCLOS and the relevant Security Council resolutions that address maritime security threats. Given the complexity of those threats, we believe that continued discussion on that topic in the Security Council is crucial. We also see added value in closer coordination with the relevant United Nations agencies in support of a comprehensive, system-wide approach to maritime security.

In conclusion, Montenegro reiterates its full support for international cooperation to address maritime challenges and stands ready to continue contributing to that effort — at sea, through dialogue and in partnerships.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

**Mr. Zahneisen** (Germany): At the outset, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Greece for organizing this timely event.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union (EU), and I would like to add some additional reflections in my national capacity.

Germany is deeply convinced that maritime security is fundamental to global stability. It is of course also a prerequisite for economic prosperity. Disruptions to maritime routes pose direct threats to global supply chains, including of critical minerals, food and energy. I may add that that is also increasingly affecting Europe, where maritime security in the Baltic Sea has gained additional importance in view of the current threat environment, which is only becoming more complex and more challenging. In order to tackle those global challenges to maritime security, Germany remains a steadfast supporter of strengthened international cooperation.

In the Red Sea, we contribute to the protection of shipping within the framework of EU Naval Force Operation Aspides. In the Mediterranean, we are engaged in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as lead nation for the Maritime Task Force and in EU Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI. In the Gulf of Guinea, we support the regional cooperation of the coastal States of West and Central Africa, within the framework of the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, particularly with regard to the implementation of the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships and Illicit Maritime Activity in West and Central Africa. We are committed to assisting our partners in the region in translating the Yaoundé Code of Conduct into a binding document. In that context, we have also supported the training of port personnel in the region to ensure the safety and security of ports and shipping.

Looking ahead, I want to make two short points.

First, we would welcome it if the Security Council could engage on the topic of maritime security on a more regular basis. We believe that such discussions should focus on maritime security in specific geographic regions and on thematic issues, such as climate change and maritime security, hybrid maritime threats and vital sea lanes.

Secondly and lastly, Germany firmly believes that maritime security and international law are closely intertwined. Our oceans will only become a more secure place if we have rules in place and if we all apply and implement those rules. That is the reason why Germany — also as host country of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea — will stay firmly committed to a free, open and secure maritime domain based on international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. And we want to see the Security Council as a strong supporter in that regard.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

**Mr. Kössler (Austria):** Austria aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union (EU).

As a landlocked country, Austria does not have direct access to the sea, but we are deeply aware that maritime security is not the concern of coastal States alone. In fact, all States are stakeholders in the security of the world's oceans.

First, we underline the centrality of international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). UNCLOS is more than a legal framework — it is a foundational pillar of international peace and stability. Respect for international law is key and a prerequisite for countering piracy, regulating shipping routes and resolving maritime disputes. The same approach should be applied to new phenomena, such as sea level rise.

Secondly, we also support the role of the European Union, which plays an important part in promoting maritime stability. Austria contributes to the EU's maritime Operation Aspides in the Red Sea and Operation IRINI in the Mediterranean Sea. The latter enforces the United Nations arms embargo on Libya and demonstrates how the EU can act in support of crucial Security Council mandates.

Thirdly, maritime threats also often mirror land-based vulnerabilities, such as illicit trafficking, terrorism and piracy. By the way, we are holding an antiterrorism conference in Vienna in early June. Those vulnerabilities frequently come from fragile governance or local conflicts. Austria therefore encourages comprehensive and preventive approaches, and we think that the Council should make use of the expertise of other parts of the United Nations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Fourthly, regarding the climate-security nexus, sea level rise threatens the very existence of some Member States. Unlawful acts at sea — from oil spills to attacks on vessels — can cause devastating environmental damage. Austria stresses that maritime security efforts must integrate climate resilience, the protection of maritime biodiversity and the sustainable use of ocean resources, because they are security threats with far-reaching implications.

Lastly, we strongly support the 30-day ceasefire in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. As mentioned by the representative of Romania today, a maritime ceasefire could be an essential component on the way to peace.

Austria's candidacy for the Security Council for the 2027–2028 term is guided by our commitment to international law, effective multilateralism and a holistic approach to peace. Those principles apply just as much at sea as they do on land.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

**Mr. Vinhas** (Portugal): Portugal commends the Greek presidency of the Security Council for convening this timely and important debate.

As a maritime nation with one of the largest exclusive economic zones in Europe, 11 inhabited islands and three quarters of its population living in coastal areas, Portugal understands that maritime security is not a distant concern — it is a daily reality. Our sovereignty and economic, environmental and human security are deeply tied to the security of the seas.

Maritime threats have been growing in recent years, in scale and complexity. Indeed, according to the International Maritime Organization, the number of incidents this year almost doubled as compared to the same period in 2024. Attacks by the Houthis on commercial vessels in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden are aggravating the existing tensions in the region, further disrupting global trade by increasing shipping costs and greenhouse gas emissions. The Mediterranean Sea continues to be used by smugglers as a route for illegal migration and the trafficking of human beings and weapons. In the Gulf of Guinea, the rampant increase in piracy, oil theft and illegal and unreported fishing further exacerbates regional instability. All those activities are increasingly interlinked. Those compounding threats destabilize regions, weaken State authority and put lives at risk. And yet, although the Security Council has dealt with specific threats to maritime security over the years, it has seldom tackled them in a systematic manner.

In facing those threats, Portugal believes that the foundation of our response must be international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). As the Constitution of our ocean, UNCLOS remains essential to addressing threats to maritime security, ensuring the freedom of navigation and promoting the rule of law at sea. We also need sustained cooperation at sea.

Portugal contributes actively to European Union (EU) operations that translate that commitment into action — from Operation IRINI in the Mediterranean to Operation Atalanta off the Horn of Africa. Portugal also supports the EU's Coordinated Maritime Presences, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea. Local ownership and regional coordination are crucial. The assistance measures provided by the European Union to the Yaoundé Architecture are a good example of fostering shared situational awareness and operational coherence. We also host in Lisbon the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre against Narcotics — a very effective forum for multilateral and interregional cooperation to tackle drug trafficking by sea.

By fostering synergies between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and security actions, States and international organizations are more likely to address the root causes of complex crises. Capacity-building is crucial, and it must be tailored to each nation's unique needs and threat profiles. Projects such as Support to West Africa Integrated Maritime Security, a project of the Economic Community of West African States funded by the European Union and managed and co-funded by Portugal, and the United Nations-Portugal Ocean Fellowship Programme are good examples of how to build capacity in the areas of maritime security and maritime governance. Complementing those efforts, the Atlantic Centre, established in 2021 and already comprising 26 member States, has also played a relevant role in this domain. The Centre assesses threats and facilitates political dialogue, expanding knowledge and implementing multilateral capacity-building projects, further reinforcing collective security and stability in the maritime space. Beyond that, Portugal encourages the Security Council to consider a few actions in order to move from reactive crisis response towards sustained and preventive engagement.

First, the Security Council must tackle maritime security in a cross-cutting and systematic manner, mandating regular reporting by the Secretary-General and calling for thematic meetings that go beyond incident-based responses.

Secondly, reaffirming the centrality of UNCLOS within the Security Council is an important contribution to a rules-based order at sea.

Thirdly, strengthening the Council's engagement with regional maritime security architectures — such as the Yaoundé Architecture — by integrating regular briefings and supporting technical assistance through United Nations mechanisms, can also contribute to preventing threats to maritime security.

Fourthly and lastly, the Council must promote the inclusion of maritime security in peace operation mandates where relevant, particularly in regions where instability at sea and on land are mutually reinforcing.

Portugal will remain committed to working with all partners to ensure that our seas remain open, safe and governed by the rule of law. That is a clear priority for our candidature to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the 2027-2028 term.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria.

**Mr. Gospodinov** (Bulgaria): Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to make few points in my national capacity.

At the outset, I would like to thank neighbouring Greece for convening today's high-level open debate on strengthening maritime security.

The debate today is particularly important and will contribute to the support and better understanding of the complex topic of maritime security as an integral part of the issue of global security. There is a growing demand for a multilateral discussion on this topic as it concerns each country equally, regardless of whether it is coastal or landlocked. Bulgaria stands ready to engage with the other United Nations Member



States to enhance international cooperation to counter maritime security threats and confirms its commitment to the freedom of navigation and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Threats to maritime security, unlike threats to maritime safety are man-made — piracy; armed attacks at sea; terrorist activities; illicit trafficking of drugs, arms and people; environmental pressures from climate change and cargo hijacking. Those dangers are dynamic and increasingly hybrid, merging elements of traditional conflict and unconventional warfare. The protection of maritime spaces from threats and intentional unlawful acts requires common efforts between governmental and non-governmental actors. Maritime security could be achieved through a comprehensive approach engaging national authorities and regional and global stakeholders. Ensuring maritime security also requires strong and enduring partnerships between civilian and military authorities.

Successful maritime security cooperation entails not only identifying stakeholders, diverse in their power and influence, it also allows operational capacities to grow and be mutually reinforced. Conducting surveillance and sharing information are the first steps of a pragmatic and successful cooperation process that is built on trust and confidence and aimed at reaching a shared awareness of the situation of the maritime domain.

As a Black Sea coastal State, Bulgaria believes in the positive experience of maritime security as cooperative security and is also very much concerned about the ongoing threats in the Black Sea and its neighbouring region due to the war of aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine and the operations of Russia's shadow fleet. In that regard, I would like to highlight the importance of cooperation in addressing security challenges in the Black Sea region and to cite the Mine Countermeasures Black Sea Task Group as an example of a mutual commitment among allied Black Sea countries to tackle the mine threat and ensure maritime traffic safety.

Maritime security in the Black Sea region is crucial, and any attempt to limit such freedom by force should be firmly rejected.

The security challenges in the Black Sea region have highlighted the need to step up the work on building energy, transport and digital connectivity in the Black Sea region. Bulgaria participates in the Black Sea submarine cable project which will establish parallel electricity and fibre optic submarine cable interconnections across the Black Sea. Enhancing regional infrastructure development and connectivity answers local security challenges and also corresponds to the importance of our region for the world's food security.

Convinced that cooperation is key for solving issues related to security generally and to maritime security in particular, Bulgaria is in the final stages of the preparation for the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, which will start on 1 July. During our presidency, we would like to bring forward discussions on blue growth and connectivity, while preserving its ecosystem as valuable natural heritage and protecting both marine and coastal resources. We will need to invest further efforts in preserving the nature of the organization as a model for multilateral economic cooperation and fostering a community built on collaboration and shared values.

In conclusion, Bulgaria is committed to regional and global initiatives that ensure safe and free navigation while holistically countering maritime security threats. We are convinced that the current geopolitical challenges at sea, on land and in space can be addressed only through dialogue and cooperation.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Mozambique.



**Mr. Fernandes** (Mozambique): I would like to commend you, Mr. President, and the Hellenic presidency for leading the Council this month and for convening this timely debate. We also express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and the briefers for their insightful contributions this morning.

Maritime security is not only about navigation; it is intrinsically linked to international peace, sustainable development and global economic stability.

With over 90 per cent of world trade transported by sea, threats to maritime routes jeopardize critical supply chains and undermine food and energy security and the livelihoods of millions.

Illicit maritime activities such as piracy, armed robbery, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, maritime terrorism, and trafficking — of arms, drugs and persons — are increasingly interlinked, with destabilizing effects globally.

Recent threats in the Red Sea serve as a stark reminder of how quickly maritime insecurity can escalate and reverberate globally. Those complex challenges warrant coordinated and multilateral responses grounded in international cooperation.

For Mozambique, maritime security is not an abstract concept but a reality. In 2010, a Mozambican vessel was hijacked in the Mozambique Channel. It was through swift international cooperation — notably with the assistance of Indian naval forces — that the crew was safely rescued. That experience demonstrated both the global nature of maritime threats and the power of solidarity and cooperation in addressing them.

Mozambique therefore reaffirms the centrality of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as the legal foundation for maritime governance. We urge all States to uphold and fully implement the provisions of UNCLOS, which remains our constitution for the oceans. We also stress the importance of full and universal implementation of related frameworks developed under the International Maritime Organization.

At the regional level, Mozambique supports the African Union's 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy, the Southern African Development Community Integrated Maritime Security Strategy and the Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control. Those instruments are vital for coordination, surveillance, enforcement and capacity-building and coordinated response.

We commend the Security Council's consistent attention to maritime threats, including through resolutions 1814 (2008), 1838 (2008), 2018 (2011), 2039 (2012), 2240 (2015) and 2634 (2022). Those instruments reinforce the principle that maritime security is central to the Council's mandate of maintaining international peace and security.

Allow me to briefly highlight five priorities from Mozambique's perspective.

First, sustained Council engagement is necessary. The Security Council must remain seized of maritime threats and act decisively to preserve peace and security at sea.

Secondly, root causes must be addressed. Maritime crime often stems from conditions on land, such as poverty, unemployment and governance deficits. Addressing those drivers is key to lasting maritime security.

Thirdly, legal and institutional capacity must be strengthened. We urge the full implementation of the relevant legal instruments and call for international support to enhance national efforts to prosecute maritime crimes and close enforcement gaps.

Fourthly, cooperative security frameworks must be enhanced. Within frameworks like the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy for information-sharing

platforms, regional coordination must be scaled up to match the evolving scale and complexity of maritime threats.

Lastly, there is a need to invest in capacity-building. Investments in surveillance systems, naval capacity, port infrastructure and trained personnel are critical. Greater international support is required to empower African States to secure their waters.

Maritime security underpins the blue economy, protects national sovereignty and safeguards regional peace. It must be addressed holistically — linking security, development, environmental stewardship and justice.

In conclusion, Mozambique reaffirms its commitment to working hand in hand with partners, near and far, in order to ensure that our seas remain a shared space of peace and prosperity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Lithuania.

**Mr. Paulauskas** (Lithuania): Lithuania aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union.

In my national capacity, I would like to thank the Greek presidency of the Security Council for holding this important debate. Indeed, maritime security is closely linked to multilateralism overall, and this debate is very timely.

Today the Baltic Sea is at the forefront of emerging maritime security concerns. Recent events in Estonia's exclusive economic zone — where a United Kingdom-sanctioned, flagless shadow fleet tanker refused inspection and was escorted by a Russian fighter jet, violating Estonian airspace — illustrate that deeply concerning development. Lithuania fully supports the steps taken by Estonia to ensure maritime safety and security, in accordance with international law.

We are also concerned about the seizure by Russia of a Greek-owned cargo ship transiting from an Estonian port. That is yet another vivid example of reckless and provocative behaviour by a permanent member of the Council, disregarding its own international obligations.

Recently, the Baltic Sea region has seen a growing number of Russia's so-called shadow fleet vessels — ageing, poorly maintained tankers that frequently operate without insurance and are crewed by unqualified personnel. Those vessels not only pose significant risks to maritime safety and the environment, but also jeopardize the security of undersea infrastructure. Since October 2023 alone, at least 11 undersea cables and one pipeline have been damaged in the Baltic Sea, mostly by shadow fleet vessels dragging anchors on the seabed.

To respond to such incidents, we have taken measures to upgrade our legal framework. As part of our international efforts, in November 2024 Lithuania joined the United States-initiated international Joint Statement on the Security and Resilience of Undersea Cables in a Globally Digitalized World. However, more must be done to address those challenges effectively. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides a robust legal framework to safeguard underwater infrastructure, but its effective implementation is essential. Flag States must exercise effective jurisdiction and control over their vessels, ensuring that ships flying their flags do not endanger critical undersea infrastructure. At the same time, the matter of whether flagless ships without clear jurisdiction are fully covered by UNCLOS remains an open question.

Protecting that critical infrastructure is a shared responsibility. Regarding the shadow fleet, the international community should act to stop the sale and transfer of ageing tankers to opaque and non-compliant entities, as those vessels often end up in shadow fleets that threaten maritime safety and security.

The broader maritime security environment is further strained by Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine in the Black Sea region. Russia has continuously attacked and destroyed Ukraine's grain export infrastructure in the Black Sea and in Danube ports. Russia also withdrew from the United Nations-supported Black Sea Grain Initiative and profited from rising global prices on food and fertilizers.

Russia should not be rewarded for weaponizing food. The memorandum of understanding between the Russian Federation and the Secretariat of the United Nations on promoting Russian food products and fertilizers to the world markets should not be renewed. Signed in conjunction with the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which made possible the provision of Ukrainian grain to global consumers, the memorandum of understanding is no longer needed. Its utility for global food supply is questionable, while the costs to the United Nations are sizable.

Maritime security cannot be fully addressed without acknowledging one of the long-standing yet underappreciated threats to it, namely, munitions dumped on the seabed, including sea-dumped chemical weapons. We note the growing global concern and recognize that the issue of munitions dumped on the seabed transcends environmental protection and becomes a security issue. Since 2010, Lithuania has led international efforts in that regard, initiating the first General Assembly resolution on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. The most recent update was adopted unanimously in 2023 and sponsored by more than 50 countries.

Lithuania is advocating practical steps forward, including exploring modalities for a voluntary database of sea-dumped chemical munitions on dumping sites, types, quantities, and where possible, the current condition of chemical munitions.

Lithuania is a maritime nation, involved in international initiatives underpinning maritime cooperation and trade and contributing to global food and energy security. The rapidly evolving Three Seas Initiative, to which Greece recently acceded, opens an opportunity for Europe to expand the North-South connectivity axis, providing an impetus for multifaceted cooperation and growth. That also enables us to improve transportation links, diversify energy resources and routes and build resilient infrastructure. We also call on all Member States to treat maritime security as a matter of shared responsibility — to protect our seas, support science-based decision-making and uphold international law.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. We must recognize the Convention's important contribution to sustainable development and to peace, security, cooperation and friendly relations among all nations.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

**Mr. Llosa (Peru)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to thank the Permanent Mission of Greece for its invitation to participate in this important debate and for its diligent work as President of the Security Council this month. We also welcome the participation in the debate of His Excellency the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

In a most timely manner, the Greek presidency convened us to assess a topic whose scope and interest are of a global nature, given that the strengthening of maritime security through international cooperation concerns us all. We consider it appropriate to add the need to exercise multilateralism based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, collective security and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Our maritime security interests are fully in line with the resolutions adopted by the Council. We condemn the Houthi attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea and

the Gulf of Aden. We regret that those attacks affect the stability of supply chains and economic development, causing considerable disruption to regional and global trade, impeding the normal flow of critical food, fuel, humanitarian assistance and other essential goods around the world.

Under the above principles, we express our strongest support for the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General through his Special Envoy for Yemen.

Peru, as a member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and, particularly, of its Council, participates in the drafting of the highest standards relating to maritime safety and security, prioritizing the crucial importance of maintaining the freedom of navigation. We reiterate our support for the resolution on maritime security in the Red Sea area adopted at the 108th session of the Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization, paragraph 11 of which encourages all parties to provide relevant information to the International Maritime Organization, as appropriate.

Therefore, as part of our commitment to international maritime governance, and in the context of our wish to continue collaborating in that regard as a member of the IMO Council for the years 2026 and 2027, in the framework of the 110th session of the Committee, to be held next June, with the support of other member States, we will continue to advance the proposal presented by Peru in April, aimed at promoting the use of international maritime information exchange centres to link efforts to combat the threats posed by organized crime in the maritime sector.

The proposal stresses the importance of an integrated network of international maritime information exchange centres, or similar bodies, to effectively anticipate, prevent and coordinate incidents and threats, thereby enhancing the protection of international trade and the marine environment.

The Peruvian navy is currently in charge of the Maritime Information Fusion Centre for Latin America, at which maritime information is collected and analysed in order to address common threats, such as the fight against piracy; armed robbery; illegal drug, human and arms trafficking; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and other illicit activities.

In that regard, in March, Peru, with the support of Belgium, Colombia, Ecuador and India, proposed the inclusion of those threats in a more comprehensive manner in the strategic plan of the IMO Legal Committee.

Finally, I wish to urge IMO member States to strengthen that interconnectedness by sharing relevant information on the above threats, through a preventive approach, and to provide technical and financial resources to that end, to ensure its development and strengthening,

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

**Mr. Larsen** (Australia): Australia is a major maritime nation whose coastline links the Pacific, Indian and Southern Oceans. We rely heavily on a free, open and secure maritime domain, managed in accordance with international law. We welcome the focus of today's debate, because we agree that threats and disruptions to maritime security continue to emerge and evolve, and that that is a matter of concern for the Security Council.

Australia will always pursue a world in which differences are settled peacefully, through agreed rules and norms. When maritime disputes arise, it is imperative that parties not only respect international law but also use its established frameworks and mechanisms to resolve them. We emphasize the primacy of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which sets out the legal frameworks within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.

We reject excessive and unlawful maritime claims that are inconsistent with UNCLOS. Conduct that limits other countries' ability to exercise their sovereign rights is not acceptable, nor is activity that impedes the freedoms of navigation and overflight.

We remain concerned by behaviour that risks miscalculation and escalation, particularly in the South China Sea, where we have seen dangerous and aggressive actions, including against the Philippines.

Australia also condemns attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Houthi terrorist strikes on commercial shipping have severely disrupted navigational rights and freedoms, international commerce and maritime security, and that is unacceptable. Meanwhile, the deliberate destruction of undersea cables in the Baltic and elsewhere has caused economic and other harm to our interconnected global community. As those cases reveal, there is a clear need for global and regional cooperation to ensure maritime security incidents are contained, and disputes are resolved peacefully.

Australia is working with partners in the Indo-Pacific to address regional maritime security challenges. In South-East Asia, we are investing in partnerships to enhance maritime domain awareness, support sustainable marine resource management and protection of the marine environment, and to uphold UNCLOS. We also reaffirm our strong ongoing support for the centrality and unity of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the practical implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

In the Pacific, we are working with partner countries to combat transnational crime and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Australia is also working with the European Union and others to support delimitation of maritime boundaries in the Pacific, which need to be preserved against the threats of sea-level rise.

In the Indian Ocean, we are playing a leading role in promoting maritime security capabilities, including through the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

We support Greece's call for using relevant international organizations to manage maritime security issues and for protecting and enhancing compliance with existing legal instruments. Australia is a founding member of the International Maritime Organization and continues to underscore the universal and unified character of UNCLOS. We continue to insist that international law and multilateralism underpin our shared security and prosperity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

**Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa): South Africa congratulates Greece for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May.

We also appreciate the opportunity afforded by this high-level open debate on strengthening maritime security through international cooperation for global stability.

While maritime security is fundamental to global stability, including through the securing of vital trade routes and maritime transport networks, we must emphasize the importance of taking a holistic approach to address the land-based threats to maritime security. That is especially so for countries affected by armed conflict.

Over 80 per cent of global trade is transported by sea, and 97 per cent of global data flows through submarine cables. However, threats such as piracy, terrorism, armed robbery at sea and illicit trafficking pose significant challenges to global stability. The disruption of maritime routes poses a direct threat to international food security, critical minerals, energy security, global supply chains and economic stability. Maritime security has become an important area of focus related to international peace and security, with recent escalations in regions such as the



Red Sea and threats to maritime trade routes and economic choke points adversely affecting the global economy.

In Africa, maritime insecurity has manifested itself in piracy, particularly off the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa. What is clear, however, is that it is not the main source of instability, but rather a symptom of land-based conflicts and crises.

South Africa is concerned by growing maritime insecurity, particularly illicit activities exacerbated by transnational organized crime. To address those challenges, we should strengthen international efforts to counter maritime security threats. I would like to highlight the following points.

We should invest in national capacity-building and training for maritime security forces, particularly in regions that are vulnerable to security threats. We should ratify or accede to the relevant international legal instruments that govern maritime spaces and counter maritime insecurity, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea — a key legal instrument that has established order in ocean governance, reduced territorial disputes, safeguarded the high seas for all and guaranteed sustainable use of our ocean resources. A further element is enhancing information-sharing and intelligence cooperation among nations to prevent and respond to maritime security incidents. We should also conduct joint operations and exercises to build trust and cooperation among nations. Furthermore, we should foster regional and global partnerships to promote cooperation and coordination on maritime security issues. We should develop and implement effective maritime security strategies that address the root causes of maritime security threats but also promote the legitimate use of, and access to, oceans and safeguard the lives of people at sea and the livelihoods and security of coastal communities. We should explore the use of new technologies to mitigate maritime insecurity. And lastly, we should strengthen judicial cooperation among States, including the extradition of maritime offenders.

In conclusion, the unity of the international community is vital in finding sustainable solutions to mitigate the growing scourge of maritime insecurity. That should be grounded in a holistic approach that addresses the root causes, which are primarily land-based but are manifesting in the maritime domain.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Mauritius.

**Mr. Meetarbhan** (Mauritius): We thank Greece for convening this debate, which is of the utmost importance when it comes to strengthening the global maritime security architecture and global stability.

Like many other small island States, Mauritius has sovereign rights over resources extending across vast maritime zones. While small island developing States (SIDS) often identify as large ocean States, they lack the capacity to independently enforce their rights under international law, owing largely to insufficient maritime surveillance capabilities. Mauritius' contribution to this debate will focus on maritime surveillance as an essential prerequisite for the broader maritime security landscape.

The inability to effectively exercise maritime surveillance has an impact on the economic security of SIDS, which often have little or no other natural resources. Mauritius, for instance, has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) that is about 1,000 times its land mass. Indeed, many SIDS are entitled to large EEZs under the archipelagic regime provided under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We submit that regional cooperation is key to maritime surveillance to ensure conservation and the effective exercise of rights under international law. It is imperative that States pool their resources and establish regional surveillance mechanisms working within global integrated systems. Maritime surveillance is intrinsically linked to the enforcement of the economic rights of SIDS, and



consequently, incidents at sea, such as oil spills, can have disastrous impacts not only on the environment but also on the economic security of those States.

Mauritius finds itself in the middle of the Indian Ocean, through which more than half of global seaborne trade passes. A significant volume of global oil trade transits through this Ocean. Robust security measures and international cooperation are required to safeguard the interests and security of coastal States. In an effort to deepen and extend the regional maritime security architecture, Mauritius has, over the past few years, hosted three maritime security conferences for the region. Mauritius is also committed to implementing the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy for maritime security and working towards the establishment of a regional mechanism to foster collaboration among coastal States and the international community to enhance maritime security and governance.

Mauritius strongly believes that international collaboration, intelligence-sharing and capacity-building initiatives are key to further reinforcing maritime security. There can be no significant improvement in maritime surveillance capabilities without the support of the international community. Economic security and resilience are essential components of the overall security required to maintain global stability, and Mauritius is convinced that debates such as the one we are having today will positively contribute to regional and global cooperation to improve maritime surveillance and reinforce security for all.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Estonia.

**Mr. Tammsaar** (Estonia): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important open debate.

We align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to add the following in my national capacity.

Like the Greek, we Estonians have always considered ourselves a seafaring nation. The Baltic Sea accounts for more than half of Estonia's border and has been a source of food and a major trading route throughout our history. As a coastal State, Estonia has a particular responsibility when it comes to mitigating maritime safety and security risks in our region and beyond.

Let me focus on the security situation of the Baltic Sea — first, the so-called shadow fleet and, secondly, undersea energy and communication connections.

Since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the number of vessels engaged in illegal activities — including in the Baltic Sea — and evading compliance with safety or environmental regulations has dramatically increased. The so-called shadow fleet, consisting of up to 2,000 substandard vessels, is being used to avoid sanctions and finance Russia's war against Ukraine. The shadow fleet is used for transporting mainly crude oil and petroleum products originating from Russia. The vessels are often in poor condition and without reliable insurance coverage. They pose a direct threat to maritime safety and the underwater and coastal environment. It is only a matter of time before they cause a major disaster. That would have a catastrophic impact on the particularly fragile maritime environment of the Baltic Sea, and coastal States would have to bear the burden of the damage.

An increasing number of shadow fleet vessels in the Baltic Sea are without a flag or sail under a false flag. On 13 May, a tanker named *Jaguar* entered the Estonian economic zone without a flag and without insurance. The vessel refused the Estonian authorities' request to inspect it in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which grants States the right to inspect ships without a nationality. While the vessel continued its route, a Russian fighter jet deliberately violated Estonia's airspace, escorting the vessel to Russia's waters. That dangerous incident proved, inter alia, that there is a clear-cut link between the shadow fleet and

Russia. We call on Russia to stop its reckless behaviour immediately. We would also like to urge all relevant stakeholders to promote action to prevent illegal operations in the maritime sector by the shadow fleet in accordance with the corresponding International Maritime Organization resolution, adopted on 6 December 2023.

Finally, damaging critical undersea infrastructure in the Baltic Sea has also become frequent. There were four serious incidents from October 2023 to January 2025. We reiterate that damaging undersea infrastructure, if done wilfully or through culpable negligence in the exclusive economic zones of other States or beneath the high seas, shall be treated as a punishable offence in accordance with article 113 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. To recall the words of the Secretary-General this morning, respect for international law is the anchor of maritime security.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

**Ms. Ni Mhuircheartaigh (Ireland):** Ireland aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and adds the following.

The world is facing an increasingly challenging and contested security environment. In Ireland, we recognize that economic success in our digitized world depends on the global communications and energy infrastructure that runs through our waters. We understand, too, that, in an ever-connected world, what happens in one part of the ocean can have a profound effect the world over.

We join others in stressing the importance of protecting critical maritime infrastructure, sub-sea cables and energy infrastructure and of enhancing maritime domain awareness. We also emphasize the importance of strengthening collaboration and cooperation between stakeholders when dealing with maritime security challenges.

Ireland has been pleased to contribute to naval operations conducted by the European Union. For example, Ireland's participation in the European Union military operation in the Mediterranean, Operation IRINI, has allowed us to demonstrate its continued support for peace and stability in Libya and the Mediterranean Sea.

As an island nation with an exclusive economic zone of almost seven times our land area, the security of our seas is of paramount importance. Ireland's most recent defence policy review found the need to give particular focus to maritime security. And from that, we are developing our first national maritime security strategy. And we are committed to broadening and deepening our international security engagement and working with partners both in public and private sectors.

Respect for international law in our oceans is essential for the maintenance of international peace, security, stability and prosperity. Ireland emphasizes the universal and unified character of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and reaffirms that the Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. The Convention is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector. Its integrity needs to be maintained, as recognized by the annual General Assembly resolution on oceans and the law of the sea.

Ireland calls on all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to UNCLOS to consider doing so now, as well as to ratify and effectively implement relevant conventions and other international instruments developed within the framework of UNCLOS.

In addition, Ireland urges all States to display responsible behaviour in the maritime domain. We are opposed to any practices that are purposefully designed to damage the infrastructure of another State, to provoke or to evade law. Ireland

also opposes practices which, through wilful negligence, pose ecological risks to the marine environment.

In conclusion, Ireland recalls that the ocean is a global common good and that having a stable legal order for the seas and a peaceful use of the ocean will contribute to the realization of a just and fair international economic order. It will facilitate international communication, enable the equitable use of its resources and help ensure the protection and preservation of the marine environment.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

**Mr. Endoni** (Nigeria): At the outset, I would like to congratulate Greece on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May and for organizing this high-level open debate on strengthening maritime security through international cooperation for global stability.

The global maritime space, encompassing the world's oceans and seas, remains a vital area and crucial for maintaining global stability and free passage. As such, maritime security remains vital in the actualization of international peace and security.

Nigeria is firmly committed to the maintenance of maritime security and multilateral cooperation. Our commitment reflects a long-standing dedication and deep understanding of the realities and evolving challenges facing the maritime space. We are committed to the implementation of our legal obligations to the maritime-related instruments, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Nigeria believes that successful regional collaboration in addressing transnational maritime security challenges depends largely on domestic capabilities. Thus, we have prioritized the strengthening of our domestic capacity for effective protection of our maritime space. In that connection, the Nigerian Government has invested more than \$195 million to establish the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure framework. That framework, also called the Deep Blue Project, is a maritime security platform for rapid response.

In addition to addressing piracy and other maritime security threats, including strengthening international cooperation in the Gulf of Guinea, Nigeria has made commitments to the Combined Maritime Task Force for the Gulf of Guinea to host the headquarters towards the operationalization of the force as an important transnational mechanism for the region.

The Nigerian Government has further prioritized the fulfilment of the country's obligations under the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, which remains the most visible international cooperation instrument for tackling piracy and other crimes in our maritime region. We are also utilizing the Yaoundé Architecture Code to share information with Member States to enhance timely intelligence-sharing and quick response. We have further demonstrated good faith in the implementation of resolution 2733 (2024) of 2024, through measures, such as regular patrols across our maritime borders, search and seizure and the use of surveillance systems by the Nigerian navy.

Effective international cooperation in strengthening maritime security must leverage the strengths of regional organizations and integrate regional competencies. That collaboration can enhance more resources and knowledge, bring valuable operational experience, bolster regional security frameworks and eliminate the duplication of efforts. Meanwhile, accountability and transparency should remain central to those efforts.

Reinforcing the sovereignty of national waters within the Gulf of Guinea and protecting a vital source of food for the population remains a vital aspect of national security. Therefore, enhancing the navy's capacity and presence would help the region address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which is adversely impacting the livelihoods and economic opportunities of the local populations.

Nigeria appreciates the contributions of international partners and commercial maritime actors at improving safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea. We also commend the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for its commitment and support for the regional architecture, as well as efforts to find solutions to the maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea. We therefore underscore the value of capacity building for the Gulf of Guinea States to effectively combat and prevent piracy and other security challenges facing the region.

We believe that efforts to enhance the efficiency of national and regional interventions in maritime security must be robust, collective and targeted. And in that regard, we highlight that the Security Council has an important role in evolving new strategies that would address new and emerging trends. Finally, bearing in mind that the maintenance of international peace and security is not a one-country venture, we look forward to better collaborations that will make our maritime environment safer and more sustainable.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

**Ms. Hayovyshyn (Ukraine):** We welcome the participation of His Excellency Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of Greece, and thank the Greek presidency for organizing today's important debate. We are also grateful to all briefers for their valuable insights.

Ukraine aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

The issue of maritime security is increasingly urgent. As correctly highlighted, safe and secure seas are vital for international peace, economic resilience and sustainable development. They are also directly relevant to the Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Ukraine, as a maritime State, attaches the highest priority to maritime security. That issue is directly linked to energy and food security, as disruptions at sea affect supply chains, delay vital shipments and jeopardize access to essential goods.

Despite facing ongoing threats, Ukraine remains committed to ensuring safety in its territorial waters. A clear example is the Ukrainian-led maritime corridor, launched after Russia's unilateral termination of the Black Sea Grain Initiative in 2023. In the face of constant missile attacks, the corridor continues to deliver food to more than 50 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. Ukraine remains a steadfast contributor to global food security.

However, Russia's aggression — beginning, in 2014, with the illegal occupation of Crimea and then a full-scale invasion — has drastically undermined stability in the Black and Azov Seas. Occupied Ukrainian ports have been turned into military hubs. Meanwhile, Russia has targeted more than 400 port facilities with upwards of 500 missiles and drones, destroying more than 100,000 tons of agricultural goods and disrupting trade routes.

The environmental consequences of the war are equally alarming. In December 2024, two Russian tankers sank in the Kerch Strait, releasing massive quantities of fuel oil into Ukrainian territorial waters. That resulted in a large-scale ecological disaster, devastating marine ecosystems and contaminating coastlines in Crimea and beyond. The incident serves to highlight how maritime security also includes the protection of fragile marine environments. Accountability must follow.

Ukraine actively supports international cooperation to enhance maritime security, including through engagement with the International Maritime Organization. We underscore the importance of implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions and upholding international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In conclusion, the only path to true stability in the region, the restoration of maritime security and the safeguarding of global market stability is through a just and lasting peace based on the Charter of the United Nations. That peace must ensure the full restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters, along with clear, reliable and enforceable security guarantees.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Bahrain.

**Mr. Alrowaiei** (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, it gives me great pleasure to welcome Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of the friendly nation of Greece, who earlier presided over this meeting, and to congratulate the delegation of Greece on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I thank the Mr. President for convening this important meeting. I also thank His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres and the other briefers for their valuable briefings.

International seas and waterways are increasingly exposed to diverse and interconnected threats as a result of illicit activities. Those activities include transnational organized crime, arms diversion, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, the smuggling of migrants, piracy, illegal and unregulated fishing, terrorist acts, cyberthreats and environmental degradation. That affects food and energy security and undermines the stability of the global economy and international peace and security, which, in turn, makes securing and protecting shipping and trade routes against all risks a collective responsibility.

As a country in a region of strategic and vital importance, the Kingdom of Bahrain recognizes the need to work in partnership with brotherly, friendly and allied countries to ensure security and stability, protect maritime navigation, confront any threats to it and promote world peace. The recent attacks in the Red Sea are an important reminder of the need for cooperation against illicit maritime activities. The Kingdom of Bahrain continues to consolidate its role as an active partner in maintaining the security of maritime navigation and its position as a hub of global security efforts. Bahrain's historic and pivotal role in the field of maritime security is epitomized by its efforts to promote international cooperation to counter traditional and emerging maritime threats, protect global supply chains, ensure the continuity of trade through vital waterways, support peacekeeping operations and respond to crises.

The Kingdom of Bahrain continues to adopt the latest technologies in the maritime sector in order to enhance the maritime safety and security system and help to elevate its efficiency and readiness, as addressing challenges requires strengthening information-exchange mechanisms, building capacities and investing in maritime awareness. In that context, the Kingdom of Bahrain emphasizes the need to adhere to international law, especially the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which constitutes the legal framework for maritime governance and cooperation.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain reiterates its unwavering determination to continue supporting all endeavours aimed at ensuring maritime security and regional and global stability, in accordance with international law, and to work with the international community to protect the seas and keep them safe, thereby



supporting international peace and security and achieving prosperity and well-being for all countries.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

**Mr. Løvold** (Norway): I thank the President for convening this important open debate on strengthening maritime security through international cooperation for global stability. We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing today.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries, namely, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

The Nordic countries are all outward-facing coastal countries with open, globally connected economies that are deeply reliant on the ocean. The ocean is central to our history, our livelihoods and our development. The security of our seafarers and maritime infrastructure and protecting the health of the ocean are of vital importance to all the Nordic countries. As firm believers in multilateralism anchored in international law, the law of the sea is our most important compass.

We cannot allow militant groups to hold the freedom of navigation and global maritime trade hostage. We have therefore condemned the illegal Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. The attacks have claimed innocent lives and severely and negatively affected free passage in the Red Sea area. They have made common goods such as food, fuel and medicine more expensive. Threats to maritime security, including piracy and armed robbery at sea, remain a serious global issue. It is important to continue efforts to stop those threats with all necessary means. We must maintain effective protective and deterrent measures. We must also continue efforts to address the underlying root causes that lead to piracy. The Nordic countries call upon all Member States to criminalize, investigate and prosecute piracy and armed robbery at sea, in line with international law. We all have individual obligations in respect of the safety and security of the ocean.

Russia uses its so-called shadow fleet to evade sanctions and fuel its war economy. The often substandard vessels and reckless shipping practices of the fleet pose a great risk to the environment, seafarers and the safety and security of maritime infrastructure, including in the coastal waters of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. In December 2023, the International Maritime Organization adopted resolution A.1192(33), which urges member States and all stakeholders to prevent the shadow fleet's illegal operations. All flag States have a legal obligation under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to exercise effective jurisdiction and control over vessels flying their flag and to ensure compliance with international rules and standards. We are determined to take further coordinated steps to deter and counter the shadow fleet together with our partners.

In 2022, as an elected member of the Security Council, Norway, together with Ghana, was a co-penholder on resolution 2634 (2022), on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. The resolution aimed to increase security for ships and sailors in the Gulf, safeguard the economic potential of countries in the region and reaffirm that UNCLOS sets out the legal framework for all ocean activities globally. The resolution serves as an example of how the Council can be instrumental in developing and strengthening the maritime security order. We therefore encourage the Council to remain actively engaged and take proactive responsibility for maintaining the freedom and security of our ocean.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Djibouti.

**Mr. Doualeh** (Djibouti): At the outset, I wish to reiterate Djibouti's gratitude to Greece, President of the Security Council for the month of May, for convening this meeting on maritime security at a time when threats are multiplying, becoming more complex and are increasingly interconnected. Coincidentally, and as noted in a United



Nations Institute for Disarmament Research report, the current configuration of the Security Council includes the group of countries that bring accumulated experience and expertise on the subject matter. We further thank the Greek presidency for the detailed and well-crafted concept note as well as the guiding questions. They go a long way in clarifying the stakes and fostering an in-depth discussion on how best to collectively confront traditional threats and emerging challenges. Our gratitude goes, of course, to the Secretary-General and the briefers for their invaluable contribution.

Djibouti has a stake in maritime security for obvious reasons. It lies at the confluence of some of the world's most vital maritime routes. Approximately 20 per cent of global trade flows through that passage. As a seafaring nation since time immemorial, the law of the sea, as developed over the years, has always been of great importance to the people of Djibouti. Indeed, Djibouti is proud to have been one of the original signatories of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), adopted on 10 December 1982.

As underscored by the Secretary-General, we reiterate the importance of respecting international law. Security Council resolutions and the obligations in the UNCLOS must be fully and effectively implemented. UNCLOS is universally and rightfully lauded for having codified a legal regime that comprehensively addresses the most significant issues that face the world's oceans and coastal States.

I would, however, submit that one of the Convention's greatest achievements is underappreciated. I refer to the drafters' wise decision to embed into the legal architecture that they erected the recognition that cooperation, both internationally and, critically, regionally, is essential for facilitating responsible and peaceful uses of the seas.

The obligations of cooperation are of particular importance to Djibouti in the light of the regrettable maritime issues that have plagued the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden that led to the adoption by the Council of resolution 2722 (2024) of January 2024.

Djibouti is, therefore, pleased to have played a significant role in developing the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden that Djibouti and 20 regional States adopted on 29 January 2009, and which is known as the Djibouti Code of Conduct.

The Code, which reaffirms that international law, as reflected in UNCLOS, sets out the legal framework applicable to combating piracy and armed robbery at sea and sets out the signatories' agreement to cooperate with regard to the investigation, arrest and prosecution of those reasonably suspected of committing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships; the interdiction and seizure of suspect ships; the rescue of ships, persons and property; and the conduct of shared operations.

Since the adoption of the Djibouti Code of Conduct, and building on its success in facilitating cooperation, 18 regional States adopted, in January 2017, the Jeddah Amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct. The Amendment expanded the Code's coverage to include cooperation in regard to other activities affecting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, the importance of which has become increasingly clear, namely illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, trafficking in arms and narcotics and psychotropic substances, illegal trade in wildlife, illegal oil bunkering, crude oil theft, human trafficking and smuggling and illegal dumping of toxic waste.

Under President Guelleh, Djibouti's economic development blueprint seeks to transform the country into a logistics, commercial and telecom hub. Djibouti has invested in 12 submarine cables, underscoring its commitment to becoming a digital gateway between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Such plans can only be realized if maritime security concerns are effectively addressed when they arise. Djibouti has undertaken efforts to strengthen its maritime security framework. We seize this opportunity to thank the international organizations, friends and partners that assisted Djibouti in its efforts to bolster port security plans and enhance the skills of personnel responsible for its implementation.

Building a self-reliant maritime security sector, however, would require investing in robust naval capabilities and designing long-term sustainable training programmes and technology transfer. Needless to say, that requires massive investment in an environment of competing priorities, as is often the case in developing countries. We call, therefore, on our friends and partners to continue providing Djibouti with the crucial support it needs.

Djibouti is a reliable and committed partner. It serves as a humanitarian hub and it hosts installations that are involved in counter-terrorism operations and anti-piracy missions, thereby contributing to regional global security.

*(spoke in French)*

The Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction that Djibouti recently signed reflects the collective determination of the international community to strengthen international cooperation and coordination around the central questions related to the conservation and the sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. We echo the call for the signature and the ratification of that fundamental text.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of India.

**Mr. Harish** (India): At the outset I take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the Prime Minister of Greece, who presided over this high-level open debate this morning, and convey our congratulations on Greece assuming the presidency this month.

Maritime security is a cornerstone of economic growth because critical trade routes, energy supplies and geopolitical interests are tied to the oceans. India, having a long coastline, an extensive seafarer community and capable maritime forces, is actively pursuing its role as a responsible maritime Power in order to safeguard its interests and address emerging threats. India's maritime security strategy is broad and multifaceted, addressing both traditional threats from State actors and non-traditional threats from piracy; contraband smuggling; illegal human migration; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; maritime incidents; hybrid threats and maritime terrorism.

We are happy that Greece has taken up the baton of this very topical debate. The importance of maritime security was highlighted by the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi, at the first ever open maritime debate during India's Security Council presidency in 2021 (see S/2021/722). We reiterate the five basic principles that indicate the holistic manner of India's approach to maritime security, namely, the removal of barriers from legitimate maritime trade; the peaceful settlement of disputes as per international law; jointly addressing the natural disasters and maritime threats created by non-State actors; preservation of the marine environment and resources; and encouragement of responsible maritime connectivity.

India is a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), adopted in 1982, which provides the legal framework governing activities in the world's oceans, including efforts to combat unlawful activities at sea. India believes that States should resolve disputes in the maritime security domain through peaceful means, including by adhering to the pronouncements of international institutions that are established in accordance with the rules-based framework.

India is committed to promoting a free, open and rules-based maritime order, in accordance with the principles of UNCLOS. In furtherance of that objective, India is committed to an effective role in the region by undertaking various capacity-building initiatives that focus on addressing contemporary security challenges; forging the way ahead to strengthen combat capability; and addressing strategic, operational and governance aspects of maritime security.

India's maritime security strategy focuses on strong surveillance, effective coordination and quick-response capabilities to protect its long coastline and sea routes. That strategy is also guided by our Prime Minister's vision of MAHASAGAR — mutual and holistic advancement for security and growth across regions — which promotes safety and cooperation on the seas and can be applied globally.

India is actively involved in numerous maritime security missions and takes part in joint naval exercises with a multitude of partners at both the regional and global levels. Those efforts focus on non-traditional threats — such as piracy, natural disasters and illicit maritime activities — that affect peace and security in the region. Inclusiveness and cooperation are key principles of India's maritime approach. Over the past year, in response to attacks on shipping and increasing incidents of piracy in the western Arabian Sea, the Indian navy has deployed more than 35 ships in the region, carried out more than 1,000 boarding operations and has responded to more than 30 incidents. The credible and swift actions of the Indian navy — irrespective of the nationality of the crew — saved more than 520 lives. The Indian navy has safely escorted more than 312 merchant vessels, carrying more than 11.9 million metric tons of cargo valued at \$5.3 billion. India actively engages in search and rescue operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, especially in the Indian Ocean region.

In September 2024, India launched Operation Sadbhav to extend emergency humanitarian assistance in the wake of the floods caused by Typhoon Yagi in Laos, Viet Nam and Myanmar. Last month, India undertook a large-scale multilateral maritime engagement exercise with 10 African countries, called Africa-India Key Maritime Engagement, or AIKEYME, which means “unity” in Sanskrit. The initiative aims to develop collaborative solutions to regional maritime challenges, enhance interoperability and strengthen the friendly relations between India and African nations.

In conclusion, India views maritime security and countering terrorism as central to its national security and economic interests. Its approach balances robust defence capabilities, regional diplomacy, international cooperation and domestic infrastructure development. It continues to develop its strategy in response to new threats and geopolitical shifts in the Indo-Pacific region.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

**Mrs. Gregoire-van Haaren** (Kingdom of the Netherlands): I would like to start by thanking Greece for organizing today's very important debate.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Benelux countries — Belgium, Luxembourg and my own country, the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Maritime safety and security are fundamental to the stability and prosperity of all nations. The challenges we face are multiple. Some are old, such as the freedom of navigation and countering the smuggling of drugs. Some are new, such as the use of shadow fleets and cyberattacks, which threaten international safety and our environment. For the Benelux countries, too, maritime security and the freedom of navigation are vital pillars of our economic stability. We host several important

ports such as Antwerp-Bruges and Rotterdam, serving as a gateway to Europe. All nations, whether maritime or landlocked, share a common interest in ensuring the safety and security of the merchant navy. As small and medium-sized nations with big maritime responsibilities and ports, the Benelux countries understand that collaboration and a rules-based international order are essential to creating and protecting a level economic playing field. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) plays a crucial role as a platform for dialogue, enhancing norms and setting standards for the global maritime community. At both the national and the Benelux levels, we remain firmly committed to the IMO and wish to contribute meaningfully within its decision bodies.

In 1609, the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius published his revolutionary work *Mare Liberum*, advocating for the right to free navigation and trade at sea. That laid the groundwork for today's United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is often called the Constitution of the oceans. It remains one of the most widely ratified treaties, serving as a vital legal framework that governs all maritime activities. When conflicts involving international law arise, it is our collective responsibility to adjust our actions to uphold those laws. As the Benelux countries, we take that responsibility seriously, which is why our navies have contributed ships and personnel to various maritime operations and deployments.

Looking ahead, shipping will continue to play a critical role in addressing global challenges, such as climate change, and in promoting the health of our oceans. To that end, the Benelux countries are committed to contributing to the third United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, to be held in Nice, France, and the entry into force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction — a major multilateral milestone for the future of our oceans.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to a rules-based international order and to working together to safeguard the freedom of navigation and security. Let us continue to work hand-in-hand to ensure a peaceful, secure and sustainable future for our oceans.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

**Mr. Yousfi** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I am very pleased to address the Security Council regarding one of the pressing challenges of our time. The seas that connect us face threats of an unprecedented magnitude that require our collective action. I welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, and I express my deep gratitude to the briefers for their informative presentations.

The oceans embody a fundamental duality in our world: while they separate us physically, they are the vital network connecting humankind, supporting 80 per cent of the world's trade and the survival of billions of people. Any maritime disruption undermines global supply chains and threatens our collective security, while sophisticated criminal and terrorist networks exploit the technologies that are both our greatest asset and our greatest weakness.

The Kingdom of Morocco has made considerable efforts to strengthen its maritime security, motivated by its strategic location at the junction of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. That unique position — combined with the increase in maritime risks such as illicit trafficking, piracy, unregulated migration flows and environmental problems — has catalysed the emergence in our country of a more robust approach to protecting its coastal interests and shipping lanes. With Tanger Med, Africa's leading port in terms of capacity, Morocco pays particular attention

to the protection of its port facilities, which are essential to its economic prosperity. Morocco also has the longest coastline in Africa — 3,500 kilometres — which requires particular vigilance and the constant monitoring of maritime security in all its dimensions.

Our country has modernized its maritime security considerably by integrating the major international conventions of the International Maritime Organization — the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974; the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the 1978 and 1997 Protocols; and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979 — and reforming its merchant navy code. That transformation is based on specialized institutions, complemented by a threefold strategic plan focused on improving equipment and surveillance and enhancing coordination against unlawful threats and environmental protection through Morocco's Accidental Marine Pollution Project, with civil society engagement. Morocco has also strengthened its regional cooperation through major agreements, such as the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden, the Yaoundé Architecture and the Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa, thereby creating a solid framework for maritime security and development in Africa.

In order to fully leverage the Atlantic coast and make it a means of creating collective wealth, His Majesty King Mohammed VI has expanded the Atlantic Initiative to help the countries of the Sahel in a visionary step that opens up new potential for win-win cooperation and the co-development of the Atlantic-Sahelian space, in an Africa that relies on its own resources and is open to the world. Through its pioneering vision of a united and active South-South cooperation, the Kingdom is positioning itself as an architect of African renewal. That is evidenced by two major Atlantic maritime initiatives: the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean and the Ministerial Meeting of the Atlantic African States Process, the third edition of which was held in Rabat in July 2023 and resulted in the adoption of the Rabat Declaration.

In conclusion, Morocco will continue in its unwavering and constant commitment to the fight against illicit flows and to the security of port infrastructure, while sharing its expertise in the international maritime context, because the oceans — ancient cradles of our common humanity — deserve better than chaos. Let us join forces, technologies and responsibilities so that those blue expanses will forever remain sanctuaries of peace and paths to shared prosperity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

**Mr. Perera** (Sri Lanka): At the outset, let me thank the Greek presidency for convening this timely high-level open debate.

As an island nation located at the crossroads of major shipping routes in the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka sees maritime security as a high strategic and developmental priority. We affirm that the security of our oceans is integral to the stability and prosperity of nations. In order to benefit, the oceans must be kept free of any power conflicts and security challenges.

Sri Lanka's commitment to maritime security is anchored in cooperation at the national and international levels. Through bilateral and multilateral partnerships, Sri Lanka continues to engage in joint operations, technical cooperation and capacity-building initiatives that reinforce a shared commitment to maritime law enforcement, environmental protection and the fight against transnational crime.

There is a growing link between maritime crime, trafficking and terrorism. To counter that global concern, international collaboration is required to face



those interconnected threats. Domestically, we have focused on strengthening legal frameworks and inter-agency procedures, with the purpose of strengthening coordination among law enforcement, intelligence entities and the courts. Through multilateral partnerships, Sri Lanka has expanded its surveillance capabilities in support of maritime domain awareness. Those enhancements support the detection of illicit activity, help secure vital trade routes and allow for timelier humanitarian and environmental responses, all vital aspects of strengthening maritime security. In that regard, we thank all our international partners for providing much-needed assistance to strengthen Sri Lanka's ability to protect its maritime sovereignty and security.

Sri Lanka is acutely aware of the compounding impacts that disruptions to maritime security can have on global supply chains, trade routes and the livelihoods of communities. We believe that mitigating those threats requires an integrated approach, combining risk assessment, maritime vigilance and legal enforcement, alongside close cooperation with regional partners. Sri Lanka views emerging technologies as invaluable tools in addressing maritime threats. However, new technologies must be used responsibly and in line with international law and norms. To strengthen resilience, States must also prioritize maritime domain awareness, inter-agency coordination and legal capacity for prosecuting maritime crimes.

While a number of frameworks already exist to guide maritime cooperation, their effectiveness depends on consistent implementation and coordination across institutions and borders. We emphasize the need to uphold international law to ensure the freedom of navigation, protect marine resources and combat transnational crimes at sea. As a State party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Sri Lanka reiterates the importance of the Convention as the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.

In conclusion, Sri Lanka reaffirms its readiness to work with international and regional partners, under the United Nations framework, to ensure that the oceans remain secure, stable and open for the benefit of all.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

**Mr. França Danese (Brazil):** Brazil congratulates Greece on presiding over the Council this month and thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this timely debate on maritime security.

With one of the largest coastal lines in the world, Brazil's history, economy and identity are inseparable from the sea. It is natural that we attach the highest importance to preserving a safe maritime domain, whose governance should be based on international law, with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea at its core.

Today that domain is under strain. Piracy, armed robbery and transnational organized crime are examples of challenges faced by the international community. They increasingly overlap and reinforce one another. And the situation has been aggravated by the malicious use of emerging technologies. Attacks against commercial shipping endanger crews, disrupt trade and supply chains and jeopardize food and energy security. Millions of people whose lives depend on a sustained exploitation of the seas are threatened by the irresponsible and criminal use of sea lanes. The Red Sea stands out as a maritime space particularly threatened by all those challenges and deserves special attention by the Security Council in that regard.

In responding to that complex landscape worldwide, Brazil sees three immediate priorities.

First, there must be full and unconditional respect for and enforcement of international law. As I said, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is the constitution of the oceans. States must fulfil their obligations under that and other



conventions and treaties that regulate the seas, including the duty to cooperate in suppressing all illicit activities, especially those against the maritime environment. The Council, for its part, must insist on full compliance with international law, of which its resolutions are an integral part.

Secondly, there must be full engagement in practical cooperation and capacity-building. Effective maritime domain awareness demands real-time information-sharing, harmonized surveillance tools and responsible integration of new technologies. Brazil stands ready to deepen partnerships through its active engagement in the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and its long-standing support to Gulf of Guinea navies and coast guards. Brazil believes that the principles and values enshrined under the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, which establishes the South Atlantic as a zone of peace, free of weapons of mass destruction and preserved from foreign geopolitical disputes, send a relevant message to today's world. That message will be reinforced in 2026 when Brazil will host the ninth Ministerial Meeting of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the zone.

Thirdly, there must be a multidimensional approach linking security and sustainable maritime practices. Protecting critical maritime infrastructure, improving port resilience, advancing digital skills and addressing cyberthreats are mutually reinforcing measures. Also, the costs of combating piracy and armed robbery at sea require resources that could otherwise be used for the development of coastal regions. There is thus a clear interdependence between maritime security, the rule of law and the development of coastal regions, which must be taken into consideration.

For Brazil, oceans are key for inclusive growth, sustainable development and the well-being of our peoples. We therefore call on all partners to redouble their commitment to international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and to the cooperative spirit that underpins it.

Brazil stands ready to work with Council members, regional organizations, the International Maritime Organization and all stakeholders to ensure that the world's oceans remain a realm of peace, stability and shared, responsible and sustained prosperity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Albania.

**Mrs. Janina** (Albania): I would like to start by thanking the Greek presidency for convening this high-level open debate with such an important topic. We appreciate the active role of Greece in the Security Council on issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Maritime security has emerged as an important issue on the Council's agenda, shaped by the convergence of traditional threats and emerging challenges. The military aggression of Russia against Ukraine, the recent escalation in the Red Sea region and other different conflicts in the world have exposed the fragility of global maritime trade routes and the impact of their functionality on international commerce and global economic stability.

Maritime security is increasingly challenged by complex and overlapping threats, including irregular migration, terrorism, drug smuggling, piracy, organized crime and geopolitical tensions. Those issues often involve the protection of critical infrastructure and ports, underscoring the need for a comprehensive and integrated security approach. That demonstrates that no single country can cope alone with those conventional and asymmetric threats.

Shared geography, overlapping security interests and common vulnerabilities such as irregular migration routes, trafficking networks and threats to maritime infrastructure necessitate coordinated responses. Collaborative operations,

intelligence-sharing, joint training exercises and interoperability among naval forces not only enhance operational effectiveness but also build mutual trust and resilience.

Strategically positioned in the Western Balkans and along the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, Albania plays a vital role in addressing the emerging maritime challenges. As a committed actor in different regional and international organizations, Albania actively contributes to international maritime security efforts. More specifically, Albania started participating in the international maritime Operation Sea Guardian in the Aegean Sea. Throughout 2024 and 2025, Albanian petrol vessels, operating alongside Greek, Turkish and German ships, have played a crucial role in life-saving missions under challenging conditions, protecting civilians, including women and children. In 2024, the Albanian Coast Guard, as Chair of the Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum, held a regional conference focused on modalities to increase the security of critical maritime infrastructure. This year in February, the Albanian Government approved the deployment of one ship with armed forces personnel, a component of the international Operation Sea Guardian in the Mediterranean. The mission entails maritime patrols, reconnaissance, situational awareness and the interdiction of suspicious vessels. Furthermore, Albania's naval forces are preparing to expand their presence in the Black Sea region and participate in Operation Aspides, the EU's maritime security initiative in the Red Sea.

Those efforts serve to highlight Albania's role as a reliable and proactive partner in the evolving global security architecture. We firmly believe that strong cooperation among States based on a solid legal international framework could be effective in preventing and addressing the common challenges to maritime security.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

**Mr. Muhamad** (Malaysia): Malaysia congratulates Greece on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May, and I thank the President for convening this debate.

As a maritime nation with continental roots, Malaysia recognizes the vital importance of maritime security in safeguarding territorial integrity and sovereignty. It is also a key pillar in ensuring safe and secure trade. Cognizant that our strategic geographical location carries with it significant geopolitical and geoeconomic weight as well as responsibilities, Malaysia has consistently taken proactive measures to address challenges and threats to the maritime order, both regionally and globally.

We firmly believe that the promotion of maritime security is most effectively achieved through sustained communication, enhanced cooperation and robust confidence-building measures. In the light of the increasingly complex and critical challenges impacting maritime security in South-East Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific region, we wish to offer the following views.

First, States should transcend their differences and avoid engaging in competitive strategic ambitions. States should continue to endeavour to institutionalize bilateral, regional or multilateral platforms, as appropriate, for maritime security and cooperation dialogues to manage major-Power competition. Within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the annual Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum and the East Asia Summit allow ASEAN member States and dialogue partners to exchange views on pertinent issues concerning regional stability, maritime security and trade.

Secondly, without prejudice to national sovereignty and maritime territorial integrity, matters relating to maritime security and cooperation should adhere to universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea, as well as obligations incumbent upon States parties.

Thirdly, littoral States along critical sea lanes vital to global trade should cooperate to ensure the freedom of navigation and navigational safety. For instance, through the Cooperative Mechanism for the Straits of Malacca, Malaysia collaborates with littoral States, user States and the shipping industry under the International Maritime Organization's Protection of Vital Shipping Lanes initiative to enhance maritime safety and environmental protection.

Fourthly, neighbouring States should cooperate to ensure maritime security. Since 2004, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand have been working closely under the Malacca Straits Patrol cooperative arrangement, with the aim of ensuring the security of maritime areas along the Straits of Malacca.

Fifthly, States should consider the establishment and expansion of cooperative mechanisms for maritime law enforcement. In 2017, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines established the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) to address security challenges in the Celebes Sea and the Sulu Sea. The TCA has proven to be an effective framework, significantly reducing illicit activities in designated areas of maritime interest. Notably, there have been no reported kidnap-for-ransom incidents within the such areas since 2021. That success has contributed meaningfully to increased economic activity and strengthened people-to-people engagement in the region.

Finally, States should cooperate and coordinate to enhance maritime domain awareness. Modernizing capabilities, building capacity and enabling information-sharing among relevant stakeholders would allow for swift, responsive and effective actions by States to counter illegal activities at sea. That cooperation and coordination could be further elevated to include collective research and development mechanisms for technological innovation involving various parties.

In conclusion, Malaysia is keen to exchange views with States to conceptualize and crystallize comprehensive strategies in addressing emerging challenges and threats to further bolster maritime security, which will significantly contribute to global peace and prosperity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Dominican Republic.

**Mr. Blanco Conde** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Dominican Republic appreciates Greece's initiative in convening this open debate.

Maritime security is a cornerstone of international stability, global trade and sustainable development. As a small island developing State, the Dominican Republic recognizes in a very concrete way the challenges posed by transnational organized crime in the maritime field and reiterates its firm commitment to the legal instruments and resolutions of the Security Council, as well as to the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, while promoting a comprehensive approach to safety, cooperation and environmental sustainability.

Among the fundamental operations carried out by the Dominican navy are those aimed at combating illegal migration, drug trafficking, smuggling and illegal fishing, as well as those aimed at guaranteeing maritime security, mitigating the effects of natural disasters, protecting the marine environment, executing search and rescue missions and offering humanitarian aid. Those operations reflect the navy's ongoing commitment to the comprehensive defence of the national territory and the safeguarding of the maritime interests of the Dominican Republic.

Those actions not only represent a commitment to our national security, but also to regional and global stability. In that regard, we highlight our active participation in regional cooperation efforts in the Caribbean, such as the San José Agreement, which

allow for the exchange of intelligence and the strengthening of joint capabilities to confront shared threats in our maritime environment.

The Dominican navy, which is recognized as a modern and professional institution, has actively participated in joint and combined exercises — such as Operation ZEUS-CARIBE, Operation UNITAS, Operation TRADEWINDS, Operation PASSEX and Operation INTEX — as well as maritime interdiction simulations with international partners and exercises with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Those initiatives have strengthened interoperability, optimized resources and improved the capacity to respond to transnational threats. Similarly, key bilateral and multilateral agreements on maritime defence and security have been signed with several countries, reflecting the political will of our nation to continue building a collective security architecture based on trust, legality and shared responsibility.

We also recognize the need to strengthen institutional and technological capacities to improve maritime surveillance, risk management and the resilience of our port and coastal infrastructure, as proposed by this meeting. We strongly support the proposed multidimensional approach, which includes information-sharing, capacity-building and coordinated response to emerging threats.

Our commitment to maritime security is closely linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, and SDG 16, on the promotion of peaceful, just and inclusive societies. For the Dominican Republic, protecting our waters and our communities is not only a matter of security, but also of development and human dignity.

The Dominican Republic reaffirms its determination to continue working actively in the fight against transnational crime at sea, as we are aware that only through sustained international cooperation can we guarantee safe oceans, protected trade routes and resilient coastal communities.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Seychelles.

**Mr. Madeleine** (Seychelles): The Republic of Seychelles expresses its sincere appreciation to the Hellenic Republic for placing maritime security on the agenda of the Security Council.

For Seychelles, as for many coastal and island nations, the sea is central to our national identity, our economy and our way of life. It serves as our primary source of food, trade and connection to the rest of the world.

However, we are confronted by a range of interconnected maritime threats that continue to test the limits of our national capacities and our ability to cooperate effectively. From illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; drug and arms trafficking; conflict spillover; and the resurgence of piracy, to emerging challenges, including cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities to infrastructure, the threats we face at sea are growing in scale, sophistication and frequency.

While they are manifested most visibly at sea, their routes often lie inland, shaped by factors such as institutional gaps, economic hardship and limited law enforcement capacity. An effective maritime security response must, therefore, go hand in hand with efforts to address those underlying conditions.

No one country can address them alone. They demand a coordinated and sustained collective response with shared responsibility. Earlier this year, Seychelles assumed the chairmanship of the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the western Indian Ocean, which serves as a regional platform to strengthen responses to illicit maritime threats. Our region faces significant obstacles to maritime safety,

and we are placing an emphasis on areas in which international collaboration is needed most, such as legal cooperation and capacity-building.

Seychelles continues to work closely with regional and international partners, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to identify gaps in national frameworks, support mutual legal assistance and promote practical solutions that enhance the region's ability to deliver maritime justice.

Many small States continue to face limitations in surveillance infrastructure and human and material resources, which cause illicit activities to go undetected and unaddressed. It is, therefore, imperative that the Contact Group and other maritime security frameworks, including the Djibouti Code of Conduct, the European Union Naval Force Operation Atalanta, the shared awareness and deconfliction initiative and the Combined Maritime Forces, be aligned and complementary. Seychelles believes that effective maritime security must be built on a foundation of shared ownership and collective responsibility.

Coastal and island States, often on the front lines of maritime threats, must be recognized not only as beneficiaries of support, but also as active contributors to regional and global support solutions. It is only through inclusive and coordinated action that we can ensure a secure maritime domain in accordance with international law.

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

*The meeting was suspended at 6.05 p.m.*