



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

9710th meeting

Wednesday, 21 August 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Kabba	(Sierra Leone)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
	China	Mr. Fu Cong
	Ecuador	Mr. De La Gasca
	France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
	Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Japan	Mr. Yamazaki
	Malta	Mr. Camilleri
	Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hyunwoo Cho
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Slovenia	Ms. Jurečko
	Switzerland	Mr. Hauri
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

The new agenda for peace — addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention

Identical letters dated 30 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2024/581)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

The New Agenda for Peace — addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention

Identical letters dated 30 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2024/581)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Angola, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; His Excellency Mr. Bankole Adeoye, African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; Ms. Hawa Samai, Executive Secretary, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion; and Mr. Arnoux Descardes, Executive Director, Volontariat pour le développement d'Haiti.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite the following to participate in this meeting: His Excellency Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Mr. Habib Mayar, Deputy General Secretary of the Group of Seven plus.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2024/581, which contains the text of identical letters dated 30 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Ms. Spehar.

Ms. Spehar: First of all, I would like to thank the Sierra Leone presidency of the Security Council for organizing this high-level open debate on the theme "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: the New Agenda for Peace — addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention."

Peace is the foundational goal of the United Nations. Building and sustaining peace is central to the work of the Security Council and of the Organization. And yet the number of conflicts is at a decades-long high, inflicting unimaginable suffering, devastating economies and robbing communities of their future. As outlined in the Secretary-General's policy brief A New Agenda for Peace, prioritizing conflict prevention and peacebuilding can contribute to reversing those trends, provide people affected by violence with opportunities and reduce the human and economic costs of war. A New Agenda for Peace provides Member States with a road map to achieve that, predicated on rebuilding trust among countries, but also within each one of them, rooted in the principles of universality and solidarity.

This morning, I would like to briefly discuss how we could invest in three key areas outlined in the New Agenda for Peace to advance prevention and peacebuilding, in fulfilment of the goals of the Charter of the United Nations, focusing on, first, promoting and supporting voluntary, inclusive and nationally-owned and -led prevention and peacebuilding efforts and strengthening national infrastructure for peace; secondly, ensuring coherence and a comprehensive approach to prevention and sustaining peace; and thirdly, strengthening critical partnerships and increasing available resources for prevention and peacebuilding.

On promoting and supporting nationally owned and led, voluntary and inclusive prevention and peacebuilding efforts and strengthening national infrastructure for peace, I would recall that the

New Agenda for Peace proposed a paradigm shift in prevention based on two core principles: first, the idea that prevention should be universal, that no country is immune from the drivers of conflict and violence; and secondly, the recognition that our focus should be on national action and national priorities.

The voluntary development of national strategies by Member States could provide important political impetus to that new approach to prevention. Such strategies could help rally different national stakeholders — Governments as well as civil society — around common priorities, helping promote social cohesion and strengthen national infrastructures for peace. As the New Agenda for Peace outlined, developing and implementing voluntary national prevention strategies and peacebuilding approaches can be important foundations for prevention and sustaining peace more broadly.

In terms of “how”, while each case must be context-specific, successful examples have prioritized a people-centred approach to governance that focuses on equitable access to services and opportunities, strengthening the rule of law and building strong State institutions that are responsive to people’s needs and aspirations. Effective national infrastructure for peace has entailed the development of institutions, processes and policies, not only at the national but also at local levels, that foster political and social dialogue, enable early warning and early response to conflicts and privilege consultation and consensus-building to resolve differences.

The United Nations system, with its unique expertise, tools and networks, stands ready to support Member States in their prevention and peacebuilding endeavours. The New Agenda for Peace underscores national ownership as a guiding principle for effective national prevention and peacebuilding efforts. It also emphasizes the need to include diverse voices, needs and participation of all segments of society, which can help make peace more sustainable. In the Central African Republic, for example, the Peacebuilding Fund has supported programmes to strengthen women community mediators, helping to prevent conflict and sustain peace at the community level, in support of the country’s broader objectives of peace.

On ensuring coherence and a comprehensive approach to prevention and sustaining peace, the New Agenda for Peace emphasizes the need to address

not only the symptoms, but also the root causes of violence and conflict. The best way to prevent societies from descending into crisis is to ensure that they are resilient through investment in inclusive and sustainable development and inclusive governance. That is why the New Agenda for Peace calls for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and for tackling inequality, marginalization and exclusion.

Within the United Nations, the Secretary-General’s 2019 reforms laid the groundwork for a more cohesive development system and peace and security pillar, with peacebuilding entities, such as the Peacebuilding Support Office helping to more closely link the pillar’s upstream prevention and conflict management and resolution mechanisms to the structural prevention work of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The peacebuilding architecture has created important opportunities for humanitarians, development colleagues and peace actors to work more closely together, in complementarity, leveraging their comparative advantages to contribute to building a sustainable peace.

In promoting a comprehensive approach to prevention and peacebuilding, the New Agenda for Peace has emphasized the necessity of addressing transnational and transboundary threats that can often impact and even derail national prevention efforts, including the adverse effects of climate change, transnational organized crime and terrorism.

On strengthening critical partnerships and making more resources available for prevention and peacebuilding, partnership with regional and subregional actors has continued to grow in importance and in scope, and indeed, the complexity of the conflict landscape requires us to seek and employ all available tools for prevention and peacebuilding. Regional arrangements are particularly rich in the array of mechanisms and processes that they make available for addressing prevention and conflict challenges and that can be effectively leveraged when there is sufficient capacity and political will. The regular engagements between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC), for example, and a similar partnership between the Peacebuilding Commission and the PSC, complemented by increasing joint efforts and mutual support between the secretariats and the two systems, are promising, and more could be done in terms of concrete follow-

up to the meetings and tracking the results of those important interactions.

When discussing prevention and peacebuilding, political commitment and the right partnerships are key, but resourcing will also always be central. Funding peacebuilding is what translates commitment and strategies into impact on the ground. It is worrisome to see investments in peace and conflict prevention steadily decreasing while military spending is increasing worldwide. Those investments now represent only a fraction of total official development assistance — 10 per cent for Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries in 2023, which is a 15-year record low. At the same time, only last year, research showed that violence cost the world nearly \$20 trillion, that is, 13.5 per cent of global gross domestic product.

At the intersection of partnerships and financing, we also need to further explore the relationship between the United Nations and the international financial institutions in the context of prevention and peacebuilding. Such partnerships with all major international financial institutions, from the World Bank to the regional development banks, are needed to ensure that development investments contribute to lasting peace. We have come a long way in partnerships with the World Bank. We hope to see a robust replenishment of the International Development Association funds this year, including its fragility envelope, to allow that work to continue. Looking ahead, there are good practices from the United Nations-World Bank partnership in various conflict and post-conflict settings that could form the basis of a more systematic and strategic partnership. The expansion of regional multilateral development banks also presents new opportunities for collaboration, with concessional resources in relevant settings that can be targeted to support sustainable peace efforts. Finally, we need to find more ways for private capital to invest in fragile and conflict-affected settings in a peace-positive manner, and the United Nations has been making some strides in that direction.

Prevention and peacebuilding can break the cycle of violence and lay the foundations to ensure that sustainable development is possible for all. The United Nations, with its unique tools, expertise and networks, can play a pivotal role to support prevention and peacebuilding efforts globally. Amid increasing polarization, strengthening those tools is critical to achieving that mission. The Peacebuilding Commission

(PBC) has untapped potential to serve as a space for Members States to address structural, long-term efforts to prevent conflict and build peace. Its strong focus on national ownership and its mandate to address issues that lie at the intersection of peace and development make the PBC the ideal body to support national prevention and peacebuilding strategies.

For the PBC's effectiveness to be enhanced, it is critical for the body to develop a more strategic and systematic relationship with international financial institutions and regional development banks in order for financing instruments to be better aligned with national peacebuilding priorities. That would allow the Commission to fulfil a core mandate of helping to marshal resources for peacebuilding. There are upcoming milestones that can transform that political vision into tangible action and impact, such as the Pact for the Future, the 2024 Peacebuilding Commission ministerial-level meeting and the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

Members of the Council have a leading voice in those processes and forums and in pushing us to move from the "what" of prevention and peacebuilding to the "how" of concrete implementation. I appeal to Council members' leadership to ensure that we collectively seize those opportunities to respond to the challenges ahead.

The President: I thank Ms. Spehar for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Adeoye.

Mr. Adeoye: The African Union (AU) views the New Agenda for Peace as a crucial master plan to recalibrate the global peace and security architecture, with a greater emphasis on conflict prevention. That is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the aspirations set forth in Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the flagship Silencing the Guns project, and the African Continental Free Trade Area for job creation and business promotion.

At the heart of the African Union's advocacy is the urgent need for a renewed multilateralism that reflects the interconnectedness of our global values, principles, solidarity, rich diversity, opportunities and efforts to address common challenges, along with a multilevel governance system that prioritizes local, community and national governance and institutional resilience.

The Security Council must therefore integrate the voices of all regions, particularly those in the global South, including Africa, in order to ensure that

the international peace and security framework is reconfigured to be inclusive and effective. I therefore wish, on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, to commend the Secretary-General for his consistent advocacy for the compelling new global agenda on peace, and Sierra Leone for putting this theme on the front burner.

With regard to democracy, elections and governance, the African Union's approach is driven by the nexus between peace, security, governance and development. Within that framework, we support African regional bodies and member States through democratic consolidation, institution-building and fostering resilience and by leveraging the conduct of inclusive, fair and peaceful elections. Member States continue to unpack and implement the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

We also recently launched the Principles and Guidelines for the Use of Digital and Social Media in Elections in Africa, another critical contribution to facilitating the holding of peaceful elections, and thereby to preventing conflict. Similarly, the African Union, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, jointly launched in 2023 the Africa Facility to Support Inclusive Transitions as a way to help build institutional capacity and facilitate a speedy return to constitutional order, all within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture and its African Governance Architecture.

In the context of the New Agenda for Peace, we also see the need for greater emphasis on security sector reform. The African Union Commission has centred its work in support of member States and regional communities around three pillars: providing direct assistance to States embarking on security sector reform, providing production of knowledge tools, building human capacities and dialogue and creating the necessary coordination platforms. We have also developed a national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration framework to assist in designing and building the institutional capacity of countries in transition.

Our goal with post-conflict reconstruction and development is centred around our Assembly's newly revised and recently adopted post-conflict reconstruction and development policy, which features youth inclusion, child protection and environmental sustainability as avenues to sustaining and advocating

for peacebuilding. Along with that, the African Union has launched an annual Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Awareness Week under the auspices of our Peace and Security Council. Our Centre for Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development in Cairo is now fully operationalized and we have set up a working group to promote interdepartmental emphases on peacebuilding. That is in conjunction with our sister organ, the African Union Development Agency NEPAD. Our peacebuilding exercise continues to be championed by His Excellency President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi of Egypt. In addition, 31 January of every year has been designated Africa Day of Peace and Reconciliation.

We cannot achieve the requisite conflict prevention without sustainable financing. That is why the African Union recently operationalized the revitalized African Union Peace Fund, which now supports three windows of conflict prevention and mediation, institutional capacity where necessary, and peace support operations. We continue to mobilize resources from member States from the private sector to replenish the Fund so that the African Union can also contribute to an African-owned and African-led sustainable funding of all its peace operations, particularly in relation to conflict prevention.

It is also important to emphasize that we are ensuring a knowledge-based, coordinated approach that is based on interfacing with our regional economic communities and mechanisms under the umbrella of the interregional knowledge exchange on early warning and conflict prevention. We have also engaged with the network of think tanks and a platform for civil society to continue to cover the critical areas of governance, peace and security. Strategic partnerships with the United Nations and other global players will help to enhance global solidarity and multilateralism.

In conclusion, let me emphasize the following recommendations. Building the institutional capacity and resilience of member States in local and border communities is critical, along with prioritizing national and traditional peace institutions. It is also necessary to invest in quality and accessible inclusive education for deprived communities in rural and urban areas. In order to improve conflict prevention, it is important to create more digitalization opportunities and to utilize the benefits of artificial intelligence and peace structures for training that supports young people and the many affected by conflict.

The Centre for Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development in Cairo is a game-changer, and we believe that the AU will continue to work with it as a think tank and a do tank. As we work together, it is also necessary to emphasize that our respect for the sovereignty and heritage of member States in a dialogue of civilizations and multilateralism will be based on mutual solidarity and differentiated burden-sharing. On that note, I want to assure the Council that the African Union remains committed to the New Agenda for Peace, driven by a new architecture that prioritizes early warning, early response and conflict prevention.

The President: I thank Mr. Adeoye for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Samai.

Ms. Samai: I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. President, to acknowledge and commend your country's leadership of the Security Council for August, with a dedication and effort that have been instrumental in advancing the Council's peacebuilding and conflict-prevention agendas.

It is an honour to address the Security Council today to share Sierra Leone's remarkable journey from conflict to peace, instability to stability, underdevelopment to development — a story that stands as a beacon of hope and a testament to the power of commitment, dialogue and inclusive peacebuilding. Our experience underscores the importance of inclusive peacebuilding, inspiring us all to adopt similar approaches in our respective peacebuilding efforts. Sierra Leone is a remarkable example of a successful post-conflict transition that is marking 22 years since the country's brutal civil war ended in 2002. The nation's progress, which has far exceeded predictions, including those of the international community, demonstrates the effectiveness of its peacebuilding efforts and offers valuable best practices and lessons learned for other regions affected by conflict. That transformation, driven by a strong political will, societal commitment and innovative peacebuilding strategies, shows that even the most devastated nations can rise again through concerted efforts, including the invaluable support of the international community.

One of the fundamental pillars of Sierra Leone's peacebuilding success has been the unwavering political will and commitment of all of the parties to dialogue. That dedication to achieving a conclusive dialogue created a strong foundation for sustainable peace and reconciliation. Concretely, from the conclusion of the

Abidjan Peace Agreement to the Lomé and Abuja Peace Agreements, the internal Bintumani conferences and the recent Agreement for National Unity, Sierra Leone has demonstrated a consistent commitment to dialogue for resolving disputes and disagreements.

Establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in July 2002 was pivotal to that journey. Driven by civil society, with significant female leadership, the Commission played a critical role in identifying the root causes of the war and recommending comprehensive, systemic reforms. The Commission's October 2004 report emphasized the need for structural changes and encouraged dialogue at all societal levels, setting a clear path for Sierra Leone's recovery. The Commission's work was not just a procedural necessity but a deeply transformative process that healed the wounds of war through truth-telling, accountability and recommendations for systemic reforms. The transformative nature of its work underscored the depth of the healing process and the resilience of the Sierra Leonean people. Women's participation in that process was particularly noteworthy, as it not only highlighted the vital role of women and young people in peacebuilding but also empowered them, emphasizing the importance of inclusive approaches to conflict resolution and conflict prevention.

The implementation of the Commission's recommendations was instrumental in transforming Sierra Leone into a stable and peaceful nation. Key reforms included the establishment of our National Youth Commission, which addressed the issue of the high number of ex-combatants among young people and children, and the creation of a Human Rights Commission. The National Commission for Social Action oversaw reparations, while the Anti-Corruption Commission tackled systemic corruption. The Office of National Security was set up to coordinate national security, alongside justice and security sector reforms that modernized Sierra Leone's police and military. Furthermore, establishing peace infrastructure and enacting significant legislation, including laws on gender equality and women's empowerment, children's rights, domestic violence, anti-corruption and a repeal of the death penalty, among others, were pivotal to fostering a just and equitable society. Those efforts culminated in a public presidential apology to women for wartime atrocities, acknowledging their suffering and committing to ongoing reforms. Those legislative and institutional reforms were not mere formalities

but reflected a deep-seated commitment to creating a society that respects human rights, promotes gender equality and ensures justice and security for all its citizens.

In 2020, Sierra Leone established an Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, or Peace Commission, as part of broader efforts to prevent, manage and mitigate conflicts. That policy action forms part of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16's target for building peaceful and inclusive societies and answers the Secretary-General's call in his New Agenda for Peace for conflict prevention at the national level. The Commission's unique leadership, with a woman at its helm and significant female representation among its staff and board of directors, underscores the vital role of women in national peacebuilding efforts. Its three-year strategic plan emphasizes a people-centred and community-owned and -driven approach, collaborating with local actors, including traditional and religious leaders, civil society, women, youth and people with disabilities, as well as security agencies.

The establishment of the Peace Commission was a significant evolution in Sierra Leone's peacebuilding architecture and embodies the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The Commission's comprehensive and holistic approach aims to address the root causes of conflict and build sustainable peace through inclusive, participatory processes. By engaging a wide range of local actors, the Commission ensures that peacebuilding efforts are grounded in the realities and needs of the country's communities.

The Peace Commission has made significant strides in establishing district, non-governmental and civil society organization peace coalitions and early-warning-and-response mechanisms across all 16 districts of Sierra Leone. Those initiatives involve peace monitors and mediators and prioritize gender balance and inclusivity. The Commission has also set up an early-warning-and-response situation room with a call centre operated by young women, a system that is both continental and regional, as it is integrated with the African Union and West Africa Network for Peacebuilding early-warning and early-response systems.

The Commission's preventive diplomacy efforts have successfully resolved intra- and inter-party

disputes and other societal conflicts, showcasing the effectiveness of proactive management. Establishing those mechanisms is a testament to Sierra Leone's commitment to proactive conflict prevention. In training peace monitors and mediators and creating early-warning and response systems, the Peace Commission ensures that potential conflicts are identified and addressed before they escalate. That approach not only prevents violence but also builds the capacity of communities to manage conflicts independently, fostering resilience, self-reliance and national cohesion.

One crucial lesson from Sierra Leone's experience is the importance of community-owned and community-driven conflict prevention, which helps resolve conflicts before they escalate. Capacity training is essential for the permanent functioning of peace structures. A proactive, post-conflict, gendered and inclusive lens is vital for effective conflict prevention, and staying apolitical is crucial for access and trust among all key players. Networking with national and international partners has proven to be a significant strength.

The Government and donors must recognize and support national peace infrastructure. Effective communication is critical in the age of artificial intelligence and misinformation; donors must invest more in research, communication and dialogue as crucial conflict prevention strategies.

Sierra Leone's experience underscores the importance of comprehensive, inclusive approaches to peacebuilding. The integration of gender perspectives, the involvement of youth and persons with disabilities and the emphasis on local ownership and participation are crucial elements that have contributed to the country's success. Those lessons are relevant for Sierra Leone and offer valuable insights for other post-conflict and conflict-prone countries.

The United Nations has been indispensable in ensuring that Sierra Leone enjoys lasting peace. Through its peacebuilding missions, the United Nations provided crucial security and stability during the immediate post-war period. Deployed from 1999 to 2005, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone was instrumental in disarming combatants, facilitating the return of refugees and supporting the Government in restoring authority and rebuilding institutions. The continued support of the United Nations, including the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women

and peace and security, has been, and continues to be, a key factor in Sierra Leone's peacebuilding success.

The United Nations continued to support Sierra Leone through the United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone. Those missions focused on consolidating peace, supporting good governance and promoting human rights and the rule of law. In addition, the Peacebuilding Commission has been actively engaged in Sierra Leone, providing financial and technical support for various peacebuilding initiatives, including the work of the Peace Commission.

Political will and a commitment to peace on the part of the Government are paramount for a successful peace process. Conflict prevention requires the thorough implementation of agreements and recommendations in order to avoid a relapse into violence. By sharing Sierra Leone's journey and lessons learned, we can reinforce the critical elements of effective peacebuilding and conflict prevention, while highlighting the roles that women and youth play in sustaining peace.

Sierra Leone's journey from conflict to peace offers a powerful narrative of resilience, determination and the transformative power of inclusive peacebuilding. Reflecting on its experiences, we are reminded that sustainable peace is achievable through collective efforts, strong political will and a commitment to addressing the root causes of conflict. Let Sierra Leone's story inspire and guide our efforts to build a more peaceful and just world.

Finally, I want to commend the Sierra Leone presidency of the Security Council for demonstrating a deep commitment to peacebuilding.

The President: I thank Ms. Samai for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Descardes.

Mr. Descardes (*spoke in French*): First of all, please allow me to congratulate Sierra Leone on its presidency and to thank the Council for the invitation extended to me in my capacity as Executive Director of Volontariat pour le développement d'Haïti, a Haitian civil society organization with a presence in the country's 10 geographic departments, working with and for young people and women and striving for civil society's participation in public policy in Haiti. I am particularly delighted to be briefing the Council once again, because it has ultimately continued to be

receptive to the authentic words of those with first-hand experience based on the situation on the ground. I have therefore come here to express my solidarity with the ongoing efforts to deal with conflicts between peoples and build peace in a shattered world where the threat of war is omnipresent. Conflict and war lead to mass migration, with enormous repercussions in terms of human rights, culture clashes and harmony between peoples. Worse still, conflict and war destroy capital — infrastructure capital, environmental capital and human and social capital.

We can create an initial springboard to peace at the international level. On that front we need vigilance, consultation and, above all, cooperation among States if we are to forge a civilization of peace. In that respect, the United Nations is crucial and ideally positioned to galvanize States and to design, propose, implement, monitor and evaluate a global agenda for peace. The responsibility for that rests with the United Nations system. We also want to urge the various regional and subregional organizations to develop programmes and tools able to help prevent conflicts of any kind in their regions so as to ensure our peoples' peaceful coexistence. The United Nations and regional and subregional organizations must therefore join forces to promote the peace agenda at the global and regional levels.

Beyond that, we should emphasize the importance of action at the local level in countries that are ravaged by violence and struggling to restore peace. That is the case in my country, Haiti, where the deteriorating security situation in recent years has blocked the movement of people, goods and services and has thereby reduced supplies of foodstuffs, exacerbating the food insecurity currently affecting 50 per cent of the population. Such is my country, scarred by escalating violence, with a toll of deaths and abductions in the thousands. In 2023, violence and insecurity claimed more than 4,000 lives and resulted in more than 3,000 abductions for ransom. In 2024, the violence has soared, especially in the metropolitan area and in Artibonite department, where many are injured or killed on a daily basis. The indiscriminate violence in Haiti has also resulted in a large number of involuntarily displaced persons, which now stands at approximately 600,000. Those families have been forced to flee their homes and neighbourhoods, which are plagued by violence. Most of them — 47 per cent — have fled to the south, and 37 per cent have fled to the west, to take refuge with

host families or in makeshift camps devoid of adequate sanitation and set up in public buildings, schools or any other place that gives them shelter from the rain.

The repercussions of the violence raging in Haiti affect all population groups. However, children and young people are particularly hard hit and run the risk of being severely affected if appropriate and early responses are not planned for in advance. As for women, they are the greatest victims of the violence, which takes on all forms when it comes to humiliating women, defiling their bodies and jeopardizing their future.

Amid all those difficulties, the Republic of Haiti seems to be intent on embarking on a quest to reverse the spike in violence, re-establish institutional order through unimpeachable elections and build lasting peace. To that end, social, economic and political actors concluded a new political agreement, the 3 April accord, giving rise to a two-headed executive branch and to the establishment, with the participation of representatives from across the whole political spectrum, of a Government tasked with carrying out the various transition projects. In addition, civil society, both at home and in the diaspora, is proposing a framework for action sensitive to the needs of young people and women in order to ensure that the transition succeeds. Civil society is also setting up a transition assistance group to provide non-partisan support to the two wings of the executive and to facilitate the participation of the various stakeholders in a shared quest to stabilize the country. Moreover, the Government is working to strengthen the law enforcement authorities, alongside the arrival in Haiti of the initial contingents of the Multinational Security Group Mission.

At this stage, we strongly encourage the law enforcement authorities and the Multinational Security Support Mission to pursue their joint efforts in a coordinated response to the urgent security needs of the Haitian people. Furthermore, in view of the realities on the ground, it is recommended that Haiti's peace agenda also include a programme to reduce community violence through national dialogue; an effective demobilization, dismantling and reintegration programme targeting those responsible for the current violence; a programme that promotes truth and justice; a prevention and rehabilitation programme for groups vulnerable to recruitment by armed gangs, namely, children, young people and women; and lastly, a programme to manage the acute humanitarian crisis in Haiti.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Haiti's bilateral and multilateral partners, including regional and subregional organizations, for their active cooperation. In that respect, I particularly welcome the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the Organization of American States in Haiti. The support of those two organizations for the day-to-day work of civil society organizations to promote dialogue, participation and good governance remains a good practice of innovative partnership in achieving the objectives set out in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the Haitian actors who, despite their differences, are active citizens, inspired by the need to resolve differences in a spirit of compromise and mutual understanding. In that regard, I am referring both to those whose voices are recognized and to those in the remotest corners of the country who have no recognition at all, but whose work serves as a source of balance. I tip my hat to them all.

The President: I thank Mr. Descardes for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Let me start by thanking the briefers—Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; His Excellency Mr. Bankole Adeoye, African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; Ms. Hawa Samai, Executive Secretary, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion; and Mr. Arnoux Descardes, Executive Director, Volontariat pour le développement d'Haiti, for their insightful briefings. I also thank the Peacebuilding Commission for the advisory note.

As I focus my statement today on the key issues of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, it remains fundamentally important to start by highlighting how inequality within and among States remains a major hindrance to peacebuilding efforts and sustainable global, regional and national conflict prevention. The Secretary-General rightfully mentioned in his policy brief on the New Agenda for Peace that,

“[i]nequalities and injustices, within and among nations, are giving rise to new grievances. They have sown distrust in the potential of multilateral

solutions to improve lives and have amplified calls for new forms of isolationism.”

Those words have never been truer.

At the global level, we are witnessing an alarming rise in conflict and instability, fuelled by a complex interplay of geopolitical tensions, economic disparities, climate change and the proliferation of weapons. Our world remains on fire as a result of both national and international conflicts. From civil conflicts in Africa to conflicts in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, we are faced today with complex situations that are more and more difficult for any individual State to resolve by itself. The complex and multifaceted nature of the twenty-first century’s challenges and conflicts warrants deliberate and multipronged solutions.

The New Agenda for Peace calls for renewed multilateralism and a recommitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We must ensure that global institutions are adequately equipped to address those challenges, with a focus on preventive diplomacy, robust peacekeeping and sustained peacebuilding efforts. The twin resolutions on sustaining peace adopted by both the General Assembly (General Assembly resolution 70/262) and the Security Council (resolution 2282 (2016) in 2016 offered an opportunity for the United Nations system to rethink how to prevent and address violent conflicts in a more holistic and inclusive way, focused on addressing the root causes and using an approach based on three pillars, namely, peace and security, development and human rights. The United Nations therefore has the opportunity to modernize its prevention toolkit through initiatives such as the Secretary-General’s New Agenda for Peace, the upcoming Pact for the Future and the forthcoming peacebuilding architecture review.

Since the end of the major world wars, multilateralism has provided an effective means of addressing global, regional and national conflicts. Yet today we stand at a juncture that could either usher in a strengthened and revitalized resolve to build on those gains of multilateralism or move us towards an untenable point of no return, at which isolationist policies drive deeper wedges among States and peoples and hinder our ability to protect ourselves and each other from irreversible destruction.

We must not be the generation at whose feet history will lay the blame for a destroyed planet. We owe it to our children and to their children to leave behind

a legacy of growth and of hope in themselves and in each other. Therefore, it behoves our generation to find remedies to the challenges that affect humankind, to bring an end to the suffering that plagues billions of human beings and to end poverty, diseases and, indeed, war. As Nelson Mandela aptly put it, while

“[w]e were expected to destroy one another [...] collectively [...], we as a people [must choose] the path of negotiation, compromise and peaceful settlement”.

In that respect, the Secretary-General’s New Agenda for Peace provides blueprints for our generation to leave a successful legacy. The guiding principles of trust, solidarity and universality must continue to guide us during these fragile times. Respect for human rights and international law, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the pacific settlement of disputes must remain paramount. Diplomacy must be the balm with which we mend all disputes, with prevention as the key watchword. We must promote national ownership of all strategies and actions, which should be people-centred, prioritizing the voices of the young and women. Furthermore, it is paramount that we focus on uplifting the economies of the least-developed countries by providing adequate and new opportunities for growth, fair lending schemes and international trading opportunities that are more sustainable and better adapted to today’s global market.

Turning to the national level, I would like to draw attention to the case of Sierra Leone, a country that offers valuable lessons in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as we heard from Ms. Samai. Sierra Leone’s decade-long civil war, which ended in 2002, was marked by extreme violence, human rights abuses and the collapse of State institutions. However, the nation’s remarkable recovery and sustained peace over the past two decades have demonstrated the importance of national ownership and inclusive governance in conflict prevention. Sierra Leone’s experience, as Ms. Samai highlighted, underscores the necessity of addressing the root causes of conflict, including economic marginalization, youth unemployment and political exclusion. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone were pivotal in promoting transitional justice, reconciliation and accountability. In addition, the Government’s focus on rebuilding institutions, promoting good governance and fostering peace and

national cohesion has been instrumental in preventing a recurrence of conflict.

In effect, Sierra Leone has been implementing some of the 12 recommended actions in the New Agenda for Peace as appropriate, including but not limited to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, shifting the prevention and sustaining-peace paradigm and boosting preventive diplomacy in an era of divisions. Its specific actions include expanding manufacturing and service industries and developing and improving the skill sets of young people, especially women, investing in technology and infrastructure as key drivers of sustainable development and promoting inclusivity, good governance, people-centred services and accountability. Our vision is that through dialogue and engagement on that shared development plan, Sierra Leoneans will continue to choose peace and prosperity now and in the future.

At the global level, Sierra Leone is contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security through its membership of the Security Council, among other things, and by spotlighting peacebuilding, sharing lessons learned in our peacebuilding journey as a country. On the regional front, Sierra Leone has continued to play a leading role in fostering peace and stability. Our President, His Excellency Mr. Julius Maada Bio, has prioritized strengthening regional cooperation, collaboration and dialogue in addressing socioeconomic development, peace and security through the Mano River Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union. Most recently, on 7 August President Bio made an official visit to Burkina Faso, where the two leaders discussed matters related to political dialogue and regional cooperation in addressing regional challenges, including the security situation in Burkina Faso and the Sahel. Peace and stability in the West African and Sahel regions are of particular importance to Sierra Leone, and we have also continued to be actively engaged on that matter in the Council.

The global landscape shows that one-size-fits-all approaches are ineffective in addressing diverse conflict scenarios. More localized and context-specific strategies are needed to tackle the unique root causes of conflicts in different regions and countries. In addition, in order to effectively prevent conflicts and crises, it is imperative to invest in early-action and response mechanisms that address the root causes of violence

and instability. That involves proactive and innovative measures that tackle socioeconomic inequalities, political exclusion and human rights abuses before they escalate into larger conflicts. At a time when the United Nations system is shaping the future of peace operations and special political missions, it is crucial to advocate for a cross-pillar approach that integrates human rights and actions to address the root causes at the core of those processes. That approach should ensure that lessons from past failures are incorporated into future strategies for sustaining peace and dealing with conflict-affected and post-conflict situations.

In conclusion, as we strive to build a more peaceful and secure world, it is incumbent on the Council to translate the principles of the New Agenda for Peace into concrete action on the ground. By prioritizing conflict prevention at the national, regional and global levels, we can significantly enhance our ability to prevent future conflicts, protect civilians and build lasting peace.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): I warmly welcome you, Mr. President, to the Security Council, and I thank Assistant Secretary-General Spehar, Mr. Adeoye, Ms. Samai and Mr. Descardes for their insightful briefings.

The world can avoid the human tragedy and devastating consequences of conflicts when we are able to prevent them from erupting, from escalating and spreading if they do occur and from recurring once they have ended. That approach is highly cost-effective, considering the political, socioeconomic and financial costs of conflicts. Based on the firm belief that the Security Council has a vital role to play in preventing conflict and the recurrence of conflict, Japan held an open debate in March during its presidency of the Council on the theme of “Promoting conflict prevention — empowering all actors including women and youth” (see S/PV.9574). We therefore strongly welcome Sierra Leone’s initiative to hold this open debate. Today I would like to make three points.

First, approaches to conflict prevention must be context-specific and nationally led. Strategically planned transitions that best fit the national context are more likely to prevent a relapse into conflict, especially

in cases where United Nations peace operations are being reconfigured or withdrawn. Nationally led early-warning mechanisms can detect and respond to signs of conflict before events escalate. In implementing such preventive approaches, countries should identify the root causes of conflict and sources of resilience, while ensuring their national ownership at all levels.

Secondly, institution-building is crucial for people to feel protected and be empowered to effectively address context-specific challenges. Capable institutions can ensure a secure political environment based on the rule of law, provide basic socioeconomic services and foster development. In a society equipped with such institutions, all individuals, including women and young people, will have the opportunity to unleash their full potential and not only participate in but actively initiate prevention efforts by contributing their abilities to help national institutions. When a national Government and local communities cooperate on the ground to build institutional capacity, mutual trust between the Government and the people can be strengthened, which in turn can cultivate social cohesion and resilience to advance sustainable peace.

Thirdly, we, the international community, should support nationally led prevention efforts by promoting a whole-of-United Nations approach, including at the Security Council. In the open debate in March (see S/PV.9574), many Member States encouraged the Council to incorporate a prevention perspective into its work, including with regard to decision-making processes and products such as peace mission mandates.

In that vein, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is well-suited to provide the Council with advice on prevention issues, drawing on relevant experiences of not only different United Nations bodies but also Member States, as demonstrated when Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste presented their national prevention measures at the PBC in March. While it is widely known that any Member State can request meetings in the PBC, I would like to emphasize that the Council itself can also advise the PBC on establishing its agenda.

Additionally, the Council should encourage its peace operations to fully cooperate and enhance synergies with United Nations country teams in order to efficiently support the national prevention efforts of host States.

Furthermore, we, the Member States, should collectively renew our commitment to implementing

a comprehensive nexus approach to ensuring human security at the Summit of the Future next month, as well as during the 2025 peacebuilding architecture review.

I would like to close by recalling that, on the occasion of Japan's open debate in March, 67 countries convened at the press stakeout to voice their commitment to promoting conflict prevention. I reaffirm here Japan's continued belief in pursuing that objective, together with the members of the Council and the Member States.

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett (Guyana): I take this opportunity to welcome you, Minister Kabba, to New York, and thank Sierra Leone for convening today's open debate. I also thank the briefers for their valuable insights.

Guyana aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

It was Martin Luther King, Jr. who once said that "true peace is not merely the absence of tensions: it is the presence of justice." Guyana fully embraces this statement, as the mere absence of conflict, without setting conditions to prevent it from arising in the first place or to ensure that grievances are effectively addressed, provides no guarantee for sustained peace. Despite commendable strides, significant gaps remain in our approach to conflict prevention.

The New Agenda for Peace calls for boosting preventive diplomacy and action. To do that, we must first acknowledge that conflict prevention is a more effective way of building and maintaining peace. The Council should not just be the emergency room of the world and react when conflicts arise, even though that is critical. Logically, the Council's mandate for the maintenance of peace and security dictates that prevention is also a central part of its work.

We must therefore set aside the political discomfort surrounding prevention and conflict risk prediction and utilize early-warning systems to identify risk factors and mitigation measures. By investing in localized and context-specific early-warning systems, we can better recognize the potential flashpoints and address budding or existing grievances before they escalate and erupt into violence.

The bottom line is that we cannot continue to ignore the high human and economic cost of failing to prevent conflicts, as Assistant Secretary-

General Spehar reminded us. That cost, in terms of humanitarian aid alone, is staggering. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that over \$48 billion will be needed in 2024 to assist more than 186 million people due to conflicts, climate emergencies and economic challenges, which, in many instances, intersect. A large portion of this cost is because of conflicts.

At the same time, the gap between need and commitment stands at \$36 billion and is likely to widen as conflicts increase across the globe. But while the funding for humanitarian aid continues to decline, military spending is increasing.

Against that background, I will emphasize three points.

First, Guyana underscores the need for a strategic approach, based on partnerships at all levels, bringing together Governments, international agencies, the private sector and civil society to address the development deficits, which are at the root of the great majority of conflicts. Development is prevention.

While we are mindful that States are responsible for preventing conflicts, we note that capacities and resources are not equitably distributed across the world. National efforts therefore must be bolstered by regional and international collaboration. Access to development financing is critical. The United Nations, through its agencies, funds and programmes must also prioritize prevention efforts and provide support through context-specific capacity-building and resource mobilization initiatives.

Secondly, we must ensure that our approaches are comprehensive and tackle both traditional and contemporary drivers of conflict. These are often interlinked and result from socioeconomic inequalities, political exclusion and the impacts of climate change, among others.

Climate change increasingly acts as a threat multiplier that exacerbates competition over scarce resources, leading to tensions and conflicts. Our efforts must therefore include robust international cooperation to integrate climate resilience into peacebuilding strategies where extreme weather events, rising sea levels and altered agriculture patterns present an existing or potential source of conflict.

Food security is another pressing issue in that context. As we have witnessed time and again, severe

disruptions in food supplies due to climate-related disasters, conflict and economic instability, are also key drivers of hunger and food scarcity that fuel discontent and violence. Strengthening local capacities and investing in resilient agricultural systems globally would help to build the foundation for long-lasting peace by ensuring that communities have the means to produce their own food. In all of these contexts, access to justice is critical. Providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions — at all levels — contribute to peaceful and stable societies.

Thirdly, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is well-positioned to serve as a bridge for the Security Council as it considers conflict situations or situations where countries are transitioning from conflict. The PBC has a rich body of expertise from which to draw in transforming the conditions that generate violent conflict. It can provide strategic guidance on specific country situations. We urge the PBC and the Security Council to explore options for maximizing the PBC's advisory role and strengthening prevention and peacebuilding.

Similarly, the enhanced use of data analytics for more evidence-based approaches must become the new norm at all levels, to expand support for prevention and peacebuilding and to drive innovation and impact. By expanding the toolkits available to United Nations agencies, we can better decrease the risk of conflict and crises.

In conclusion, looking ahead to the Summit of the Future and the adoption of the Pact for the Future, we must act with urgency and determination to build a world where peace is sustainable because the conditions for conflict no longer prevail. We must also remind ourselves that prevention is an integral part of our collective effort to maintain international peace and security and therefore does not fall outside the ambit of the Security Council's mandate. Let us work together, united in our commitment to preventing conflicts before they erupt and building a future of lasting peace for all.

Mr. Bendjama (Algeria): I want to thank you for presiding over our debate, Mr. President. We are grateful to Sierra Leone for bringing the subject of peacebuilding and conflict prevention back to the Chamber. I also thank Assistant Secretary-General Spehar and Commissioner Adeoye for their briefings.

We listened with particular attention to the analyses and ideas shared by Ms. Samai and Mr. Descardes.

With the proliferation of violent conflicts and threats to international peace and security around the world, it is more necessary than ever to pay greater attention to conflict prevention. In that regard, the Secretary-General, in his New Agenda for Peace, offers a timely and comprehensive blueprint for navigating today's complex challenges. In the context of the clarion call for a renewed commitment to multilateralism grounded on the principles of international law, sustainable development and human rights, I would like to touch on three points.

First, we need to strengthen governance and the rule of law. Stable and prosperous societies are founded on effective governance and firm adherence to the rule of law. While many countries, particularly those in post-conflict settings, have made commendable strides in those areas, significant challenges persist. Constitutional reform, judicial independence and the fight against illicit financial flows have been instrumental in enhancing accountability and transparency. If we are to realize the potential of good governance, we must strengthen institutional capacity, ensuring that State institutions are well equipped to deliver essential services efficiently and equitably.

Secondly, there is a need to enhance reform of the security and judiciary sectors, where effective reform is essential to laying a foundation for sustainable peace and stability. However, progress in that area has lacked consistency, and the degree of success has varied in different countries and regions. It is therefore vital to create conditions that are conducive to success for security sector reform processes, particularly from a political perspective, by learning from other successful cases. One area that is very important to the success of such processes is that of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, which represent the heart of peace efforts and of the work of building trust between actors and parties to conflicts. Nevertheless, DDR programmes face considerable challenges, particularly in terms of resources and funding, which means that it is essential for the international community to scale up its support for those efforts. The central aim in that regard is to put in place professional security forces as a concrete expression of State-building while ensuring that those forces operate in compliance with the relevant human rights frameworks.

Thirdly, there is a need to foster partnerships. Comprehensive approaches to peacebuilding by the United Nations cannot be considered comprehensive if they are not undertaken in coordination with regional mechanisms, national institutions and relevant actors. Relations with the host authorities are an essential component of efforts to develop peacebuilding strategies that reflect national priorities and reinforce the principle of national ownership. There is also a need to strengthen cooperation with regional organizations on a basis of comparative advantages so as to respond to needs on the ground. Sustaining the annual consultation between the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the African Union's Peace and Security Council can and should be a concrete entry point for aligning priorities and coordinating the efforts of the African Union and the United Nations regarding that important chapter.

In conclusion and in that context, we should start by strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission, whose unique bridging power and capability have not yet been harnessed to their full potential. As a member of the PBC, Algeria reiterates its support for that body. We should take the opportunity of next year's review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture to finally strengthen and empower the Commission.

Mr. Hauri (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank you for convening this debate, Mr. President, and I thank our speakers for their insights.

No glory is to be had in prevention. History has a long memory when it comes to conflicts and their outcomes. Monuments to victory abound. Wars averted and violence defused, on the other hand, barely register. And yet it would be more worthwhile to erect statues to the heroes who have been able to prevent or overcome conflicts and to the facilitators and mediators who have saved the lives of thousands of civilians and staved off humanitarian catastrophes. We therefore commend Sierra Leone for drawing attention to the lessons learned from its own recent history. We also welcome the fact that this debate is being held in the light of the New Agenda for Peace, which calls on us to make prevention a political priority and to develop national prevention strategies. For that reason, we are proud to have been able to join forces as part of the initiative that the successive presidencies for August, September and October launched for collective action moments ago.

Sierra Leone's lessons are invaluable, but it would be wrong to believe that prevention concerns only

those States that have experienced or are at risk of experiencing armed conflict. Rather, violent extremism and even intra-State and interpersonal violence must be confronted by everyone. A recent study carried out as part of the Pathfinders initiative on halving global violence showed that the economic costs of violence in various countries, including Switzerland, are considerable. Prevention, as explained in the New Agenda for Peace, must be tackled at the local and national levels, while drawing on exchanges of experience between different countries.

Allow me to contribute five observations to this debate.

First, prevention depends on confidence in security, justice and the guarantee of freedoms. Those are national responsibilities, anchored in international conventions and commitments. Such confidence is a powerful antidote to violence. The human rights enshrined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights more than 75 years ago also have a preventive purpose. We also affirmed that fact with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Secondly, it is important to defuse our political apprehensions about the notion of prevention and to allow ourselves to be guided by the facts. Recent evidence-based studies from a range of national contexts identify key elements for national prevention strategies. Those elements range from measures to ensure the security and independence of the judiciary and initiatives to strengthen tolerance, solidarity and inclusion, to trust in institutions — a notion that is at the heart of Sustainable Development Goal 16 — and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Thirdly, prevention is effective if it emanates from the local level. Switzerland recognizes that fact by delegating many powers to the regional and local levels and by promoting, for example, civil society initiatives on combating extremism, violence and marginalization. We can benefit from our experiences and offer mutual support. In Benin, for example, Switzerland is supporting the presidential initiative aimed at preventing the spread of armed extremist groups. The Government is adopting a holistic approach by investing in land-use planning and economic incentives to improve the living conditions of the population in the north and prevent their recruitment by extremist groups. That is just one example out of a number of national projects that deserve our support despite being far removed from the

conflicts that attract the attention of our Council, which has to deal with acute crisis situations all too often.

Fourthly, the Peacebuilding Commission is ideally suited to sharing experiences on national prevention. Thanks to its collective expertise, it can support countries that would like support in their peacebuilding processes. We welcome its advice. Not only is such advice valuable to us in the context of this meeting, but it can also guide us in all our future activities. In addition, thanks to the Peacebuilding Fund, the United Nations has a flexible instrument that can serve as a catalyst for investors with greater resources, such as the international financial institutions.

Finally, for its part, the Council must fully assume its role in prevention. First, it must make better use of the tools provided under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, which enable the Council to make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Secondly, the regional missions mandated by the Council, such as those in West Africa and the Sahel, Central Africa and Central Asia, must be capable of supporting Governments — at their request — in identifying increased risks of conflict and reducing those risks in the long term.

As the Sierra Leonean author Manratu Kamara so aptly put it, we cannot change the past, but we can choose to create a new future. With the Summit of the Future only a few weeks away, this open debate serves as a clear call to conclude an ambitious pact on prevention. Let us seize this opportunity.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Spehar, the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Mr. Adeoye, and Ms. Sawai and Mr. Descardes for their very comprehensive briefings. I would also like to thank Sierra Leone for organizing this open debate on a topic that is essential to rethinking collective security.

In that regard, France would like to commend the work accomplished by the Secretary-General through the New Agenda for Peace, looking ahead to the Summit of the Future. That event offers us the opportunity to reflect collectively on the future of United Nations tools in working to achieve international peace and security.

That collective effort should begin with reflection on the causes of crises, in order to contain their emergence more effectively. That requires investment

in all sectors, from the rule of law to education, health care, and climate and biodiversity protection. France also calls for promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping and for the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Efforts to combat poverty, create jobs and provide support for vulnerable communities as part of comprehensive development strategies are also integral to prevention.

In the event of a crisis, the international community must be capable of providing responses that are appropriate for each context. France is fully committed to adapting those tools through its support for crisis and conflict prevention, peacekeeping and reform of those tools. Peace operations remain invaluable tools, with a wide range of adaptable models, and are based on close dialogue with host countries. They seek to strengthen host States and support the capacities of local security forces. United Nations special political missions support political processes. Our collective response also involves complementarity between initiatives — I am thinking in particular of the adoption of resolution 2719 (2023) on African peace operations, which now provides us with a clear framework for joint action with the African Union.

Post-conflict situations must also receive increased international support. That is the aim of the Peacebuilding Commission and its Peacebuilding Fund, which have been active in more than 40 countries over the past 15 years. France, as one of the leading contributors to the Fund, is delighted that the Fund will now be able to benefit from long-term funding in order to provide the best possible support in transitional contexts.

In order to provide that multidimensional response to collective security, all stakeholders must be involved. First, at the national level, close collaboration among political authorities, institutions and civil society actors is essential. At the regional level, coordinated efforts can provide an effective response, and there are many examples of that. Here I am thinking in particular of the efforts of the Southern African Development Community in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Finally, at the international level, the entire United Nations system must continue to play its part, while full coordination between United Nations funds and programmes and development banks on the ground must continue to be developed.

France will continue to lend its full support to peacebuilding. Together, we can and must better prevent conflicts.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I am grateful to Sierra Leone for convening this important meeting, and I thank Assistant Secretary-General Spehar, African Union Commissioner Bankole Adeoye, Ms. Samai and Mr. Descardes for their briefings today.

In 2016, the sustaining peace framework underlined the importance of shared responsibility to address conflict. Seven years later, the Secretary General's New Agenda for Peace called for strengthened international foresight, nationally owned prevention approaches and an all-of-system approach to tackling conflict. Faced with the highest number of conflicts since the Second World War, we must work together — now more than ever — to act on those principles.

I will make three points.

First, conflict prevention should be at the forefront of our approach, to reduce the cost of conflict in terms of human lives and development gains. The United Kingdom encourages the use of national prevention approaches to address the drivers of conflict and strengthen national infrastructure for peace. Such approaches should strive to be locally rooted, inclusive, human-rights based and conflict sensitive. Embedding localized early warning mechanisms also helps in identifying risks and responding quickly, including on global issues, such as climate change.

Secondly, it is clear that underdevelopment can drive conflict, and conflict undermines development. Breaking that cycle is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Kingdom is committed to development partnerships founded on mutual respect that support countries' national efforts to reduce poverty and instability. To deliver, the United Nations system must work as one. That means mutually reinforcing humanitarian, development and peace and security efforts. For example, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts promote stability, strengthen governance and the rule of law and prevent the recurrence of violence, enabling peace and development to flourish. Ms. Samai's briefing brought out clearly how, in so many ways, Sierra Leone has been a good model of post-conflict peacebuilding.

Finally, the Summit of the Future offers an opportunity to reinvigorate our efforts. That includes

maximizing cooperation between the multiple actors — States, regional organizations and the United Nations — involved in mediation efforts. The promotion of women's full, equal, safe and meaningful participation in inclusive peace processes is indispensable. It also includes strengthening existing forums, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, to provide a constructive and United Nations system-wide space to support peacebuilding efforts. The 2025 peacebuilding architecture review will be the next important step.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): As you have heard from all our interventions this morning, Mr. President, your convening of today's open debate on peacebuilding and the New Agenda for Peace is very much appreciated. I also want to thank Assistant Secretary-General Spehar, Commissioner Adeoye and our two civil society briefers, Ms. Samai and Mr. Descardes, for their very informative briefings.

Every week, the Security Council meets to discuss efforts to end the world's worst conflicts, but it is far less common that we discuss efforts to prevent conflicts from ever starting. And that is why this debate is so welcome and so critical. Today roughly 2 billion people live in conflict-affected areas. Two billion people — that is one quarter of humankind. We heard just today, from Mr. Descardes, descriptions of more than 4,000 deaths in Haiti alone. Our charge must be to stop even one more person from experiencing the hell that is war. The good news is this: we know how to create conditions that foster peace. We also know what effective conflict prevention looks like. Now we just need to make those strategies real, especially in the countries most vulnerable to conflict, and today I will lay out five ways we can do that.

First, we must move beyond words and invest in prevention. Prevention requires long-term, comprehensive and inclusive approaches. It requires political will, effective partnerships, sustainable resources and national ownership. The development of national prevention strategies has been shown to help to tackle drivers of conflict and strengthen national infrastructure for peace. As the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace makes clear, conflict prevention saves lives and safeguards development gains. None of that work is easy, but when diverse stakeholders, including women and youth, are at the table, peace is possible. And with broad input and support, prevention strategies can reinforce State institutions, promote the

rule of law, strengthen civil society and build greater tolerance and social cohesion. Again, as Ms. Spehar reminded us today, those efforts must be people-centred as well.

Secondly, peace, development and humanitarian efforts are mutually dependent and reinforcing, and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach appropriately recognizes the importance of complementary and coordinated efforts. Since its inception in 2004, the Joint United Nations Development Programme-Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention has served as a model programme in cross-pillar collaboration. We must continue to build on that work.

Thirdly, Member States should continue to learn from each other on conflict prevention, including national prevention strategies. I want to specifically recognize Sierra Leone's engagement with the United Nations peacebuilding architecture over the years and the opportunity to learn from its peacebuilding success. Sierra Leone has made significant progress in rebuilding and strengthening post-war institutions and in addressing some of the immediate needs of its people and war victims, including through the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Peacebuilding Fund's support to Sierra Leone has included a strong focus on land conflicts, the vulnerabilities of cross-border and borderland communities and women and youth empowerment and participation. Another example of that valuable work is the Peacebuilding Commission. Under the leadership of Brazil as Chair this year and Croatia last year, the Commission continues to serve as the important forum for exchanges on lessons learned in peacebuilding, as recent engagements with Liberia, Colombia, Kenya, Guatemala, Norway and Timor-Leste have clearly demonstrated.

Fourthly, in order to be effective, conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts must be inclusive. When women, youth and other underrepresented voices can participate fully, equally and meaningfully in political and public life, policies and implementation are more likely to reflect the needs of all of society, and there are lasting and sustainable outcomes for all, as we heard from Ms. Samai's description of Sierra Leone's success.

Fifthly, next month's Summit of the Future and the subsequent 2025 peacebuilding architecture review are

prime examples of how to strengthen peacebuilding efforts, including in conflict prevention and mediation. The Summit is a chance for Member States to recommit to the Charter of the United Nations and to making key reforms, so that the institution is more representative and more fit for purpose. The Pact for the Future negotiations have already built on important recommendations in the New Agenda for Peace and have been characterized by strong and committed cross-regional support for strengthening the tools the United Nations has to sustain peace. For the architecture review, we should build on the previous review processes to advance the Peacebuilding Commission's advisory, bridging and convening roles, so that we can expand its impact and foster more consistent dialogue with regional organizations and financial institutions. And we should strive for even more ambitious and structured collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and the principal organs of the United Nations.

In parallel, the United States remains committed to the United Nations conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts through our 10-year plan for four priority countries, namely, Haiti, Libya, Mozambique and Papua New Guinea, as well as the coastal West Africa region, as we work to implement the United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability. That Strategy — and the United States strategy and national action plan on women and peace and security — complement United Nations efforts.

Too often, it can feel as if war is inevitable, especially in countries where there is widespread insecurity and inequity. But I refuse to accept that inevitability, because I know that conflict-prevention measures work. I have seen them in action. But I also know that this work requires investment and persistence, that it requires all members of society being at the table, and it requires the support of this very Council.

For our part, the United States will continue to stand behind United Nations initiatives to further inclusive conflict prevention, mediation and peace efforts. And I urge every single Member State to do exactly the same.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Sierra Leone for the initiative of organizing this open debate on the theme of conflict prevention. I thank Foreign Minister Kabba for presiding over this meeting. I thank Assistant Secretary-General Spehar, Commissioner Adeoye and the civil society briefer for their presentations.

The international situation is now undergoing profound and complex evolution. Some regions are facing intensifying turmoil with a serious spillover effect, which further underscores the importance of conflict prevention. We need to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of conflict prevention and address both the symptoms and underlying issues, in particular by tackling the root causes of conflict, and must strive to translate the international community's shared vision for peace into effective actions to realize lasting peace.

In that regard, I would like to make several points.

First, development should be prioritized. Poverty and underdevelopment are major sources of conflict. Conflict prevention must focus on poverty reduction and development. It is important for post-conflict countries and countries in special situations to leverage their resource endowments and comparative advantages in order to tap the momentum and potential for sustainable economic development and thus embark on the fast track to development. Maintaining stable economic growth and continuing to create jobs and wealth constitute the foundation for realizing long-term national peace and security.

Secondly, Government should take the lead. Effective governance is indispensable for a country to maintain long-term stability and achieve sustainable economic and social development. As countries differ in their national conditions, it is important that they should independently explore a development path that suits their own conditions, improve their governance systems and enhance their governance capacity. The Government should play its role in making up for the shortcomings of the market mechanism, investing more in infrastructure, education and health, among others, in order to enhance people's sense of well-being, thus solidifying the public's buy-in for Government policies and actions.

Thirdly, we must promote social inclusion. Only through inclusive development can we build the foundation for a lasting peace. It is important to ensure that the well-being and interests of all people are taken into account as a starting point for the rational allocation of social resources and for enhancing access to public services so that all ethnicities and social groups can participate in and benefit from development on an equal footing and all vulnerable groups with special needs and regions with development difficulties are

duly addressed. We must ensure that the human rights of women, youth and other groups are safeguarded in the context of development, with the right to life and development front and centre in our work, while other human rights are promoted and safeguarded in a balanced manner.

Effective conflict prevention requires favourable external conditions. The United Nations should ensure that it plays its role in conflict prevention and enhance its development efforts. United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions should pay attention to the needs of the countries concerned and do more practical work to promote their economic growth and sustainable development. Regional and subregional organizations should work to enhance political trust among countries of the region and promote regional cooperation. We should build an open and non-discriminatory international economic and trade environment so that more developing countries can participate fairly in economic, scientific and technological cooperation and share the development dividends.

At the same time, efforts should be made to promote the reform of the international financial architecture so that it can better meet the needs of developing countries in such areas as financing for development, climate change and capacity-building. We should uphold international justice, oppose interference in the internal affairs of other countries and oppose unilateralism and hegemony. In that regard, I wish to emphasize that the indiscriminate imposition of illegal unilateral sanctions by some countries, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law not only exacerbate the economic and social challenges of the countries targeted, but also sow the seeds for new conflicts and instability. We urge these countries to immediately lift all unilateral sanctions.

As a permanent member of the Security Council and an important member of the global South, China, in addition to promoting its own development, has always shouldered the responsibility of supporting the efforts of the global South to achieve lasting peace and sustainable development. In 2015 President Xi Jinping announced the establishment of the China-United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, which has carried out some 150 projects thus far, providing important support for the Organization's efforts to promote the Agenda for Sustainable Development and maintain international peace and security. Juncao

technology is one of the priority projects carried out under the Trust Fund. Based on the widely adaptative herbaceous plant, this technology helps farmers rapidly invest in higher value industries such as mushrooms and animal husbandry. So far, this technology has been promoted and adopted in 107 countries around the globe, bringing hope and supporting efforts to tackle problems related to poverty, food security and employment.

The inventor of Juncao technology, Professor Lin Zhanxi, who will turn 82 this year, has been engaged in related research for more than 50 years and can still be seen travelling around the world to personally engage in research and development and promotion of the technology. Two weeks ago, I travelled together with senior United Nations Secretariat officials and Professor Lin to Rwanda and Tanzania. In the Muhanga district of Southern Province of Rwanda, I met a young man named Nyambo, who transformed his life using Juncao technology. Unable to find a job after college, Nyambo came across a training course on Juncao technology organized by the China-United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund. In just five years, Nyambo went from being an unemployed young man to a farmer who now employs about 30 people and produces a wide range of products, including food, animal feed and fertilizer. He proudly told me,

“Juncao technology has not only changed my life, but has also made me a champion in my village to help others out of poverty. Thanks to it, I am now able to take care of the livelihoods of dozens of families on my own”.

A thread of fungus or a blade of grass, though very small, is loaded with significance. It symbolizes the successful practices explored by the Chinese people in furtherance of poverty reduction and eradication and epitomizes China's practical actions to support the realization of sustainable development in the global South. China is ready to work with the international community in order to help more developing countries achieve independent development, help usher in the dawn of peace in more regions and continue to build the foundation of global peace and stability.

Mr. Camilleri (Malta): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important open debate. I also thank the briefers for their valuable insights.

As the Secretary-General outlined in his New Agenda for Peace, conflict prevention requires an urgent shift in approach, in which all States recognize prevention and

sustaining peace as overarching goals that all commit to achieve. In the face of a growing number of crises, the multilateral system must offer its extensive support. That includes promoting capacity-building capabilities for the development of national prevention strategies and tackling the root causes of conflicts. More sustainable and predictable financing for peacebuilding efforts, particularly through the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), is urgently needed. Regrettably, the PBF continues to face financing shortfalls. A renewed commitment to voluntary contributions by Member States would help close those gaps and would be a direct investment in sustainable peace.

We also recognize the crucial role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in supporting peacebuilding priorities. The PBC is well placed to spot emerging threats and early-warning signs, which can be conveyed to the Council. We also welcome its active support for the youth, peace and security agenda, including through the publication of the Strategic Action Plan on Youth and Peacebuilding. The PBC can promote common analyses among United Nations missions and assist in the orderly withdrawal of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

Malta supports the development of comprehensive national prevention strategies in which security, sustainable development, human rights and gender equality are mutually reinforcing. Effective prevention requires an understanding of the gender dynamics behind the causes and consequences of conflict. Gender-responsive disarmament and arms-control measures are vital in preventing conflict-related sexual violence, since the unchecked proliferation and misuse of weapons significantly exacerbate gender-based violence. By investing in gender-responsive constitutional, judicial, legislative and electoral reforms, we can help overcome obstacles to women's participation and other structural gender inequalities. Ensuring financing for women's peacebuilding organizations and giving priority to sexual and gender-based violence prevention also foster sustainable peace. The hard-won progress made in supporting women's leadership in conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding must not be lost during transitions. Consistent with resolution 2594 (2021), transition planning should ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and the inclusion of young people. Comprehensive gender analysis and

technical gender expertise must be included throughout the transition process.

Malta stresses the importance of strengthening climate security risk analysis as part of peacebuilding efforts. Through the joint pledges on climate and peace and security, we remain committed to ensuring a comprehensive approach to peace and security. The multilateral system must be used to support the developing nations that are bearing the brunt of climate change. Innovative solutions towards climate adaptation, mitigation, resilience and capacity-building must be sought while keeping the distinct protection needs of populations in mind.

In conclusion, despite the Council's attention to peacebuilding and prevention, the number of global crises appears to be continuing to grow. The first anniversary of the New Agenda for Peace should make us reflect on the implementation of its recommendations in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future and the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome your personal participation in the Council's open debate on conflict prevention, Mr. President, and we thank all of today's briefers for their assessments.

Needless to say, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, conflict prevention is one of the main tasks whereby the Security Council works to maintain international peace and security. Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world, and in the area of conflict prevention the Council has been considerably lacking. So far the success stories are far fewer than the failures. We have always believed that effective conflict prevention should be underpinned by the need to take account of national priorities and the unique nature of each individual case, and the New Agenda for Peace points to that too. While we are far from supporting everything in the Agenda, we do concur with its conclusion that the national responsibility of States that themselves resolve issues related to their citizens' welfare and security is indeed an important factor in effective conflict prevention. After all, who knows the needs of a society and the risks it faces better than its own national authorities? Accordingly, the Governments of every sovereign State should independently decide which measures and strategies are needed for preventing conflict and violence, dealing

with adverse consequences and surmounting any other challenges in a given context.

We also believe that developing strategies at the national level for the prevention of conflict and violence is the best way to respond to a State's national interests, based on its priorities and on the principle of national ownership, and that they should not be subordinate to the interests of foreign donors. However, in itself the idea of developing such strategies is not new, and such domestic national practices have long existed, if sometimes under different names. But it is important to understand that there is no such thing as a universal approach to conflict prevention as presented in the New Agenda for Peace, just as there are no universal solutions to suit every crisis. And the Secretary-General acknowledges that in his policy brief and notes that decisions taken in that regard can be selective and fraught with double standards.

Some may not like what I am about to say, but we are accustomed to speaking the truth. Despite the fact that all countries are equal in the face of the problem of emerging conflict or violence, some States inherently put themselves above the rest and are happy to lecture others but never to listen to criticism of themselves, and that is also one of the problems of prevention today. As long as the world is divided into teachers and taught, the breeding ground for new conflicts will only grow. If we add to that the hitherto unresolved historical injustices to developing countries, especially African States, it is clear that it is much harder for the countries of the global South to deal with preventing and addressing the consequences of conflicts and crises. Even though the colonial era is supposed to have been consigned to history, our contemporary world has a huge number of ways to preserve and deepen the dependent status of States that suffered under the colonial yoke. For the sake of maintaining their disappearing hegemony, the former colonial Powers and their allies stop at nothing when it comes to ways to dominate our planet, striving diligently to impede the creation of a just, multipolar world. That also reinforces the commodity-dependent nature of developing economies, the harsh, indeed ultimately enslaving programmes of the International Monetary Fund and the resulting brain drain. All of that leads to entrenched economic underdevelopment, poverty and political instability in developing countries, and it is exactly those factors that create fertile ground for the emergence of conflicts.

Instead of development assistance of the kind and on a scale that the global South needs, those self-proclaimed masters of the world prefer to supply far greater quantities of weapons to hotspots, thereby profiting from others' misfortunes, stealing resources and appropriating others' assets. And those who stand up to such injustices can expect unilateral sanctions and unlawful restrictive measures. What kind of prevention can we even be talking about in those circumstances? This is at a time when nascent conflicts are often so obvious that it is harder to ignore a looming crisis than to sound the alarm about it. And yet many members of the Security Council prefer to engage in selective deafness and blindness and then look for anyone but themselves to blame for the next conflict.

We do not need to look far for examples of that. Was it really not obvious what would come of the unchecked eastward expansion of NATO, in violation of the fundamental agreements and principles that enabled the end of the cold war? Combined with disregard for Russia's interests and the factors threatening its security, as well as with a selective approach to human rights and freedoms and blatant double standards, over the years that created a volatile cocktail that was going to explode sooner or later, and we all realized that. What detonated the armed conflict in Europe was the 2014 anti-constitutional coup in Ukraine, which its Western backers had long been preparing and ardently supported, but after which they did their best to ignore the resulting nationalist regime's failure to respect the basic principles of good-neighbourliness and inter-ethnic peace and did not perceive its ugly neo-Nazi and Russophobic manifestations. The last chance to avoid a crisis and return the situation to a non-conflictual track came with the Security Council-approved Minsk agreements, which the Kyiv regime and the West deliberately ignored. How many times have we raised that question and that topic as a whole in the Security Council and the General Assembly and warned that it was fraught? How many times have Western countries in this Chamber said that black was white and avoided an honest conversation?

At the end of the day, we have what we have, and those who did not want to see the obvious are now holding forth, including in this Chamber today, about the importance of prevention. They are doing everything in their power to stop the formation of a just, Europe-wide indivisible security for all, pitting it against their own egotistical interests and hegemonic aspirations.

In parallel, they are also artificially inflaming the situation in the Middle East and East Asia, promoting bloc approaches and not seeking to find solutions that would meet the interests of all key players. Who will we then blame for the fact that prevention has failed?

Our Western colleagues clearly understand what that can lead to. However, they do not grasp the obvious calls for peace, stability and equality from all of those who, as Mr. Borrell Fontelles puts it, live in the jungle surrounding their “beautiful garden”. Preserving their own domination and continuing to exploit the rest of the world is far more important to them than any efforts to prevent conflict. What, then, are we really talking about today? What global, regional and national aspects of prevention can we talk about in these circumstances? We can only talk about real prevention when a more just world order is more clearly defined and when all countries in the world can enjoy equal circumstances for development and for building their own States. Let us work together to achieve that goal.

Ms. Jurečko (Slovenia): I would like to thank Sierra Leone for convening this meeting, and I would also like to thank the briefers for their valuable contributions.

This is a very timely and important topic. It is our strong belief that we need to strengthen our efforts on conflict prevention, and for that reason, Slovenia joined Sierra Leone and Switzerland in the Joint Action for the New Agenda for Peace by the Security Council presidency trio for conflict prevention, which was launched this morning.

The United Nations has a key role in paving the way from war to peace. However, the highest-ever number of ongoing violent conflicts and the record-high numbers of casualties among civilians should serve as a wake-up call for the international community to strengthen its efforts in preventing conflicts, rather than merely focusing on their mitigation. Inclusive peacebuilding that prevents the reoccurrence of violence and builds resilient societies is essential to sustaining peace. Early warning and early action remain key for timely action to prevent immense human suffering, spare entire generations from the burden of conflict and ensure that development is not hindered or set back.

It is worth repeating — in terms of human, developmental and environmental loss — that there is no better option than conflict prevention. The Security Council should do more to prevent the escalation of threats into armed conflict and to strive for their

peaceful resolution. Full respect of and compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international human rights law, are key.

Effective prevention requires comprehensive and tailor-made approaches that reflect the needs and views of the population on the ground. It should tackle the root causes and drivers of conflict and violence. No one is better placed to identify those risks than people living and working in affected communities. Meaningful engagement with civil society actors, who are usually the first to notice any worrisome changes and processes, has proved to be key. That has also been highlighted by the Secretary-General in the New Agenda for Peace. We therefore need to invest in national prevention capacities with the inclusion of the whole of society and formulate national strategies for prevention.

On that basis, I would like to make the following three points.

First, no crisis or conflict can be successfully resolved without inclusion. Gender-equitable communities are resilient, inclusive and peaceful. Removing all barriers to gender equality and women’s empowerment brings us more effective institutions. It is an investment in women and girls, and it enhances their participation in all spheres of private and political life. Women bear the burden of conflict and can be one of the main drivers of prevention.

In post-conflict settings, women must fully, equally, meaningfully and safely participate at all levels and stages of peace, security and peacebuilding processes and operations. Similarly, it is important to promote the meaningful participation of youth in those efforts, as they are the generation that will gain the most from peace and stability. It is therefore imperative to implement fully the women and peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda.

Secondly, today climate change is clearly recognized as a multiplier of threats to international peace and security, as it increases the vulnerability of societies and increases the likelihood of conflict, particularly intracommunal and intercommunal conflicts. Improving governance capacity to sustainably and effectively manage and control natural resources should be viewed as an investment in conflict prevention and a critical element of peacebuilding. That is why Slovenia strongly supports the recommendation from the New Agenda for Peace to strengthen the United Nations system’s capacity through joint

regional hubs on climate, peace and security, helping to accelerate progress and providing technical support on that agenda.

Thirdly, the Council can and must act through Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations and make better use of the tools at its disposal for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Council also needs to make full use of the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body and as a hub to convene national authorities and actors, United Nations bodies, regional organizations, international financial institutions and other stakeholders to discuss and promote nationally led prevention.

Let me conclude by saying that in an era of new and more complex threats, conflict prevention is essential, providing for stability, resilience and sustainable development in fragile societies. In that light, the Pact for the Future and the review of the peacebuilding architecture in 2025 present another opportunity to advance prevention and peacebuilding for sustainable peace.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): Mozambique welcomes Your Excellency, Mr. President, to New York to preside over this meeting of the Security Council. We commend the presidency of Sierra Leone for selecting a timely and most relevant theme for today's debate. That debate takes place amid ongoing challenges to preventing and de-escalating conflicts around the world. We wish to express our deep gratitude for the insightful briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Ms. Elizabeth Spehar; the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, His Excellency Ambassador Bankole Adeoye; the Executive Secretary of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion of Sierra Leone, Ms. Hawa Samai; and the Executive Director of Volontariat pour le Développement d'Haiti, Mr. Arnoux Descardes.

As we navigate an increasingly complex and unpredictable world, a comprehensive and inclusive approach to conflict prevention is crucial if we want to build a peaceful community of nations. Conflicts, whether they are armed in nature or involve civil unrest or prolonged political crises, have profound and far-reaching consequences for peoples and nations. They undermine development, destabilize entire regions, fracture the social fabric and cause immense human suffering, as Ms. Spehar described so well today. Some of the bleak examples of that, to name but a

few, are the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Asia — including in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Myanmar — in Africa, including in the Great Lakes region, Somalia, the Sahel, the Sudan and Libya, and in Ukraine and Kosovo in Europe. After the fact, we can be certain that countless lives could have been saved had those conflicts been prevented, and the international community would not be bearing the heavy burden of addressing the resulting dire consequences, including humanitarian crises. Preventing conflicts is therefore the foundation of conflict resolution and far more desirable than dealing with their tragic consequences. The 2018 joint United Nations-World Bank report entitled *Pathways for Peace* underscored that point and estimated that conflict prevention could save between \$5 billion and \$70 billion annually. It also noted that every dollar invested in prevention and peacebuilding would reduce the costs of conflict over time.

As former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali articulated at the end of the cold war, in his seminal 1992 document *An Agenda for Peace*, the aim of prevention must be

“[t]o seek to identify at the earliest possible stage situations that could produce conflict, and to try through diplomacy to remove the sources of danger before violence results”.

An Agenda for Peace was a prescient document. It laid a foundation for today's peacebuilding efforts. It recognized the importance of understanding conflict, early warning and preventive diplomacy. It also advocated the use of development assistance to avoid State fragility, because as we are now aware, fragility in States invites conflict. That vision of a United Nations that acts early and decisively to address situations that could lead to conflict remains highly relevant in today's anarchic world. In that context, the New Agenda for Peace outlined by Secretary-General António Guterres in July 2023 is an extremely important piece of reflection and action. It deepens and expounds, in relation to the turmoil in the world, our vision and understanding of prevention as a pillar of our collective security. It reminds us that prevention must be a political priority for all States, and that conflict can be avoided because

“[w]ar is always a choice: to resort to arms instead of dialogue, coercion instead of negotiation, imposition instead of persuasion”.

Central to the New Agenda for Peace is the call for a surge in diplomacy for peace, with a view to ensuring

that political solutions remain the primary option for resolving disputes. That includes reviewing all the tools that make up the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and better integrating prevention and risk assessment across the Organization's decision-making processes. More importantly, the New Agenda for Peace is an urgent call and a reminder of the need to uphold the Charter of the United Nations and respect for international law, which is an essential basis for a better understanding among nations.

That is an approach that Mozambique embraces wholeheartedly. Our experience and current domestic efforts in conflict resolution, reconciliation, national unity, peacebuilding and even peacemaking and peacekeeping provide valuable lessons in the importance of prevention in our own country and the broader African context. Our internal conflict, tied to a long war of destabilization, following our victorious liberation struggle, left deep scars in our social and political fabric. But it also laid the groundwork for an arduous peace process, from which we can draw useful lessons domestically, at the continental level and even beyond. The Maputo peace process, which culminated in the 2019 Peace and National Reconciliation Agreement, is a testament to the importance of national leadership, local ownership, persistent dialogue and sustained international support in conflict resolution. It has also demonstrated that preventing conflicts, addressing their root causes and avoiding relapses into conflict remain a high priority and responsibility for States.

At the Peacebuilding Commission meeting during our Security Council presidency in March 2023, His Excellency President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi of Mozambique highlighted our experience of integrating resilience-building into national development strategies, particularly in our northern province affected by terrorism. Mozambique's experience therefore vindicates the premise of the New Agenda for Peace by underscoring the need for conflict-prevention strategies that are deeply rooted in local realities, while supported by regional and global institutions. In that context, Africa's diverse conflict dynamics require tailored approaches that recognize the unique challenges and opportunities in each context. Our continental approach, underpinned by the principle of African solutions to African problems, correctly emphasizes the need to act early and decisively on emerging issues.

In conclusion, Mozambique would like to express its strong support to the Secretary-General and the Peacebuilding Commission in the implementation of the New Agenda for Peace, particularly in supporting Member States in conflict resolution and prevention.

Mr. De La Gasca (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Sierra Leone for giving us the opportunity to address the central theme of peacebuilding and prevention as the best way to ensure lasting peace. I also thank the briefers for their valuable reflections. My delegation appreciates and takes note of the assessment provided by the Peacebuilding Commission to the Security Council on this occasion.

Over the past 30 years, the United Nations has had peace agendas with recommendations that address, in general terms, the need for an integrated and coherent approach between security, development, respect for human rights and strengthening the rule of law as conditions for peaceful and just societies.

The Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace stresses that investment in prevention remains chronically undervalued. As such, it is no coincidence that conflicts are proliferating around the world, democratic constitutional order is breaking down on all continents and global geopolitical conflicts have been reactivated.

Global violence can also be explained by examining the outcome of the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024, which shows that only 17 per cent of the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have made progress. In other words, of the 169 targets that measure the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 135 are not on track.

Consequently, the premise that peace and development are mutually reinforcing has no practical application. Peacebuilding requires long-term responses, but also immediate results that restore people's confidence. In that sense, prevention is the best way to maintain peace by taking into account the needs of the population in an inclusive manner. Effective prevention requires comprehensive approaches, political will and even a social pact within countries, lasting partnerships, sustainable resources, but, above all, it requires national ownership to tailor prevention strategies to each country's reality.

Just as there is no peace without development, there is also no peace without justice. That is why

accountability through the establishment of strong institutions is indispensable for sustainable development and peace. In many cases, regional and subregional organizations are the ideal partners that can provide effective and complementary cooperation in this and many other areas.

Eliminating the root causes of conflict is critical for peacebuilding. A population that enjoys basic services, education, opportunities and employment is less likely to choose the path of violence and criminality — and, indeed, transnational organized crime — which is why the fight against poverty, inequality and exclusion must be a priority and the main challenge for democratic societies.

In that context and, above all, because of the winds blowing in my region, I stress the importance of holding inclusive, free and transparent elections for the sake of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In that regard, we recall the words of Kofi Annan in his speech entitled “The New World Disorder: Challenges for the United Nations in the twenty-first Century”, when, in 2014, he stated that one should not give the impression that the street is an alternative to elections, since the latter guarantee peaceful changeovers and democratic leadership and since democracy, despite its faults, is always a better alternative than retreat into autocracy.

Support for international and regional financial institutions is key if we are to eliminate the root causes of conflict and put prevention at the heart of the strategy, in keeping with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) consistently promotes these partnerships, carries a proactive message on the support that can be provided to countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, according to their needs, giving pride of place to preventive diplomacy and mediation. For those and other contributions, the PBC must be strengthened.

Finally, the Pact for the Future, currently under negotiation, and the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture that we will address in 2025, open an opportunity to fulfil the responsibility of the United Nations and the Council for peace, sustainable development and human rights. The words of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who was already quoted this morning, have therefore never been timelier. When he presented the first Agenda for Peace

in 1992, he referred to the need for reform in order to fulfil those responsibilities, he said,

(spoke in English)

“The pace set must therefore be increased if the United Nations is to keep ahead of the acceleration of history that characterizes this age. We must be guided not by precedents alone, however wise these may be, but by the needs of the future and by the shape and content that we wish to give it.” (S/24111, pp. 23-24)

Mr. Hyunwoo Cho (Republic of Korea): First, I would like to extend my special thanks to Sierra Leone for hosting today’s meeting on this very important topic. I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Spehar, Commissioner Adeoye, Executive Secretary Samai and Executive Director Descardes for sharing their insights.

The Republic of Korea aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Mexico on behalf of the Human Rights and Conflict Prevention Caucus.

I would now like to deliver a statement in my national capacity.

Conflict prevention and sustaining peace is a timely subject ahead of the Summit of the Future and the 2025 peacebuilding architecture review. In particular, the 2015 peacebuilding architecture review was a significant milestone. With the concept of sustaining peace, the focus on post-conflict reconstruction has shifted to a comprehensive approach that encompasses conflict prevention.

Building on the achievements over the past decade, we must capitalize on this opportunity. In that regard, I would like to make three points.

First, national ownership should be at the core of conflict prevention and sustaining peace. The Secretary-General has rightly shifted the focus of the conflict prevention paradigm towards national ownership. Nationally led conflict prevention involves not only Government priorities, but also the views of all segments of society, including women, youth and those who are most adversely affected. Such inclusive and nationally led prevention strategies stand a greater chance of success alongside the strong support of local constituencies, as well as the international community.

Secondly, the United Nations must work more closely with multi-stakeholders outside of the Organization that have a deep understanding of regional complexities and local dynamics. Cooperation with regional and subregional organizations is crucial to ensuring effectiveness and continuity in peacebuilding.

We welcome closer cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), as well as support to regional efforts, including through the financing of AU-mandated peace support operations authorized by the Security Council. Regional and international financial institutions also play a crucial role in assisting countries in their efforts to sustain peace. Studies show that economic growth significantly contributes to lowering the likelihood of conflict. As such, the United Nations should systematize and expand partnerships with financial institutions to provide more comprehensive support to countries striving to avert conflicts or their relapse.

That brings me to my third point, on the need to enhance coordination among various stakeholders based on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, a role in which the United Nations should take the lead. Overcoming silos and promoting closer coordination have been a persistent focus for decades. We have seen some notable successes, such as reinvigorating the Resident Coordinator system, the deployment of peace and development advisers and the programme of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on strengthening national capacity in conflict prevention. However, it is widely agreed that more can — and should — be done. Sierra Leone is one of the prime examples in all those aspects. Based on such successful cases, we should further strengthen the United Nations capabilities in assisting national conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. That includes strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission and enhancing its cooperation with other United Nations bodies, including the Security Council and various stakeholders.

The Republic of Korea hosted the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultations in Seoul last May to contribute to the review of the peacebuilding architecture next year. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission and a major contributor to the Peacebuilding Fund and the multi-year appeal, we will continue to constructively engage in discussions to make the peacebuilding architecture stronger and more effective.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): Brazil commends Sierra Leone for organizing this open debate. I thank the briefers for their insightful remarks.

Brazil has traditionally supported the idea that prevention is a key element of a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace. That idea is present in the New Agenda for Peace and, we hope, will be incorporated in the Pact for the Future. By addressing conflict prevention, the international community can recommit to the founding purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including Chapter VI.

Conflict is not inevitable or a self-fulfilling prophecy. It can — and should — be avoided. We must encourage and promote the shift to the prevention paradigm. Prevention not only saves lives but, in the end, it is much more cost-effective than deploying peace operations and engaging in post-conflict recovery. In order to escape the mindset of reaction and mitigation, we should be able to invest in early-warning mechanisms, preventive diplomacy, mediation and other tools we already have at our disposal.

As regions and countries have their own challenges and resources, it is crucial to find ways to support conflict prevention based on their respective priorities and specificities. The culture of prevention should be fostered locally, nationally and regionally, as we manage to provide support with respect to concrete challenges and give voice to those affected by specific risks. We should strengthen international cooperation and leverage diplomatic tools to address the many different causes of conflict, including extreme poverty and inequality, food insecurity, systematic violations of human rights, weak State institutions and instability.

The international financial institutions, regional organizations and development banks also play a crucial role in conflict prevention and resolution. Collaborative regional efforts are essential for sustainable peace. The United Nations as a whole and the international financial institutions and regional development banks must help countries that seriously engage in peacebuilding and

conflict prevention strategies under the umbrella of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

At the national level, the involvement of civil society, grass-roots organizations, Indigenous groups and local leaders and communities in conflict prevention is paramount to develop tailored strategies that address specific national challenges. Peace cannot be achieved without addressing the concerns of the people directly affected, especially women and youth. Such an inclusive approach strengthens the fabric of society and fosters a sense of ownership and resilience. A plurality of perspectives provides a broader perception of risks and helps indicate where investments are necessary.

The implementation of prevention strategies and approaches must be adequately resourced. Access to adequate financial means is key to their successful implementation. Investing in education, infrastructure and governance, for example, under a robust conflict prevention strategy, has the potential to yield long-term benefits for global peace and security. The recommendations of the New Agenda for Peace, the Summit of the Future and next year's peacebuilding architecture review can compose a vision to redefine our approach to conflict prevention. Brazil stands ready to collaborate with all Member States to create a more resilient, inclusive and proactive framework for peace.

I would like to take note of the written advice provided by the Peacebuilding Commission to this meeting, which reflects on this body's role in prevention as part of sustaining peace efforts.

Finally, I would like to remind all members that, as Chair of the PBC, Brazil will host a ministerial meeting of the Commission on 26 September on the subject of the review of the peacebuilding architecture.

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

Mr. Muhith (Bangladesh): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the group of States belonging to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), in my capacity as the acting Chair of the group.

Permit me to express our appreciation to the Republic of Sierra Leone for convening this open debate on this very important topic. I also commend the briefers for their very useful and robust perspectives on the issue under discussion.

The theme of this open debate properly aligns with the OIC principles of promoting unity and solidarity among its member States. The priority objective is born out of the understanding that peace, security and development can be more enduring and sustainable when built on a solid foundation of social, cultural and economic relations existing among the people of the OIC member States. It also underscores the OIC's overarching vision of upholding the lofty Islamic values of peace, compassion, tolerance, justice and human dignity for the promotion of sustainable development, progress and prosperity within its member States and on the global plane.

Based on those time-honoured principles, the member States of the OIC have continued to identify with the objectives and principles of the United Nations on all issues bearing on the maintenance of world peace, security and sustainable development, especially the sacrosanct principle of the pacific settlement of disputes. That partnership has become more pronounced on the various political, economic and socio-cultural issues on the agenda of the United Nations, and indeed the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

While we acknowledge the bold initiatives of the United Nations in the area of peacebuilding and development-oriented conflict prevention, we have continued to draw attention to major conflicts in our region that have posed a serious threat to world peace, stability and sustainable development. Foremost among those crises is the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and the ongoing war in Gaza, which has continued to defy decisive global action despite the heavy toll of human and material losses inflicted on the innocent civilian population of occupied Palestine.

The OIC considers the failure of this highest world body to bring about an immediate halt to the long humanitarian disaster in Palestine as a serious and unfortunate setback to its prominent role of promoting world peace and security. Accordingly, in line with the United Nations model, the OIC strategies for conflict prevention, management and resolution have been holistic and comprehensive. That is manifest in the various policy frameworks and institutional arrangements put in place for promoting sustainable peace and socioeconomic development among the peoples of the OIC region.

In addressing the nexus between conflict and development, the various OIC specialized institutions are

providing development support for national institutions in OIC member States. Those institutions operate in such fields as science and technology and innovation, food security and education and research, arts, sports and culture and trade and development. That includes other dedicated institutions with respective focuses on multilateral development, banking and finance, women's empowerment and youth development.

In furtherance of their commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals and within the framework of the proposed Pact for the Future, OIC member States have put in place policy instruments aimed at facilitating intra-OIC action and international collaboration with the United Nations on peacebuilding issues such as counter-terrorism measures, disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, anti-corruption prevention, transnational crime, drug trafficking and illicit financial flows, among others.

Furthermore, it is heartwarming that OIC member States are both contributors to, and beneficiaries of, United Nations peace operations and peacebuilding initiatives, which have contributed immensely in supporting the conflict resolution, post-conflict rehabilitation and humanitarian response actions in conflict-affected countries. That is in addition to the collaborative role of the Islamic Development Bank Group in support of fragility and post-conflict rehabilitation in some OIC member States.

It is also noteworthy that the OIC Triangular Cooperation Programme has provided needed capacity-building support and resource endowments for least developed countries and fragile States within the OIC, under the respective dedicated poverty alleviation funds, namely, the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, the Islamic Solidarity Fund and the OIC Trust Fund for Afghanistan.

In addition to what I have mentioned, the OIC regional programmes in Africa and Central Asia have been designed to accord priority to targeted intervention on the relevant programmes within the Sustainable Development Goals, including in such areas as microfinance, vocational training and food security, with an emphasis on water resilience in countries with the highest incidence of water stress.

In the area of promoting interreligious tolerance, the OIC underscores the importance of the implementation of the resolution (General Assembly resolution 76/254) that designates 15 March as the International Day to

Combat Islamophobia, including measures to combat Islamophobia. On its part, the OIC has continued to adopt resolutions condemning all acts of violence on the basis of religion or belief, with the objective of promoting interfaith harmony and preserving diversity, tolerance and mutual respect between the Islamic world and global communities. Those measures are aimed at stemming the tide of provocative acts that, in the recent past, has led to clashes among adherents of different religious beliefs.

Finally, we are convinced that the measures I mentioned will contribute to a positive outcome to this debate through the various best practices for conflict prevention, management and resolution.

I would now like to deliver a short statement in my national capacity.

The fundamental premise of the New Agenda for Peace is prevention. We believe that prevention efforts must aim to address and eliminate all factors that lead to deprivation, discrimination and exclusion. And they must involve all members of society. While prevention is essentially a nationally led process, the effective implementation of preventive measures requires support and cooperation by all partners. Allow me to share a few points.

First, conflict prevention measures are often ingrained in existing national policies in various forms, including in national development policies. What is important is to develop capacity at the national and local levels to implement those measures in a coordinated and integrated manner so that the underlying drivers of conflict and violence can be eliminated and peace and development can be sustained.

Secondly, national efforts to prevent conflict must be backed by international institutions. In that regard, the role of United Nations entities, especially those supporting Member States on the ground, including the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), are critical. Through its experience and expertise in supporting national peacebuilding efforts, the PBC can continue to guide the United Nations and Member States themselves in their national efforts to prevent conflict.

Thirdly, the role of regional organizations in dispute resolution and conflict prevention is critical. We have seen successful regional efforts to build, keep and sustain peace in various regions, including Africa. We are also encouraged by the commitment of the Association of

Southeast Asian Nations in supporting efforts to end the conflict in Myanmar by facilitating constructive dialogue among all parties. As a neighbouring country bordering Myanmar, Bangladesh has long been affected by the consequences of the country's internal conflicts and its policies of persecution of minorities, such as the Rohingya, leading to their recurrent forced displacement into Bangladesh. We believe that stronger and more accountable regional initiatives could complement the efforts of the international community, including of the Security Council, in building peace in Myanmar.

Fourthly, enhanced investment in the youth, peace and security agenda is critical in our efforts to chart a safe and prosperous future for all. Young people have the power to challenge the systemic problems of society and bring about revolutionary changes in the system. Their productive energy can be utilized to eliminate poverty and exclusion and build peaceful societies. In Bangladesh in recent time, we have seen a revolution led by young people, many of whom made the supreme sacrifice to establish their right to be heard and to be included in the affairs of the State. Our new interim Government, led by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, is youth-inclusive and aims to build a country that is free from discrimination, which is the most effective investment in prevention. As our Head of Government, Mr. Yunus, has said, the task is huge, but doable, with the support of the people and the international community.

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

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): We thank Sierra Leone for convening today's timely open debate, and we thank all the briefers for their invaluable inputs.

Allow me to pay tribute to the late Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who was the first to officially introduce his landmark report *An Agenda for Peace*. He considered peacebuilding as an essential complementary phase of response to conflicts, which aims at strengthening and solidifying peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. That paradigm shift was further echoed by the current Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, in issuing the New Agenda for Peace, which recognizes the need for a peace continuum based on a better understanding of the underlying drivers of conflict and a prioritization on investing in prevention and peacebuilding. Accordingly, allow me to share the following points.

First, Egypt praises the Secretary-General's focus in the New Agenda for Peace on the need for a peace continuum that prioritizes investment in prevention. For that to happen, we underscore the imperative of a paradigm shift from crisis management to a comprehensive, coherent and adequately resourced approach across the peace and development continuum.

Second, the New Agenda for Peace includes several positive elements that are aligned with Egypt's positions, particularly when it comes to partnership with regional and subregional actors, and it stresses the importance of securing predictable resources for regional peace support operations, which was reflected in the adoption of the landmark resolution 2719 (2023), on the financing of peace support operations led by the African Union (AU). We look forward to agreeing on the modalities of its implementation in the near future.

Third, in the same vein, we affirm the importance of enhancing the partnership between the United Nations and the AU, including through the AU Peace and Security Council, in addition to the AU Centre for Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development in Cairo after its full operationalization. Egypt is ready to play its bridging role in that regard, under the leadership of His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of Egypt, and the leader of post-conflict reconstruction at the AU.

Fourth, it is commendable that the New Agenda for Peace recognizes the need for investing in prevention and expanding the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, especially its convening, bridging and advisory roles, as well as the provision of adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding, which should strive to achieve progress on all financing streams. We reaffirm the centrality of peacebuilding efforts to the work of the United Nations throughout the peace continuum, while ensuring while ensuring national ownership in our prevention efforts.

Fifth, in that regard, Egypt would like to share its concern over the little progress made on sustained financing for prevention and peacebuilding. It is important that we seriously consider supporting peacebuilding options in the light of the current international challenges, in which financial allocations for peacebuilding programmatic activities are very low. We therefore call upon all Member States to engage constructively in the consideration of options related to assessed contributions, including the Peace Building Fund (PBF), in which we made a great achievement

through last year's resolution (General Assembly resolution 78/257) to support the PBF with \$50 million from assessed contributions. We are glad that we are about to conclude the relevant update of the PBF terms of reference to ensure the smooth implementation of that landmark decision.

Sixth, it is important to strengthen the interdependence between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities in a way that contributes to addressing the root causes of armed conflicts and strengthens the peace, security and development systems.

Seventh, it is important to enhance the role of youth and women in peacebuilding and post-conflict efforts. The empowerment of women and the inclusion of youth in various fields must be translated into executive policies to overcome the economic, social and security challenges.

Last but not least, in that context, we cannot ignore the fact that respecting the rule of law and exercising the right to the self-determination of people under foreign occupation are indispensable to preserving and promoting peace and security in all aspects, as they will contribute to ensuring the validity of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles and norms of international law.

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

Mr. Nasir (Indonesia): I thank Sierra Leone for convening this meeting, and I also thank all the briefers for their insights.

This open debate is timely as we prepare for next year's review of the peacebuilding architecture. The brutal reality of conflict is claiming more lives than ever, with a 70 per cent surge in civilian deaths in 2023, the highest number of conflict-related deaths in three decades. At a time when peace is becoming more elusive, we need to ask ourselves: have we really given peace a chance? Have we done enough to invest in peace? And is the current multilateral system still fit for purpose? Those questions should guide us in our quest to improve the peacebuilding architecture, an architecture that not only prevents the relapse of conflicts but also lays the foundation for sustainable peace and development, one based on partnership and solidarity, human dignity, prevention and reconciliation. In that context, allow me to highlight three points.

First, peacebuilding must be home-grown. National ownership is the bedrock of any successful peacebuilding strategy. It also allows relevant national stakeholders to take a holistic approach in addressing the root causes of conflict. That includes strategies from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction. The United Nations could also play a crucial role in supporting countries by promoting partnership and providing resources and expertise.

Secondly, on strengthening regional collaboration to sustain peace, the hard-won lessons learned in one region can serve as a guide for others. We therefore welcome regional dialogue in preparation for the peacebuilding architecture review so that we can tap into the potential of regional organizations in shaping peace, including as the first responders in providing support to peace and as an instrument for preventing a relapse of conflicts. In our region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has a wealth of experience to share.

Thirdly, on unlocking the potential of collaborative partnerships among relevant stakeholders, successful peacebuilding efforts require concerted efforts across all United Nations agencies, backed by robust partnership and the international financial institutions for the necessary funding and support. The Peacebuilding Commission must be effectively geared to promote coherence of actions. That will ensure that all peacebuilding efforts contribute to a country's long-term development and break the cycle of conflict.

A strong peacebuilding architecture will contribute to strengthening the multilateral system as a whole, particularly in bringing peace and development to all countries, as outlined in the New Agenda for Peace. Rest assured of Indonesia's commitment to that goal.

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

Ms. Güç (Türkiye): We thank Sierra Leone for organizing this timely debate.

Peacebuilding has evolved into a crucial pillar for both conflict prevention and post-conflict recovery. We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General to further integrate peacebuilding into the United Nations system through the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) has been instrumental in establishing peacebuilding as central to

the future role of the United Nations in ensuring global peace and stability.

It is evident that national ownership and robust partnerships extending beyond the United Nations are critical to achieving success and sustainability. No single organization can effectively address the ongoing challenges alone. Therefore, strengthening partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, as envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is indispensable.

A significant portion of the Council's agenda is dedicated to addressing peace and security challenges in Africa. We were pleased to observe the deepening partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. In case of Libya, our primary objective remains achieving a sustainable political solution while preserving the stability, territorial integrity and unity of the country. To that end, we encourage Libyan stakeholders to engage in a solid and constructive dialogue between the east and the west. It is vital that the international community act in unity and supports that effort.

The ongoing situation in Gaza remains a grave concern. This unspeakable humanitarian crisis continues to escalate, with devastating impacts on civilians, particularly women and children. The cycle of violence serves to underscore the urgent need for an immediate ceasefire and a political solution based on the two-State vision. We call on the international community to intensify efforts to achieve a sustainable and just peace in the region.

Terrorist groups and entities thrive in conflict zones. They are among the principal factors that exacerbate conflicts, utilizing those areas to recruit and train members, acquire weapons and finance their activities. Effective control over the transfer of small and light weapons and minimizing the risk of diversion to terrorist groups are critical for conflict prevention. As first responders, States bear the primary responsibility in that regard. The recent erosion of international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation frameworks, coupled with ongoing conflicts in various regions, creates an environment conducive to attempts by terrorist organizations to acquire conventional and more sophisticated weaponry.

When addressing the topic of preventing conflicts and sustaining peace, we must not overlook the root causes of conflicts, which often lie in poverty,

inequality, discrimination and severe violations of human rights. Alarming trends in racism and hate speech, particularly based on race and religion, are on the rise in certain regions. Given that many conflicts are taking place in Türkiye's wider neighbourhood, peaceful conflict resolution and mediation are priorities of Turkish foreign policy. As the co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Mediation, Türkiye continues to actively engage in mediation efforts to prevent conflicts and sustain peace. Furthermore, Türkiye is a member of the Group of Friends of Sustaining Peace, underlying our belief that the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders is key to prevention. We also support efforts to provide the peacebuilding architecture with adequate financial resources. The Peacebuilding Fund has achieved significant results and continues to play an important catalytic role.

Today we need a multilateralism that is open, constructive interaction, new ideas and diverse perspectives that can produce tangible solutions. It is in that context that we welcome the Secretary-General's call for working on a New Agenda for Peace. We believe that his recommendations, including rebuilding trust among nations, deploying tools for the pacific settlement of disputes and boosting preventive diplomacy through an innovative use of multilateral instruments, merit special attention. We also look forward to the Summit of the Future as an opportunity to mend eroded trust and renew our commitment to multilateralism.

In conclusion, we once again call on the international community to demonstrate solidarity and political will so that we can work effectively to sustain peace and create a world where future generations are spared from the scourge of war. As a long-standing contributor to peacebuilding, Türkiye stands ready to continue to do its part.

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

Mr. Pretterhofer (Austria): Let me extend my gratitude to Sierra Leone for convening this important high-level open debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Austria aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union.

We thank the briefers for their remarks.

The Secretary-General is very clear in his New Agenda for Peace: we must invest more in prevention.

As the Secretary-General rightly noted, prevention saves lives and safeguards development gains. Austria fully supports that. Investing in prevention and peacebuilding is a shared responsibility and a duty we must all embrace. As a way to contribute to prevention and peacebuilding, the Austrian Foreign Ministry set up a mediation facility four years ago and has undertaken various international mediation projects under that umbrella. The cornerstone of our approach to prevention is fourfold, namely, inclusivity, tailored solutions, synergy and partnerships.

First, Austria advocates for a more inclusive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, based on the full and effective promotion and protection of human rights. Conflict prevention is about constructing just and inclusive societies: the bedrock for sustainable peace. That means forging peace through open societies where the full, effective and meaningful engagement of women and youth is not just encouraged but ensured. That is enshrined in the landmark women and peace and security resolution 1325 (2000) and the youth, peace and security resolution 2250 (2015) and the respective subsequent resolutions. Austria increased its multiyear funding to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund from €5 million to €9.7 million through to 2025. We also commend the active engagement of peace and development advisers. Similarly, Austria believes that true effectiveness in conflict prevention and peacebuilding must be rooted in national, local and community-led interventions. The active involvement of civil society, supported through mechanisms such as the Peacebuilding Fund, is essential.

Secondly, prevention concerns all of us. Just as human rights are universal, all countries need to do their share to build peaceful societies. It is therefore crucial that the Pact for the Future emphasizes and strengthens the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, while highlighting the universality of prevention and the importance of national prevention strategies.

Thirdly, in tackling today's complex conflicts, we must accept that no single solution fits all scenarios. Peacebuilding must adopt a holistic approach, while recognizing its connections to issues such as climate change, the lack of the rule of law, poverty and socioeconomic factors. As such, effective conflict

prevention and peacebuilding have to address the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and the climate-security nexus. That is why Austria recently joined the Climate and Security Mechanism. We believe that the Security Council must do better at integrating climate security, socioeconomic factors and human rights into its workstream and resolutions. Hence system-wide coherence is crucial. The Security Council must strengthen its links with other intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations, particularly the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council. Furthermore, we should deepen our collaboration with other United Nations entities such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Human Rights Council on issues related to peace and security. We hope to see those points addressed in the upcoming 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

Conflict prevention and peacebuilding require strong partnerships. The United Nations must foster even stronger cooperation with regional organizations to better build regional and comprehensive prevention strategies. In that regard, we hope that the United Nations, Member States and regional organizations will intensify their partnerships in the future. The Pact for the Future should serve as a key platform to outline concrete and innovative strategies to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including through an annual meeting with regional organizations convened by the Secretary-General.

To conclude, let me emphasize that Austria will continue to be a strong supporter in ramping up our efforts in preventing conflicts, fostering effective disarmament and arms regulation and building peaceful, inclusive societies. As a candidate for the Security Council for the period 2027 to 2028, we will gear up our efforts in working alongside partners in achieving peace and prosperity for all.

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

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.