



Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

4288th meeting

Wednesday, 7 March 2001, 10.45 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Yel'Chenko	(Ukraine)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Amin
	China	Mr. Wang Donghua
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Cooney
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

Ensuring an effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa

Letter dated 28 February 2001 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2001/185)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Ensuring an effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa

Letter dated 28 February 2001 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2001/185)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Egypt, Japan, Namibia, Pakistan, Peru and Sweden, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Baali (Algeria), Mr. Listre (Argentina), Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Laptенок (Belarus), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Duval (Canada), Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt), Mr. Kobayashi (Japan), Mr. Anjaba (Namibia), Mr. Khalid (Pakistan), Mr. Picasso (Peru) and Mr. Schori (Sweden) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2001/185, which contains the text of a letter dated 28 February 2001 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

At the outset, I should like sincerely to welcome the Secretary-General, and all the other participants, to the Security Council Chamber today. Their presence

here testifies to the importance of our meeting, as well as of the subject matter to be addressed. Today, we mark six months since the Security Council held its Summit, entitled "Ensuring an effective role for the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa". That meeting, held during the course of the Millennium Summit, assembled the leaders of the States members of the Council to reaffirm their responsibilities in upholding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. It brought about a number of important commitments by the Security Council to enhance United Nations effectiveness in addressing challenges to peace and security, which were recorded in its unanimously adopted declaration.

Giving special importance to the decisions taken at the Summit, Ukraine, having assumed the presidency of the Security Council, proposed convening an open debate aimed at evaluating concrete results in the implementation of those decisions. This debate proceeds from the assumption that there is a need to conduct regular reviews of the practical implementation of the decisions taken and to explore further ways of ensuring an effective role for the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. In this context, I should like to draw particular attention to the decision taken by the Security Council to invite non-members of the Council to speak first at this open debate. I hope that our broad and frank exchange of views will strengthen the efforts aimed at increasing the effectiveness of current and future activities of the Security Council.

I now invite the Secretary-General to address the Council.

The Secretary-General: It gives me great pleasure to join the Council today for this open debate on the implementation of decisions taken last September, when this Council met — for only the second time in its history — at the level of heads of State or Government. Let me thank you, Mr. President, for initiating this timely review. The Security Council Summit was, indeed, a historic occasion that demonstrated in a most eloquent way the commitment of the States represented on this Council to making its work more effective. That commitment was spelled out in resolution 1318 (2000), adopted at the Summit, in which the Council undertook to act preventively in future; to improve the capacity of the United Nations to act effectively; and to act quickly and decisively.

I told the Council on that day that it was facing a crisis of credibility. We are here today to assess whether that is still true, and what progress has been made in overcoming that crisis.

Before we begin the debate, I should like to ask members to consider one point very carefully. The resolutions of this Council are not self-implementing. In themselves, they hardly do more than express a wish or an aspiration. Their impact on reality depends on a great deal of subsequent effort, by Member States, as well as by the Secretariat. It is therefore vital that the delegates who attend the Council's meetings regularly maintain a constant dialogue with their capitals, which should stimulate dialogue in those capitals focusing on how to translate the aspirations contained in each resolution into real change on the ground. This dialogue needs to start before a resolution is passed, and it needs to continue long afterwards.

I know that all, or most, members of the Council are now engaged in such dialogues. The Secretariat stands ready and willing to assist them. But too often these dialogues involve only a handful of experts. Only through the much deeper and broader involvement of Member States, reaching up to the highest political level, can the will and resources needed to implement Council resolutions be mustered.

That, of course, applies to resolution 1318 (2000) itself. In that resolution, the Council, meeting at the level of heads of State or Government, pledged, among other things, to make the United Nations more effective in addressing conflict at all stages, from prevention through political settlement to post-conflict peace-building. It also affirmed its determination to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping operations. It listed the measures by which it would do so, and resolution 1327 (2000), adopted two months later, spelled out those measures in much greater detail. Those two resolutions, therefore, are ones to which Member States have committed themselves in a particularly solemn way. I hope that not only you, Excellencies, but your colleagues and political masters back home, will make the most strenuous efforts to see those resolutions translated into concrete action.

Let me thank you, Mr. President, for the most useful working paper which you prepared for this meeting, in which you ask a number of very pertinent questions. Let me sum up my remarks by adding one question of my own: are your capitals now engaged in

an active debate on the best way to fulfil the commitments made by the Council in resolutions 1318 (2000) and 1327 (2000)? Indeed, are they seriously discussing how to implement resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, or the recently adopted presidential statements on strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries and on peace-building?

There is no doubt that, with these decisions in the past six months, the Council has undertaken important new commitments. I hope the next six months will be marked by equally vigorous action to put those commitments into effect.

I look forward eagerly to hearing your conclusions.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his kind words addressed to me.

I have no doubt that the participants in the debate will reflect on the proposals and questions that the Secretary-General has put before us.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): The Security Council declaration adopted by heads of State or Government on 7 September is a seminal document that will guide this Council for many years to come. My delegation is pleased to have this opportunity to participate in this very preliminary assessment of where this Organization and its Member States stand with respect to the implementation of the elements contained in resolution 1318 (2000). We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting today.

I will focus mainly on two of the six questions contained in the explanatory note to which you referred (S/2001/185, Annex), Mr. President: the third question, on strengthening United Nations peacekeeping operations; and the sixth, on strengthening cooperation and communication between the United Nations and regional or subregional organizations and arrangements. The commitments undertaken by the Council last September serve as benchmarks against which United Nations Member States will measure the performance of those upon whom we have conferred the primary responsibility for the maintenance of

international peace and security, that is, the members of this Council.

The Council's report card on the strengthening of peacekeeping operations contains both good and bad elements. We are pleased that the Council responded quickly to the Brahimi report by adopting resolution 1327 (2000). We have already begun to see changes in the Council's decision-making processes with regard to peacekeeping operations, including, particularly in the case of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), a willingness to amend mandates in order to ensure that they are clear, credible and achievable. We regret, however, that, in that particular case, the Council's duty to provide for the protection of civilians in armed conflict was not upheld.

Some progress has also been evident in giving effect to the observation, in the declaration, of the need for a transparent three-way relationship between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries. Singapore's initiative in consulting the broader membership on strengthening consultations with troop-contributing countries is welcome indeed. Now is the time to transform into action the words that were uttered during that important debate. I think that this is what the Secretary-General has urged us to do this morning.

We were pleased to see the establishment of a Security Council Working Group on peacekeeping, and we were especially satisfied to see the chairmanship of that Group placed in the very capable hands of Ambassador Curtis Ward of Jamaica. But the Council must not allow the creation of a working group to substitute for a vigorous response to the ideas put forward during the open debate.

Subsequent to its intervention in January's debate, my delegation circulated a proposal for a "mission-specific cooperative mechanism for Security Council-mandated operations" (*S/2001/73, annex*). In that proposal, we emphasized that the issue was not one of communications or consultations but rather one of cooperation and participation. If we, the Member States of the United Nations, want to develop a meaningful and trustworthy three-way relationship, then it is you, the members of the Security Council, who must find a way for troop contributors to participate fully in the decision-making process for Council-mandated operations.

Both the Council and the Secretariat must be able to win and sustain the confidence of troop-contributing Governments. It must be clear that the strategy and concept of operations for any new mission are sound and that the plans for their implementation are well thought through. Troop-contributing Governments must also be confident that their troops or police would be serving in sensible missions with effective leadership. That confidence comes from cooperation, not from mere notification or even from consultation.

We hope that the Working Group will focus seriously on these and other issues, making specific and practical recommendations for Council action. We look forward to learning of the results of the Working Group, established by presidential statement 2001/3, including the interim decisions due next month.

(spoke in English)

I would also like to say a few words regarding the Council's relationship with regional and subregional organizations and processes. Over the past five years, the Secretary-General has made substantial progress in improving the Secretariat's ability to work with regional and subregional bodies. That progress has not been matched by the Security Council.

Too often, the Council has been absent when peace agreements were negotiated. In some instances, the result was that the United Nations was assigned roles it could not possibly execute — whether the forced disarmament of combatants, the supervision of vast territories or other functions the signatories themselves were not willing to take on. It is not in anybody's interest that peace agreements be premised on false expectations. The Council must find a way of ensuring that its views of what is attainable are fully understood by the parties to any peace process in which subsequent United Nations action may be a factor.

On the other hand, where the Security Council has engaged regional or subregional bodies, too often the result has simply been to delay effective Council action. This, too, serves nobody's interest over the long run.

Effective collaboration with regional and subregional organizations and arrangements may never be easy, but the Council's ability to get it right may well determine whether the Council succeeds or fails in its Charter-mandated responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

In conclusion, I wish to re-emphasize my delegation's continuing support for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1318 (2000). I also wish to register our support for efforts to ensure transparency in the Council's working methods and to provide an opportunity for Council members to benefit from the views of the broader United Nations membership. Of course, debates in this Chamber must not become a substitute for meaningful Council action, and simply listening to non-members of the Council must not become a substitute for really hearing, and acting upon, what they say.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Sweden. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Schori (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

Six months ago, the Security Council adopted an important declaration on enhancing the role of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. Today we should ask ourselves how far we have come, particularly in Africa. Have the Council's intentions of September 2000 become real? Is the understanding reached at the summit being translated into practical action?

The answer is yes, but it is most definitely a work in progress. In fact, over the past six months, we have seen certain steps forward in strengthening United Nations activities in peace and security. However, much remains to be done.

Keeping our focus on Africa, let us recall that the continent currently hosts three of this Organization's most important peacekeeping missions. Of these, the Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea has reached full deployment, and the one in Sierra Leone is experiencing major changes. In today's debate, however, I would like to focus on the regional crisis that was on the summit's agenda six months ago and still remains a challenge for the Security Council, the

international community and the parties concerned: the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

There have been encouraging signs lately that the parties to the conflict are finally committed to implementing the Lusaka Agreement. The United Nations, in particular the Security Council, has responded to these changed circumstances in a quick and flexible manner. However, in order for the process not to derail, the parties must remain committed, and the capacity of the United Nations to provide support must be strengthened. Unless the well-known constraints of United Nations peace operations are addressed, the Organization will not be able to realize its full potential in helping control and defuse crises, whether in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or elsewhere.

By the adoption of resolution 1327 (2000) in November 2000, the Security Council acted quickly to the reforms proposed by the Brahimi Panel. Work has also been undertaken by the Member States in the General Assembly to follow up on these recommendations. So far, however, the reforms proposed in the Brahimi report have received only partial endorsement. The European Union considers that the Brahimi proposals offer a unique opportunity to improve the way the international community approaches peacekeeping and strongly urges the United Nations and its Member States to work towards full implementation of its recommendations. The European Union hopes that the resumption later this spring of consideration of the Brahimi report will result in the endorsement of a wider range of its recommendations.

One such recommendation — the improvement of cooperation between the Security Council, the United Nations Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries — is now being looked at in depth by the Security Council Working Group on peacekeeping. The European Union notes that important lessons on the need for closer consultations with troop-contributing countries can be drawn from recent experiences and welcomes the fact that the Working Group will engage in this issue as well as other key themes of the Brahimi report.

Let us not forget, however, that ultimately the role of the United Nations cannot go beyond the will of the parties. Unless there is a real desire for peace among the parties involved in the conflict, there are

limits to what the international community can do to help, and peace efforts will certainly fail.

As has been affirmed by the Council before, we cannot deal effectively with conflict without tackling its root causes. A long-term and comprehensive perspective is necessary to prevent conflicts and consolidate peace. Measures in this field should be all-encompassing and include reducing poverty; improving health, looking particularly at the HIV/AIDS crisis; strengthening democracy; ensuring respect for human rights and promoting gender equality; and increasing humanitarian assistance. All these elements are necessary and directly relevant to the responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter. The European Union looks forward to the Secretary-General's report on conflict prevention due in May.

Let me now turn to some key areas of conflict resolution addressed by the summit declaration, particularly in Africa.

First, Africa is generally regarded as the region most affected by the scourge of illegal flows and destabilizing accumulations of small arms. The upcoming United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will play a vital role in focusing international efforts to address this problem. The European Union will do its utmost to ensure that the Conference leads to prompt and decisive actions that foster early and sustainable solutions. Additionally, programmes aimed at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants into civil society should, whenever necessary and appropriate, be an integral element of the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

Secondly, systematic and deliberate violations of sanctions continue to fuel some of the long and bitter conflicts in Africa. The reports of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola and the Panel of Experts on Sierra Leone have shown that many of the same actors are involved in violations of sanctions in those countries. It is essential that the international community show that such violations will not be tolerated.

In this context, the European Union reiterates its full support for the resolution on conflict diamonds adopted unanimously by the General Assembly last year. There is a clear need to give urgent consideration to the establishment of a global certification scheme for rough diamonds. The European Union welcomes the

launch at Windhoek last month of the new phase of the Kimberly process, and looks forward to rapid progress and the presentation of clear recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly. We must put a stop to the use of diamond sales to fund continued conflict and suffering.

On the issue of sanctions, the European Union looks forward to the report of the informal working group of the Security Council on improving their effectiveness. We welcome recent efforts to ensure that United Nations sanctions are effectively targeted, and recall in that regard the valuable work sponsored by the Swiss and German Governments on improving the effectiveness of financial sanctions, travel restrictions and arms embargoes. We strongly support moves by the Council to make the objectives of sanctions and the criteria for lifting them clear from the outset; to assess the possible humanitarian impacts of sanctions; and to ensure that appropriate mechanisms for reviews are incorporated into sanctions regimes. The European Union notes the ongoing discussions in the Security Council on how to improve the monitoring of sanctions, and stresses that effective steps should be taken to support the Council and Member States on this and all other aspects of sanctions.

Thirdly, let me mention one instrument that is crucial for post-conflict reconstruction: international tribunals. It is important that individuals who have committed war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity during an armed conflict be held criminally responsible for their acts. In the context of Africa, in particular, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has served important functions of accountability, reconciliation, deterrence and peace-building. The European Union also wishes to underline the importance of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and to renew its call on all States to become parties to the Statute with a view to its early entry into force.

Measures in the fields of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building are closely interlinked and are crucial for building a solid foundation for peace. The Council has recently recognized the need to devise comprehensive peace-building strategies and to mobilize all relevant actors at the earliest possible stage to ensure that there is no gap between peacekeeping and peace-building. In this context, it is essential to give the Secretariat an information and analysis capacity that will permit it to

understand the profound, as well as the immediate, causes of conflict. This will provide the Secretary-General with the necessary input to develop integrated strategies for conflict resolution.

Of course, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. But it is equally recognized today that for peace efforts to succeed, the various relevant elements of the international community must act in a concerted manner. This makes sense not only in order to better utilize resources, but also to tap into the comparative advantages of each organization. The recent high-level meeting of the United Nations with regional organizations sought precisely to continue to strengthen the cooperation between the United Nations and regional or subregional organizations in the implementation of peace strategies. The European Union recalls its willingness to develop its cooperation with the United Nations in elaborating and implementing conflict-prevention and peace-building strategies.

Six months later, the report card reads, "Steps have been taken, but much more needs to be done". This assessment should encourage the United Nations to work more and harder to improve its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa. The whole United Nations membership should engage in this work, in accordance with the commitment made by the heads of State and Government last September in the Millennium Declaration.

Let me end on a general note by expressing our appreciation for initiatives taken by Security Council members to arrange open debates, such as the one being held today, on important thematic topics within the field of international peace and security. The European Union — in New York, in Brussels and in all the other capitals — wholeheartedly supports efforts to make these debates as interactive and as focused as possible.

The President: I would like to thank the representative of Sweden for his statement on behalf of the European Union. He has very pertinently reminded the Council of the major focus of the Security Council summit, namely, the need to pay special attention to the promotion of durable peace and security in Africa.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kobayashi (Japan): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting as a follow-up to the Security Council summit held last September. As the Council's role continues to evolve in order to respond to the constantly changing realities of today's world, it is important to review its effectiveness from time to time, to identify the problems it faces and to set priorities for its activities.

My delegation supports the general thrust of the declaration attached to Security Council resolution 1318 (2000), which was adopted at the conclusion of the Millennium Summit. It is particularly significant that the Council then pledged to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in addressing conflict at every stage — from prevention to settlement to post-conflict peace-building — with a particular focus on Africa. As my delegation stressed at the open meeting on peace-building held last month, the problems of conflict and development in Africa demand the urgent and committed attention of the international community.

As acknowledged in the declaration attached to resolution 1318 (2000), there is a long list of issues that deserve to be discussed. But today I would like to focus on a few points that we believe are of fundamental importance.

First is the need to take a comprehensive and integrated approach in addressing a conflict situation. Such an approach must include economic and social dimensions in addition to political and military dimensions. Conflicts cannot be prevented nor peace-building achieved at the post-conflict stage unless the root causes of the conflict are addressed, and this requires efforts for reconstruction, development and capacity-building. The multifaceted mandates of many recent United Nations missions around the world are testimony to this requirement.

To ensure the effectiveness of such an approach, the Council must be particularly mindful of the importance of ensuring the smooth transition from one stage of conflict prevention and peace-building to the next. This requires a clear and coherent strategy throughout the entire process of United Nations involvement. Most importantly, utmost attention must be given to avoiding any gaps in the international

assistance required at different stages, particularly at a point of transition from one stage to another, because such a gap could bring to naught any progress achieved in preceding stages. This point will be particularly salient when we consider, for example, the United Nations presence in East Timor after its independence.

The cooperation of the entire international community is also essential. As my delegation has stressed on other occasions, players outside of Council must also be mobilized and fully involved to attain full cooperation. Non-Council Member States that commit their personnel as well as financial resources to United Nations efforts must be mobilized in order to ensure the success of any peace effort. Relevant regional organizations can also provide valuable insight and assistance to the Council.

Needless to say, the creation of a sound foundation for peace-building requires the cooperation of various agencies and institutions, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Indeed, it is essential to involve these States and institutions at the earliest planning stage. In this regard, we strongly support the Council's recent practice of holding full-scale debates involving troop-contributing countries, major donors and relevant agencies and institutions. We strongly hope this practice will be continued.

Before concluding, I would like to mention here once again an obvious but unfulfilled requirement, namely Security Council reform. As reflected in the Millennium Declaration, which was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly last September, it is essential that the Security Council be reformed to reflect the realities of today's world so as to enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Council itself. Although it was disappointing that the declaration of the Security Council summit made no reference to the need for such a reform, we hope that the Council, particularly its permanent members, will remain committed to the cause of Council reform.

In conclusion, I wish to stress that the subject of today's meeting requires the continued attention of the Council. We also realize that the subject is indeed a broad and complex one and needs to be addressed by the General Assembly as well. The subject requires full discussion with the broad participation of the Member States, and I thank you once again, Mr. President, for organizing today's meeting.

The President: I cannot agree more with the understanding of the representative of Japan about the need for active involvement of the General Assembly, as well as other organs of the United Nations system, in the discussion on strengthening the Organization's capabilities in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Argentina. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): On September 7 last year, the heads of State of the members of the Security Council met to exchange views on mechanisms to strengthen the collective security system, and they raised several concerns that were reflected in resolution 1318 (2000). As President De la Rúa stated at that time, if the Security Council does not fully exercise its responsibility in maintaining international peace and security, none of the remaining activities of the United Nations can be successfully implemented.

Six months after that summit, your proposal, Mr. President, to assess what has been accomplished since then seems appropriate. We think that this evaluation must be done at two levels. The level is stipulated in the resolutions and presidential statements adopted by the Council in response to the concerns raised by our heads of State in resolution 1318 (2000). The second level is geared toward examining the impact that those resolutions and presidential statements have had on the conflicts that are before the Council.

The fact that the Security Council has adopted decisions on subjects such as the need to develop an exit strategy for every peace-keeping operation; the strengthening of the relationship between the Council and troop-contributing countries; the importance of the peace-building tasks in the integral solution of a conflict; the creation of groups of experts to identify the link between the illegal exploitation of natural resources and armed conflicts in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the creation of the Working Group on peacekeeping operations; and having a greater interaction with regional and subregional organizations, as shown by the meetings held in February 2001 with the members of the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement in the case of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and with the Committee of the Economic

Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the case of the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Guinea — all of this allows us a positive assessment of the activity of the Council since the adoption of resolution 1318 (2000).

However, we cannot but state our concern about the lack of progress in adopting a resolution on Sierra Leone that has remained in draft form for several months. The prolongation of this situation, in a regional framework which is deteriorating, certainly does not contribute to the credibility of the Council. Now, having said this, I must acknowledge the fact that efforts have been undertaken by the United Kingdom to overcome this difficult situation, which the Council has been tackling without any results to date.

This assessment, however, would not be complete if it were done in an abstract framework. The political will of the members of the Council to take action in a specific conflict and the support of the other Members of the Organization are essential factors to make operative the principles contained in those resolutions and presidential statements and, eventually, for the Council to be effective.

We believe that this political will is shown in providing enough resources to finance a peace-keeping operation; with logistical support, especially from those countries which are in a better position to offer it; and with the willingness to contribute with troops, including in those operations which involve a higher level of risk. Political will goes even beyond the existence of appropriate financial and human resources. It is also reflected in the willingness of the Security Council to hold substantive consultations with the troop-contributing countries and making more transparent its decision-making process on the establishment, modification or termination of the mandate of a peace-keeping operation.

The political will of the Security Council and the international community to assist the parties to a conflict must be accompanied by equal political will from those parties to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. By way of examples of such political will, we might cite respect for ceasefire agreements; guarantees of the freedom of movement and reasonable guarantees for the security of United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian staff; and adherence to the commitments undertaken with respect to disarmament and demobilization.

Since resolution 1318 (2000) was adopted, there have been two specific cases in Africa demonstrating that the role of the Security Council can be effective only when the Council has the political will to act and the parties show the political will to resolve the conflict. In the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia, on the one hand, both parties respected the ceasefire agreement and cooperated with the United Nations while, on the other, the international community contributed enough troops and resources. These two factors allowed the successful deployment of the 4,200 troops of the Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the political will of the parties to implement the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement seemed to be coming together at the meetings held with the Security Council in February 2001, opening the way to the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which had been authorized a year earlier but had been paralysed by the parties' lack of will.

Any debate on the mechanisms to strengthen the collective security system established in the Charter must include the issue of humanitarian intervention. The question is: Can the Security Council remain inactive when serious and systematic violations of human rights are committed within the borders of a State, while at the same time it and the Organization as a whole advocate the defence of those very rights and freedoms? I am referring to cases of extreme violations of human rights. As President De la Rúa said in his statement before this Council on 7 September last year:

“There is no simple answer to this question, because it is linked to values such as the sovereignty of States and to the principle of non-intervention.

“We believe that the principle of non-intervention must be respected [because it is the very foundation of the relationships among independent States], but at the same time we believe that a complementary value should be added: the principle of non-indifference.”
(*S/PV.4194, p. 6*)

Just as there is a chapter devoted to lessons learned in peacekeeping operations, we believe that it would be useful for the Security Council to make a periodic and critical assessment of its own work. This is a complex task because, among the criteria applied

to assessing the effectiveness of the activities of the Council, we must take into account that political, military, economic, social, ethnic and geographical circumstances vary from one conflict to the other. The lessons learned in one case cannot always be applied to others. That is why we would consider it useful for the Council to complement the general assessment with a critical examination of its work on individual conflicts.

Finally, with respect to Security Council reform, we feel that it is necessary in order to make the Council's work more democratic, transparent, representative and harmonized to the realities of our time. We believe that such reform should be carried out by consensus.

The President: I think everybody will agree with the remarks of the representative of Argentina about the need for the decisions adopted by the Security Council always to be accompanied by a willingness to act decisively to implement them. Indeed, it is exactly this point that was also highlighted in the introductory statement made by the Secretary-General.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to express to you, Sir, my great satisfaction at seeing you preside over the work of the Security Council and to extend to Ambassador Saïd Ben Mustapha our gratitude and admiration for the way in which he guided the Council's work last month.

I also wish to thank you for having provided us with an opportunity to speak on the declaration adopted six months ago by this organ, meeting at the level of heads of State and Government, in conjunction with the Millennium Summit, in a high point for multilateralism and our Organization.

While it seems to me premature, if not presumptuous, to engage in a stocktaking, howsoever partial, of the implementation of that document — which, in fact, is more of a general policy framework than a programme of action endowed with a precise timetable — I wish nevertheless to make two general comments on the declaration itself before making a few brief observations limited exclusively to the issue of peacekeeping in Africa.

I wish thus to note and welcome the fact that the Council — which, in recent years, has increasingly

ventured into the field of competence of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in order to address issues whose connection to peace or security is often highly tenuous — has decided to reaffirm that its primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security and has emphasized that its job is to ensure the effective functioning of the collective security system established by the Charter, which, as we are all aware, has been sorely tested of late. I wish, however, to add straight away that this solid reaffirmation has not been followed up in any tangible way by action, since the Council's incursions into the areas set aside for other organs of the United Nations, far from ceasing, are continuing apace.

In the same way, I can only welcome the fact that the Council has deemed it timely to reaffirm its dedication to the principles of the sovereign equality, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States, which we cherish all the more that some seem to wish to call them into question in the name of an improperly understood globalization and poorly defined humanitarian interference.

While in the past I may have sometimes heatedly voiced here the frustration or even the anger of Africa at the Council's lack of urgency in involving itself in the settlement of African conflicts, I am now duty-bound by truth to note that, in recent times, this organ has been directing ever-greater attention to African issues. To be sure — and this is due in part not only to the complexity of certain issues, but also, we must say, to the hesitations or ulterior motives of certain Council members — such involvement sometimes comes too late, as we saw in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and is sometimes inappropriate or insufficiently effective, as in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In both cases, however, there has been a visible improvement and genuine political will.

Having delivered this encomium, I feel that the Council — which, it can never be stressed enough, is supposed to act on behalf of the States Members of the Organization and not of its own members alone — could, in order to make its actions more effective and better targeted, rely more heavily on those who are familiar with the territory and its problems: the African members of the Council, the countries of the region, the Organization of African Unity and, of course, the African or non-African troop-contributing countries.

In this respect, the recent adoption of a declaration defining modalities of cooperation for the troop-contributing countries in conflict management should be duly recognized as an achievement of the Council. We should also credit the Council with the establishment of a working group on peacekeeping operations; the debates that have been held on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and on peace-building; and the declarations that sanctioned them.

While the African leaders have made an effort to work for the settlement of the conflicts battering the continent — as witnessed by the accords of Lusaka, Lomé and Algiers — the Council must not consider itself released from its responsibilities in that field. Indeed, its role remains vital and its contribution irreplaceable.

In fact, by contributing to the conclusion of peace agreements — be it as an observer, as was the case with the negotiations which led to the Algiers agreement — the United Nations can, in a more orderly and effective manner, monitor the respective implementation of said agreements.

Some of the mistakes made in Sierra Leone could have, for example, been avoided. But the humiliation suffered in that country last year served to highlight other gaps and major shortcomings and ultimately will have been useful, because the Council now is working to see that the mandates of the forces are more clearly defined and that the forces themselves are in a better position to provide for their own security and, when possible, that of the civilian populations where they are deployed.

The searing and unbearable spectacle of Blue Helmets taken as hostages also triggered a real awakening regarding the need to strengthen the credibility and the authority of the Organization, and in particular of the Council, around which the system of collective security has been built — a system to which we attach the greatest of importance, because it represents for us a bastion against the misuse of force and the guarantee of the dominance of the rule of law in relations among nations.

This is, moreover, the reason that we advocate a Security Council that fully shoulders its responsibilities, which is vigilant in enforcing respect for international legality and, above all, for its own resolutions — as was rightly recalled here by our

Secretary-General — and the scrupulous and faithful implementation of peace agreements and settlement plans agreed upon by the parties to a conflict, and in particular when it has formally endorsed them. We advocate a Security Council that is always on the side of the victim and against the aggressor and the occupier and which holds fast against those who do respect their international commitments and who choose, either deliberately or counting on a war of attrition, a policy of delays and procrastination in order to perpetuate a *fait accompli* and shirk their obligations.

It is also for this reason that we are calling for a comprehensive reform of the Council, both in terms of its membership and its methods of work, to endow it with ever-greater legitimacy, representativity and effectiveness, given the new challenges resulting from international transformations and today's realities.

Before concluding, I should like to express my satisfaction at seeing that some countries which had been somewhat indifferent to peacekeeping operations in Africa have participated in the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Here I would like to urge the non-African Powers not to give up on the problems of Africa, which is facing complex and numerous challenges with a determination that is equalled only by its faith in a future which inevitably will be better, and to provide their support to help it in that recovery to which it is committed and to treat it as an equal and respected partner.

Indeed, the initiative launched recently by Presidents Bouteflika, Mbeki and Obasanjo, designed to set up a partnership for African renewal, specifically is based on the firm conviction of those leaders that Africa must rely first of all on itself to settle any and all of its problems and that a genuine partnership with the developed countries based on mutual interests and shared commitments would make a decisive contribution to the recovery of Africa.

In conclusion, once again I should like to express to you, Sir, my gratitude for having made it possible to hold an open debate on this declaration, which is the result of the deliberations of the members of the Council and whose implementation is, by definition, a long-term undertaking. I hope that, for my part, I have made a useful contribution to it.

The President: I should like to note in particular the important remarks made by the representative of

Algeria. Of course, it is the primary responsibility of the Security Council to act promptly and in a timely manner to address crises in Africa.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and to extend to you our thanks for organizing this important meeting devoted to evaluating the progress achieved towards implementing the summit declaration adopted by the Council last September on ensuring an effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa.

Your deliberations on this important subject — with the participation of non-member States — will undoubtedly be for us all an opportunity to take stock of the Council's effectiveness in addressing the various challenges it faces and its response to the changing and complex nature which currently characterizes many of the armed conflicts threatening international peace and security. Furthermore, this debate might enable us to agree on the steps that could be taken to enhance the role and performance of the Council in this field, taking into account the fact that the Council discharges its responsibilities on behalf of all of the States Members of the Organization, as stipulated in Article 24 of the Charter.

The declaration adopted by the Council addressed, in its various components, a number of subjects to which Egypt attaches special importance and which are of interest to other Member States. Given that time may not allow us to address all of these subjects, I would like to confine my comments to the following points, which my delegation deems especially important.

First, the declaration reaffirmed the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the Charter, and affirmed its determination to give equal priority to all regions of the world while paying special importance to the needs of Africa. We have in the past seen that the Council is indeed capable of swiftly and decisively responding to crises that erupt outside Africa, namely in East Timor and Kosovo. We have also seen that the Council has

gradually shed its hesitation in addressing crises that erupt on the African continent, as we witnessed in Sierra Leone when the conflict resumed in May last year, in Ethiopia and Eritrea when the two parties signed the peace agreement in Algiers last December, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, when the Ceasefire Agreement was on the verge of collapsing.

In this context, the delegation of Egypt — like other African delegations — was somewhat optimistic about the seriousness of the Council in addressing African questions and the many armed conflicts raging throughout its territory, and we had hoped that the Council's swift response to the crisis in Sierra Leone would represent the rule and not the exception for what we expected the Council's role in the African Continent to be.

Regrettably, however, we feel that there remains a wide gap between what the Council promises to do in Africa on the one hand, and the concrete steps it takes to resolve the conflicts raging across the continent and to address the causes that lead to their continuation on the other. Hence, the ongoing crisis on the borders between Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia is spiraling and threatens to erupt into a regional conflict, the repercussions of which no one can foresee. The Somali crisis remains unresolved, and we have yet to see the necessary enthusiasm on the part of the Council to seize upon the positive developments that have resulted from the Arta conference in order to support the ongoing peace and reconciliation efforts.

Secondly, aside from the situation in Africa and what we expect from the Council in that continent, we cannot speak about the Council's role in the maintenance of international peace and security without expressing our regret at the Council's approach to the crisis that has affected the Middle East since 28 September, especially given the fact that it began to explode only three weeks after the Security Council summit and the adoption of the Declaration we are examining today.

Despite its diligence in continuously reminding us of the need to respect human rights, uphold the rule of law and prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity and for violations of international humanitarian law, the Council failed to discharge its responsibility towards the defenceless Palestinian people and to put an end to the blatant aggression by the Israeli occupation forces. As long as the Council

persists in failing to address the Palestinian question and in disregarding Israel's systematic and grave violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Council's credibility will continue to decline and its pledge to give equal priority to all regions of the world will remain a hollow and meaningless one.

Thirdly, the Council affirmed its determination in the Declaration adopted at the summit to take a number of specific measures to enhance the capabilities of the Organization in the field of peacekeeping. While we welcome the attention the Council has given — especially since the submission of the Brahimi report — to enhancing its performance in those areas falling within its purview and responsibility in a manner that helps to meet the new prerequisites imposed by the complex nature of armed conflicts that the United Nations is asked to settle or contribute to their resolution, we also feel that there are a number of shortcomings that require credible action on the part of the Council.

Whereas the Council pledged to adopt clearly defined, credible and appropriate mandates for its peacekeeping operations, we have recently noted that Security Council resolution 1341 (2001), on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), was inconsistent with all of the above. Instead of being encouraged by the positive circumstances, the Council opted to reduce the military component of the operation, curtailing its tasks, while at the same time entertaining the hope that it would contribute to the achievement of peace and stability in a country that is larger than Western Europe and on whose territory six African armies, three rebel groups and a handful of armed groups are fighting.

Fourthly, the Council also expressed its determination to enhance consultations with troop contributors when it formulates peacekeeping operation mandates. While the Egyptian delegation welcomes the steps taken by the Council in this area to improve its relationship with those countries that provide and sometimes sacrifice their personnel to implement the tasks adopted by the Council, it continues to call for the establishment and institutionalization of methods of consultation between the troop-contributing countries and the Council at all stages of formulating mandates for peacekeeping operation and in all steps taken by the Council to revise, review, extend or terminate these mandates and the tasks that accompany them.

In this context, my delegation is also mindful of the fact that the primary purpose we must all strive to achieve must go beyond merely listening to or exchanging views with troop-contributing countries, even if this were to be done in the formalized and institutionalized manner we call for. What is needed is for the measures that we may agree on to enhance the relationship between troop-contributing countries and the Council involve those countries in the decision-making process in the Council at all stages of establishing, deploying and terminating peacekeeping operations, especially when the matter pertains to authorizing the use of force, as stipulated in Article 44 of the Charter.

Fifthly, the Declaration adopted by the heads of State and Government of the Members of the Council contained a pledge to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in addressing conflicts at all stages: from prevention to settlement to post-conflict peacebuilding. We have indeed witnessed in the past growing awareness on the part of the Council of the fact that the resolution of various conflicts cannot succeed without removing the root causes leading to the emergence and continuation of those conflicts and that peace cannot develop in an environment plagued by poverty, unemployment, economic stagnation and social fragmentation.

In this context, we welcome the deliberations and resolutions emanating from the Council on these issues, taking into account that the desired outcome must enhance coordination and congruence among all efforts exerted by the relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations to avert the eruption of conflicts or to settle them or to ensure that they don't resurface. Of course, the required coordination of these activities must be based on consideration of and respect for the competence of these organs and agencies, each in its own field and each in accordance with the legislative mandate under which it functions.

In conclusion, allow me to address one final issue to which the Egyptian delegation attaches great importance, although it was not reflected in the Declaration adopted by the Council summit, but which received substantial attention in the summit debate. I am referring to the issue of sanctions. At that meeting we noticed a growing trend calling for ending the unrestricted use of sanctions as a tool to which the Council can resort in order to induce changes in the behaviour or actions of a given State or regime. We

have also seen instances recently in which the Council has imposed sanctions that included a number of controls that should be formally institutionalized. Most important in that regard is establishing a specific time-frame for the duration of the sanctions and specific mechanisms for their lifting. In this context, we hope that the Millennium Declaration, in which the heads of State and Government of all Member States pledged to minimize the adverse effects of economic sanctions on innocent, civilian populations, to subject sanctions regimes to regular reviews and to eliminate the adverse effects of sanctions on third parties, will be adhered to. We particularly hope that the Security Council will consistently adhere to the provisions of Article 50 of the Charter and apply it without discrimination or politicization.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement. Indeed, he made a number of very practical and action-oriented remarks that must be taken into account in the future work of the Council.

I would like to note, *inter alia*, his important comments with regard to the mechanism of consultations with troop-contributing countries. As a matter of fact, those comments are very similar to what was said earlier by the representative of Canada. It will be very important for the Council to take these comments into account, in view of the ongoing work in the Council Working Group on peacekeeping operations.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate, as well as for the gesture of having non-Council members speak before members. As the saying goes, one swallow does not a summer make. But, as we have now had at least two swallows, perhaps, if summer is not with us, then spring in the form of further Security Council reform may be just around the corner.

Speaking at the Millennium Summit last year, the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, observed that for nations, as for individuals, no rights come without responsibility, and no prosperity comes without price. My own country has made its contribution to paying the price of international peace and security. It has participated willingly and, we would like to believe, effectively in more than 30 peacekeeping and peace-

monitoring operations in the years since the foundation of the United Nations. Our decision to participate in today's stocktaking debate is a further practical expression of our commitment.

We were heartened to see the same commitment expressed by the leaders of the world's nations in the Security Council and General Assembly millennium resolutions, encouraging the United Nations to strengthen and modernize its role in maintaining international peace and security. We were also particularly pleased to see the recognition of the ever-growing complexity of the issues that affect international peace and security, including, as spelled out in Security Council resolution 1318 (2000), issues of HIV/AIDS, which are to be taken up this year during the special session of the General Assembly, in which my Government is playing a particular role, as well as the issues of the development of international criminal law and of small-arms trafficking.

With regard to HIV/AIDS, I want to draw the attention of members to a forthcoming ministerial meeting on HIV/AIDS and development in the Asia-Pacific region, which will be hosted by Australia in Melbourne in October. This meeting is being organized as a separate but complementary part of the 6th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific. It will seek to strengthen action being taken to address this issue in our region. Given the words of the Secretary-General at the beginning of our debate in particular, we see this as a concrete, practical follow-up to the decisions taken at the Millennium Summit.

I want to take this opportunity to express Australia's support for the principles, as well as the decisions, contained in last September's summit resolution, and to welcome warmly the recent activities of the Council in moving them forward. Specifically, we are very pleased by the establishment by the Council of a working group on peacekeeping whose mandate includes enhancing consultations with troop-contributing countries. We listened carefully to the remarks of our colleagues about this, and see it as a good start to a process that is clearly going to be developed and refined as we continue to have more and more meetings.

Secondly, we were very pleased to see last month's open debate on peace-building and the Secretary-General's consultations with regional organizations. Thirdly, we are pleased about the action

taken to support the commitment made in the Council declaration on preventing the flow of small arms into areas of conflict. This is a problem of particular resonance in our South Pacific region.

Australia is currently the sixth-largest contributor of United Nations peacekeeping personnel and, as I indicated at the outset, has a longstanding commitment to United Nations peacekeeping. This is reflected in our current contribution to East Timor and our participation in United Nations missions in Africa and the Middle East. However, we believe that our contribution to peacekeeping and to the peaceful resolution of conflicts also extends to regional efforts. These are not United Nations operations, but we consider that they have made a contribution to the efforts of the United Nations with respect to the protection of international peace and security because, by our regional efforts, we have made a United Nations operation unnecessary. I am referring in particular to the Peace Monitoring Group on Bougainville and the International Peace Monitoring Team in the Solomon Islands, both of which are assisting in a very real way in building confidence and providing the conditions on the ground necessary for bringing the various parties in conflict together to resolve their differences. We keep the United Nations very closely informed about these operations, and we see a real value in continuing dialogue and interaction as we work in the region to deal with these conflicts.

We think that this demonstrates very concretely our commitment to burden-sharing. Having demonstrated our own willingness over many years to contribute to United Nations and international peacekeeping, often far from our shores, we believe that, from time to time, we can reasonably look to others to share the burden of peacekeeping in our own immediate region.

The Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations provides us all with the opportunity to bring about major and much-needed changes in the way the United Nations carries out its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. We welcome the action taken to date, including the increase in personnel granted to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) late last year. We express strong support for the current review of DPKO. It is essential that its strategic and planning capacity can be strengthened.

However, in our view, work on implementation is really only in the first phase; much remains to be done to give effect to many worthwhile aspects of the report. Despite differences of opinion on the detail of some of the report's recommendations, we urge all countries to join together in working to address and resolve the problems it identifies, in particular, issues such as rapid force deployment capacity, regular financing mechanisms, post-conflict management, peace-building programmes and the training of personnel.

I want to make particular mention of East Timor, because we would argue that the success of the United Nations operations in East Timor has underlined the critical importance, in designing and implementing United Nations operations, of strong support from Member States, and an appropriate, clear and decisive mandate, as well as a clear exit strategy. In this respect, we welcome the useful open Council debate in November last year on exit strategies. We note the major effect on the credibility of the United Nations of how an operation is conducted and concluded, and we hope that in time the operation in East Timor will be a model in this respect.

In its resolution, the Council also stressed the need to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes and other serious violations of humanitarian law. I would like to say that Australia, like Sweden — whose representative, our colleague, spoke earlier — has always had a strong commitment to the development of international criminal law, in particular as expressed through our support for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, as well as for the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The establishment of an International Criminal Court with the capacity to deal with the most serious crimes of concern to the international community has been a longstanding goal of Australia and one which we continue to support strongly, particularly through the current work being undertaken in the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court.

We see a real linkage between the Security Council resolution and other decisions coming from the Summit, and maintaining the momentum of the International Criminal Court negotiations. It is a significant element in following up the Millennium Summit. The International Criminal Court will make a significant contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

This year's United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will also provide us with another opportunity to follow up on the Millennium Summit and to address the problem of the illicit small arms trade through practical, concrete measures.

The extensive work already undertaken in this area by African countries, as well as in some other regions and subregions, provides us with important building blocks for more concerted and coordinated international action. In our own region, Pacific Island Forum countries are also working actively to address the small arms issue, including through the development of model legislation to facilitate implementation of a common regional approach to weapons control. In the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum, Australia has also encouraged efforts to develop a coordinated approach to the issue, in particular the adoption of a declaration of responsibilities on small arms and light weapons.

I have mentioned all of those issues because we see them as giving practical concrete expression to those principles that were spelled out in the Millennium Summit resolutions and decisions.

The Millennium Summit and the Millennium Declaration, together with the extensive work undertaken by the United Nations on redefining and modernizing how the Organization operates, provide an opportunity that should not be missed to review United Nations operations so that they can better meet the complex and difficult challenges that the global community faces. This debate has provided us all with an early opportunity to review what we are doing to implement the commitments that we made jointly. I chose to highlight a few areas that my Government judges to be particularly important, where we are focusing our attention and where one will not find Australia wanting in either commitment or action in contributing to the way forward.

Finally, like my Egyptian colleague, I would like to raise one final point that was not in the Security Council document, but that we would like to see inform and infuse the work of the Council as it implements its decisions: the question of gender awareness. As we are sitting here in this Council, the annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women is taking place. Tomorrow is International Women's Day. I think that it is appropriate in the present circumstances, as the

Council members collectively and the Member States consider how they can give practical effect to all of the decisions and the priorities that were identified at the Millennium Summit, that they not forget the vital element of gender awareness and work actively to ensure that there is a gender perspective contained in all follow-up actions.

The President: Let me highlight the representative of Australia's important appeal to all countries to overcome their differences and to pool their efforts in order to speed up the implementation of recommendations on strengthening the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): I join previous speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate.

The declaration adopted by the Security Council summit reaffirms at the highest level a comprehensive set of goals and commitments. As many speakers have remarked before me, some progress in specific areas has been achieved in the implementation of the goals of the summit. Nevertheless, we are still faced with the need to work to translate some of its commitments into real and effective action.

Let me start with a general comment. In theory we all have a fairly good idea of what would be necessary to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations activities in the field of peace and security. The short answer to this question is that the Security Council must be able to prevent conflicts, it must be able to react promptly to conflicts that erupt, and it must have the necessary capacity to help in the efforts of post-conflict peace-building.

But why are we so far away from that ideal scenario? Is it because the members of the Council are lacking a common perception for action? Is it because the instruments available are inadequate to deal with the complexities of contemporary conflicts? Is it a political problem? Is it because the Secretariat suffers from chronic insufficiency of resources? Do we have a technical or a bureaucratic problem? Or is it an intellectual problem? Are we missing ideas on how to act? I am sorry for adding questions to the Council's

questions, especially because I do not have a clear answer to my questions.

But perhaps the answer is a combination of these factors, and that is why the issue remains so elusive, requiring a renewed determination on our part to tackle these challenges. This is even more so in view of the ever-growing gap between the demands placed on the Organization and the material resources available.

Let me go to a few specific points now. The first one is the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. The Brahimi report made many useful recommendations, and we are glad that some of them have already been approved. Its consideration by the Security Council and the General Assembly was perhaps complicated by a possible misperception. In our view, the recommendations of the report were not intended to assert a degree of autonomy for the Secretariat in the planning of peacekeeping operations, but rather to increase its capacity to better serve the Organization and fulfil its responsibilities. An increased capacity does not necessarily mean enhanced autonomy, if the mandates approved by the Security Council are clear and achievable, with a visible sense of political direction.

But we all know that even the best-crafted decision of the Council will not yield the expected results if there is no adequate means for its implementation. There must be a genuine commitment to peacekeeping. The permanent members of the Council should be the first ones to ensure troops and financial resources for the peacekeeping missions they mandate. They must take full responsibility for their own decisions and must be prepared to assume the costs implied.

The second point is conflict prevention. It is said that successful prevention does not win votes, but failed intervention loses buckets of them. We all recognize the importance of conflict prevention and the urgent need to enhance the United Nations instruments in this area. But conflict prevention is perhaps the most daunting task of all, given the high complexity and singular nature of each conflict situation. Therefore, there is no uniform recipe for conflict prevention, and each situation requires a distinct approach. In certain cases prevention means highly visible actions. In other instances, discreet efforts are the key to incremental gains. Moreover, conflict prevention in many cases is a continuous undertaking. Kosovo and Angola are in this

respect emblematic of the challenges involved. Another difficulty stems from the fact that the acceptance of preventive action by the United Nations often entails a certain dilemma for the authorities of a country torn by conflict.

The third point is peace-building. The Secretary-General rightly reminded us that peace-building is about the resumption of economic activity, the rejuvenation of institutions, the restoration of basic services, the reconstruction of clinics and schools, the revamping of public administration and the resolution of differences through dialogue, not violence.

This is an enormous task, one that we all recognize is well beyond the responsibilities of the Security Council alone. It requires strong political will and commitment on the part of both the recipient country and the donor community. Coordination is absolutely a key element.

As in many other questions, here the record of our efforts is also mixed. We were able to achieve much in Mozambique for instance, and good efforts are under way in Guinea-Bissau. But the system has yet to deliver in Haiti despite the continuous efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and bilateral donors.

Peace-building efforts are necessary to ensure that institutional mechanisms are in place to deal with political differences and to quell potential conflicts that would otherwise re-emerge in the context of poverty, inequality and the absence of the rule of law. We continue to hold that putting in place the mechanisms to allow a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peace-building requires the necessary involvement of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

Another important point to stress is the urgent need for Security Council reform. There is a deep frustration within the entire membership with the fact that the Working Group of the General Assembly has been discussing this issue for almost eight years now, without concrete results.

We cannot underestimate the negative impact of this situation. The Council cannot continue to be perceived as an anachronistic body, both in its methods

of work and composition. This is detrimental to the Council's authority, which we must always preserve.

The effectiveness of the Council's role hinges largely on the assumption that it represents all members of the United Nations. We must therefore redouble our efforts to reach agreement on all pending aspects of reform so as to ensure that the Council is more transparent, democratic, representative and accountable. It is therefore disappointing to note that the issue of the composition and reform of the Security Council failed to appear in the declaration approved by Council's summit in September.

The President: I thank the representative of Brazil for his statement, and in particular for his important comments on the role of conflict prevention and peace-building.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We are very happy to see you presiding over this debate today and to give non-members of the Council an opportunity to share our views.

Although the debate that you have convened today is an important one, Mr. President, I would like to begin by recording our reservations to elements of the appendix that you have circulated in the working paper contained in document S/2001/185. That appendix contains certain views that are held by individual Member States — and not by the entire membership of the United Nations — and that carry no consensus support in either the General Assembly or in the Security Council. Those views do not in any way constructively contribute to the important questions that you have raised, Mr. President. Moreover, their inclusion threatens to detract from the main issues that we must address. We would have preferred that the appendix had been omitted in the first place. In our view, the Security Council is not a debating club, and it must not be reduced to one. Its main functions are to maintain international peace and security, and that should remain its central focus.

This function of the Council is clearly spelled out in the Charter, which carefully delineates the scope of work of its various organs. Peace remains the essential

feature of the Security Council's responsibilities. Those responsibilities include conflict prevention, dispute resolution, peace-making, conflict management, peacekeeping and peace-building. These are the pillars on which the Security Council's edifice is built. Ignoring any one of those pillars enormously weakens its standing. Adding on new areas of interest that are not included in its Charter responsibilities reduces its effectiveness. I hope you will agree with me that by not implementing its own resolutions, the Council undermines its own credibility. Addressing symptoms and not root causes becomes an exercise in futility. Holding international peace and security hostage to national interests does a disservice to both this body and to the United Nations as a whole. The unrealistic and self-defeating approach of leaving disputes to be dealt with at the bilateral and regional levels raises for us the question of why we must have a Security Council in the first place.

Indeed, the Security Council has clearly neglected its key obligations. Some of those have only been honoured in their selective applications, and others in their complete omission. That is why we are still burdened with "forgotten" conflicts — the unfinished business of the Council — that are still consistently ignored. The issue of Jammu and Kashmir is a reminder of one of the oldest outstanding disputes before this Council. It is also the only dispute that the Council has chosen not to revisit since the early 1950s. Since then, in spite of two wars and a struggle that has cost the lives of tens of thousands of Kashmiris and turned the region into a nuclear flashpoint, the Security Council continues to ignore the problem.

The Council has an obligation to address the Kashmir issue with a view to resolving it in accordance with its own resolutions and the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. What the oppressed and long-suffering people of Kashmir yearn for is the realization of their legitimate right to self-determination as laid down in the resolutions of this very body. This is for us the litmus test not only of the Council's effectiveness, but also of its *raison d'être*.

We, of course, also appreciate the efforts the Council has been making to try to be more interactive with non-members. We are pleased to note that the Council itself has taken a number of positive steps in that direction. We welcome in particular the steps taken by the Council to promote greater cooperation between it and troop-contributing countries. While we laud such

measures, we feel that more progress is needed to ensure increased accessibility to, and transparency in, the Council. The tremendous gap that exists between the Council's actual obligations and its real achievements needs to be narrowed.

What is required from the Council are not idealistic debates or holistic pronouncements, but political will and concerted action. However, too often global objectives of international peace and security are held hostage to the dictates of the national interests of a few. In many cases in the Council, the lack of political will is itself a political decision, and inaction the most politically expedient option. This is unacceptable. If there is any need at all for reform in the Security Council, it is to address that alarming practice.

Any reform of the Council must therefore strengthen the inclusive and participatory character of the Organization, in keeping with the principle of the sovereign equality of States. It must be aimed at reducing the anomalies of the past, not at accentuating them or at creating distortions.

The Security Council must carefully weigh its actions so as to mitigate any adverse impact on humanitarian situations. We must learn from history, not repeat it.

There is no justification for the creation of new centres of privilege at the expense of the rest of the membership. The veto remains the primary obstacle to a truly democratic Security Council. What little justification may have existed for such a mechanism at the end of Second World War is clearly no longer valid. The veto is not only obsolete, it is also contrary to contemporary trends — one need only recall the resounding, spontaneous applause that the President of Venezuela received in the General Assembly Hall during the Millennium Summit when he called for the democratization of the Security Council and the elimination of the veto. That was an expression of the general will of the membership of the Organization.

We firmly believe that the current global trends to promote democracy, participation, transparency and accountability should also form the basis for the reform of the Security Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement. Indeed, he reminded the

Council of some acute issues related to its activities and functions.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Peru. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Picasso (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let my first words be to congratulate you for assuming the direction of the Security Council during the month of March, a task that has begun in a highly auspicious manner. My delegation wishes to thank you, first of all, for the opportunity to take part in this important meeting that is a follow-up to the conclusions reached in the Security Council in its meeting at the level of heads of State last September on ensuring an effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In recent years Peru has followed very closely how matters relating to the maintenance of peace have been dealt with in the Organization. The discussion and reflection have touched upon subjects that deal with the conceptualization of the basic elements, such as the establishment and definition of new criteria and bases for action now that conflicts have become more complex and peacekeeping operations have a different scope.

Along these lines, my country has observed with interest the reaffirmation of basic concepts such as the unrestricted respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. These principles are included in Security Council resolution 1318 (2000), the contents of which Peru supports and encourages. In this same sense, my country has welcomed, among other aspects, the efforts to secure greater participation by troop-contributing countries. This is both a logical practical measure and just recognition of those States that are involved in the most difficult and risky phase of the peacekeeping operations.

Nevertheless, my delegation has also viewed with concern the fact that the new principles and criteria for action in the collective security system of the Organization — which include, *inter alia*, the redefinition of the content, scope and mandate of peacekeeping operations and the conceptual expansion of the causes of the conflicts — have been the fruit of a process of reflection and decision exclusively within the Security Council. This has left and continues to leave the great majority of States outside the debate on the configuration of the new international order in

these matters. Peru also has doubts about the relevance of many of the new themes being discussed in the Security Council which naturally fall under the competence of other forums and bodies of the Organization.

Your delegation, Mr. President, has wished to delimit this debate through a useful document that includes precise and direct questions on the work of the Security Council. It has attached an equally important annex that compiles initiatives and comments presented in the Security Council summit meeting. This section demonstrates what is known by all, and this is that in many areas of discussion relating to peace and security there is not yet a clear consensus on the conceptualization of terms and principles of action. This requirement for consensus, in our opinion, becomes essential for shaping clear rules and criteria which will, in their turn, gain the necessary support and consent of the States of the United Nations and prevent the imposition of concepts that are contrary to the feelings of the majority.

In our opinion, there is no other body within the system, aside from the General Assembly, that because of its universal nature is capable of creating the required consensus and can rely on a genuine capacity to contribute and support this. Peru considers that the Security Council has not yet conducted a broad review of, nor given adequate consideration to, the important role that the General Assembly can play in the reinforcement of its own role as a means of unifying common action criteria with regard to international peace and security.

This participation becomes even more obvious when the matters to be debated are superimposed on its natural sphere of action. For example, we would like to emphasize, in this first aspect, that the strategies developed to handle the causes of conflicts — which include concepts such as poverty and underdevelopment — imply in themselves consideration in and participation by the General Assembly, as well as a dialogue with the Security Council to determine a clear form of interaction. We emphasize the interventions of some members of the Security Council in the debate last September, when they stated that not all causes of conflict should be addressed by the Security Council but that its function should be to participate with the relevant bodies of the Organization in drafting general strategies for cooperation. This same idea must be present with

regard to the expansion sought by some States of the concept of security that would involve health, environment and human rights matters.

Peru would also like to recall the full capacity and relevance of the General Assembly for consideration, reflection and recommendation in the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the Charter. They grant it a capacity for recommendation in situations of a threat to peace, the breach of peace and aggression. The limit on its action is the imposition of coercive measures under Chapter VII. This interpretation has been consolidated with the principle of the subsequent practice of the General Assembly through resolutions that are parallel and complementary to those of the Security Council and even, at times, performing functions of this body.

In this regard, my delegation considers that the Assembly is fully empowered to become an important participant in the establishment of the new international collective security. This is all the more true since there are several subjects that await a clear definition, such as preventive action, several aspects of peace-building and many areas within the framework of the peacekeeping operations. We do not need to say that the Assembly's presence is indispensable when dealing with matters linked to its natural capacity for action that we have referred to.

My delegation is convinced that only a higher level of dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly will permit the obtaining of results that will offer a positive and successful answer to the questions pointed out in the document prepared for this meeting.

My country wishes to focus on an important aspect which, even though it was not considered in resolution 1318 (2000), nevertheless underlies, in a fundamental and vital way, the entire problem of the effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, in a relationship that will allow the Council to act with the consensus and support of all States of the Organization, in the context of the current crisis of credibility that it is facing, as was indicated by the Secretary-General in the meeting which we are following up at this time. The Peruvian delegation would like to conclude its intervention by summarizing its position as follows.

First, there is the need to restore the nature of the General Assembly as a forum for debates and broad and pluralistic discussion of subjects relating to international peace and security.

Second, there is the need to engage in dialogue and an exchange of ideas between the Security Council and the General Assembly to permit the development of a clear legal framework with precise rules and criteria, in accordance with the Charter of the Organization. This would be in line with the new concepts of collective international security and with the political independence of States as central actors in international relations and that ensure their effective participation in its implementation.

Thirdly, the basis of this participation is found by ensuring general support for the representational nature and legitimacy of the General Assembly while the current composition, rules of procedures and methods of work of the Security Council are open to question. These make it the most appropriate forum for the search for consensus on items of common interest and application.

Lastly, there is a need to promote a new concept of collective security based on reciprocal trust, mutual respect, legal equality and cooperation.

The President: I note the useful remarks of the representative of Peru on the important issue of dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Croatia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): It gives me special pleasure to greet our former colleague, Volodymyr Yel'chenko, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, on the occasion of this open debate, and to take part in this follow-up of the recent Security Council summit.

The Security Council summit was a monumental event in many respects. Besides its symbolic value, it certainly brought us closer to a shared vision to ensure an effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of peace and security in each and every region of the world. Building on that momentum in a series of open debates and through several actions of the Council in the past six months, we have reaffirmed

repeatedly our conviction that the United Nations remains indispensable to safeguarding world peace.

We have reaffirmed the importance of timely, competent and otherwise effective peacekeeping, which has increasingly acquired ever more complex formats. The troop-contributing countries that shoulder the greater share of peacekeeping in the field told the Council in January what they need to carry out their duties as they are expected and called upon to do, as did the Member States on the issue of women, peace and security last October. Also, just last month we moved closer to outlining a comprehensive strategy for peace-building. Throughout these debates, we said again and again that we need all the political will, mutual trust and bureaucratic capacity to act upon the very causes of conflicts in a timely and effective manner in order to prevent their occurrence or recurrence.

For the time being, Africa should remain the special focus of the Security Council, the entire United Nations system and the regional organizations, but frozen conflicts in other regions should not be underestimated either. Given the extent of poverty and the spread of infectious diseases, which are occurring there at a greater scale than elsewhere, the need for a convergence of the peace and development agendas figures prominently, particularly in Africa. No development can be sustained without peace or without people. Investments in peace thus encompass investments in health, education and environment, as well as in human rights and good governance.

As an advocate for and guarantor of peace, the Security Council must use its visibility and its prestige to consult with and augment the efforts of the United Nations bodies principally charged with furthering the world development agenda. In this regard, great importance should be attached to the substantive cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Croatia for his kind words addressed to me. One specific point from his intervention that I would like to underline relates to the importance of the Council's not forgetting the so-called frozen conflicts on its agenda.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Namibia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and I wish to commend Ambassador Ben Mustapha of Tunisia for the able manner in which he presided over the work of the Council in February.

I further wish to thank you and your delegation for convening this important follow-up meeting to the historic and precedent-setting meeting of the Security Council last September, and we thank the Secretary-General for his important statement this morning. Your initiative is further commendable since the United Nations is often criticized of being a talk shop, and follow-up action like today's can go a long way towards correcting that image. Regular review of the Council's decisions is one way to ensure that it becomes more effective in fulfilling its mandate.

When the Security Council, at the level of heads of State and Government, adopted resolution 1318 (2000), it made a number of important commitments aimed at ensuring an effective role for itself in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa. Principal among these commitments was the pledge by the Council to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which should be respected at all times. This review, six months later, proves that, while some progress has been made, the Security Council still needs to be much more responsive to and proactive towards the challenges facing it today.

Since the focus of this meeting is on Africa, I shall deal with that first. In that region, the root causes of conflict remain poverty and underdevelopment, and the Council should continue to further strengthen its coordination with regional and subregional organizations that have direct knowledge of the reality of certain issues in order to develop integrated responses to conflicts which address both peace and security and sustainable development.

The Council was unfortunately found lacking in political will with regard to peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts in certain conflicts. On the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the peace process is moving forward at the moment thanks to the commitment of the parties to the conflict. However, it is our view that progress could have been achieved earlier had the Council not at times adopted a wait-and-see approach. While the Council's adoption

of resolution 1341 (2001) is welcomed, this reaction from the Council is minimalist, despite the excellent conditions for peace. A question mark remains as to whether the agreed numbers of military personnel will be sufficient to effectively deal with the situation, given the size of the country and the enormity and complexity of the conflict.

A further positive point is that the Council has shown continued commitment to cutting off UNITA's resources, which enable it to wage war against the Angolan people. In this regard, the extension in January of the mandate of the Monitoring Mechanism was welcome, but the Council also needs to take appropriate measures against sanctions violators. Sanctions remain a viable tool for the Council to enforce its decisions. However, in some cases the effectiveness of sanctions is questionable and they have caused untenable hardship to civilians. In cases like these, sanctions need to be eased or lifted so as not to prolong the agony of the affected people.

Another criticism frequently leveled against the Security Council is that it practices selectivity in dealing with conflict situations. Unfortunately, if one looks at the continuing tragedy in the occupied Palestinian territories, it is hard to argue against such criticism. The military onslaught and economic strangulation of the Palestinians continue, with massive human rights and humanitarian rights abuses, while the Security Council does not appear fully committed to stop the violence and to find a lasting solution to the conflict. To restore its credibility, the Council should ensure that its resolutions, such as resolution 1322 (2000), are fully implemented. It also remains an urgent necessity for the Council to establish a United Nations protection force for Palestinian civilians.

An area where the peacemaking efforts of the international community are being frustrated is the situation in Western Sahara. The Security Council must be vigilant and should not accept any attempt to derail the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan. The people of Western Sahara have suffered too much and for too long. They must be allowed to exercise their right to self-determination. This is clearly a case where the Council has to assume its responsibility to ensure that the settlement plan is implemented without any further delay.

The other victims of war are women and children, and the Council has a special responsibility to

safeguard them and to protect their interests. Concrete measures should be taken to ensure a greater role for women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Additional efforts and initiatives should be put in place to end the targeting of children in situations of armed conflict, including the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, in violation of international law. The Council should ensure that all of its resolutions regarding these vulnerable groups are fully implemented.

In conclusion, while the Security Council possesses enough tools, through the Charter of the United Nations, to respond to situations regarding the maintenance of international peace and security, it needs to be continuously vigilant to be able to respond to modern-day challenges, which are not so clear-cut but clearly pose threats to international peace and security. These issues include HIV/AIDS and the effects of poverty. In this regard, it is imperative for the Security Council to reform itself to reflect the will of the wider United Nations membership, so as to strengthen its role, maintain its authority and improve its effectiveness.

The President: I thank the representative in Namibia for his comprehensive intervention. In his statement, he grasped one of the major reasons which prompted this presidency to propose holding the current debate. Indeed, a regular review of the Council's decisions represents an important means for ensuring their practical implementation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Belarus. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Laptanok (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, as Ukraine is a country with which we have special ties.

The Republic of Belarus has, for the last few years, unswervingly emphasized the need for the expansion of the practice of convening high-level meetings of the Security Council, so that the decisions of the Council can be more universal in nature and reflect a policy that has been arrived at collectively.

Like the other participants in this meeting, we would like to thank your delegation, Mr. President, for your timely initiative, which has made it possible for

virtually all interested States to participate in the discussion on the preliminary results of the implementation of the summit declaration of the Security Council.

The Council's September summit, which focused attention on Africa, yielded specific ways to strengthen peacekeeping operations. However, unfortunately, despite a number of positive changes, Africa today continues to require the most intensive attention from the Security Council, and not only in the context of peacekeeping operations.

This part of the world has inherited an extremely difficult legacy. In September 2000, a great deal was said to the effect that changing reality can be done only through rapid, collective and effective action. Belarus is evaluating its potential in the area of the effective mobilization of resources. Its specific characteristic is that, as a country located in the centre of Europe, as an integral part of the general European political and economic space, and as a member State of the Non-Aligned Movement, Belarus has a highly developed sense of the needs and requirements of many of our partners in the Non-Aligned Movement which in recent years have been overcome by crisis situations. Among other things, we believe that Belarus still has great unexploited potential to offer in the process of resolving many of the issues considered by the Council.

For that reason, we have decided significantly to expand our participation in the non-military components of peacekeeping operations. The relevant, concrete steps are now being worked out by the highest-level State organs in Belarus. In January 2001, Belarus paid in full all of its assessed contributions with respect to the financing of peacekeeping operations begun after 1 January 1996, and paid in full the sums assessed to the account of the two international tribunals.

We have begun to establish our own basis for readying personnel for participation in peacekeeping operations and are prepared to engage in broad cooperation in this field with all interested parties.

The growing attention that is being devoted by the Security Council to measures to resolve and prevent inter-State and regional conflicts is a product of today's realities. In the light of recent events on the Macedonian-Yugoslav border, the question of whether some issues have remained outside the focus of the

Security Council is not only a rhetorical one. However, from our point of view, the Security Council must continue to focus on the global aspects of security and in particular on disarmament questions. This is in answer to one of the questions raised in the note distributed by your delegation, Mr. President, to this meeting.

The commitment to achieve the elimination of the threats created by weapons of mass destruction was enshrined in the Millennium Declaration. Belarus, as is well known, traditionally has put forward, at sessions of the General Assembly, an initiative for the adoption of a draft resolution prohibiting the creation of new types of weapons of mass destruction and related systems. During the last few years, Belarus has devoted particular attention to practical measures for strengthening regional and global security through nuclear disarmament. From our point of view, such activity reflects clearly the effective contribution of a specific State to strengthening international peace and security and must be duly taken into account by the Council.

An important contribution to halting illicit flows of small arms to regions of conflict will be made by the upcoming international Conference on this problem. This is a step towards improving the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations and of the Security Council. In past years, we participated in an international experts' group on the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on this problem, an opportunity we were grateful for.

From our point of view, the focus of attention of the Security Council must be, to a greater degree, on issues linked to the fundamental social and economic reasons for conflicts: the prevention of outbreaks of violence; the improvement of principles and mechanisms for the establishment of enforcement measures and in particular of economic sanctions; the strengthening of the democratic basis for the Security Council's decision-making process; and above all the stepping up and strengthening of interaction with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies. This was mentioned by previous speakers, and we fully concur.

What are the basic changes that have taken place recently that could help in overcoming, to use the Secretary-General's expression, the crisis of faith in the United Nations and in the Security Council? In our

view, we can include the following among the important achievements: further United Nations reform efforts; emphasizing regional forums, including African forums, on the problems of maintenance of peace and international security; extensive discussion on new concepts for peacekeeping operations; and intensive consideration of the mechanism for sanctions, proposals and conclusions of the report of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations. Many important changes have already been initiated on this basis. The resolution has been adopted based on the Brahimi report and a number of steps have been undertaken to systematize peacekeeping operations sanctioned by the Security Council.

There have been open meetings on issues such as exit strategy, complex approach and others. There has been an increase in the work on sanctions and additional dynamic work on Afghanistan, Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Steps have been considered to halt international terrorism. These are extremely important steps.

There is also a new scale of contributions and assessments for peacekeeping operations and cooperation by the membership of the various States groups. In many States, inter alia, in Belarus, additional work has been carried out to expand participation in peacekeeping operations.

The list could go on if we looked at the period beginning with the summit. This does not mean that little or much has been done, but more still lies ahead. Unfortunately, after September 2000 many contradictions also remain unresolved, which, to a significant extent, continue to hamper decisions in the Council today. The main question remains: Does the Council always truly have a decisive voice here? The Charter and the role of the Security Council cannot be ignored. In that regard, the events of the last few years, inter alia in the Balkans, have taught us a serious lesson. At the same time, today we are witnesses of another serious escalation in that region.

The draft resolution on Palestine was not adopted and the question on the no-flight zones also remains. A number of very serious problems remain on the Security Council agenda today.

How can we achieve effective implementation of the Council's decisions so that they do not remain on paper alone? Perhaps the decision is not to simply continue discussions on Security Council membership,

but to have this discussion open to all Member States. The President of Belarus has noted that one of the great achievements of the United Nations is the fact that it provides every State, regardless of its size and resources, with an opportunity for equal participation in producing a just and durable peace. We should not look at the primacy of State interests; rather, we should look at many situations in terms of collective interests.

Regarding Security Council reform, virtually all the participants at the summit said there was a need for reform. It was not coincidental that at the September meeting many of the Council members themselves rather bluntly raised the question of reform of this body and of more effective response by the United Nations to conflict situations at all stages, including their social and economic aspects. This coincides with the spirit and approach of the Non-Aligned Movement, which we share, regarding further improvement of Security Council activity and working methods and expansion of its membership.

Undoubtedly, an important conclusion is that the African continent will have to be given the highest priority attention. There have been positive achievements; the Congo and Ethiopia and Eritrea, for example. But the most important thing is the restoration of peace, which has not yet been achieved in many regions. The voice of African States must be taken more seriously into account. We are ready to make our contribution to resolve the problems of Africa, inter alia, through the comprehensive development of our ties with the countries of that continent, insofar as possible by making voluntary contributions to international funds and programmes to

render assistance to countries that have experienced natural disasters; the development of activities, to which we will be paying great attention, not only within the framework of our bilateral relations but also within the framework of international organizations, and, above all, those of which Belarus is a member. Within the framework of our efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Security Council in the struggle against the illegal trade of diamonds, our scientists are working, inter alia, on a unique method for determining the sources of their origin.

At the same time, with respect to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and mechanisms, the potential of our region and that of its organizations, including those of the Commonwealth of Independent States, is far from having been exhausted. For its part, Belarus is doing everything possible to strengthen that potential.

Allow me once again to assure you, Sir, of the readiness of the Republic of Belarus to fully cooperate in enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the Security Council.

The President: I would like to thank the representative of Belarus for his statement. His thoughtful comments on many issues on the Council's agenda will be useful and will be taken into account.

There are a number of speakers remaining on my list. With the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting now and to resume it at 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.