



Security Council

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Letter dated 8 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, as well as the statements delivered by Their Excellencies Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa; Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Niger; Mr. Kaïs Saïed, President of Tunisia; Mr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, National Security, Legal Affairs and Information of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Mr. Wang Yi, Special Representative of President Xi Jinping, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China; Ms. Sophie Wilmès, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belgium; Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam; Mr. Urmas Reinsalu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia; Mr. Heiko Maas, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany; Mr. James Duddridge, Minister for Africa of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Mr. Febrian A. Ruddyard, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Multilateral Affairs of Indonesia; and by the representatives of the Dominican Republic, France, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, in connection with the video-teleconference on “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations: African Union” convened on Friday, 4 December 2020. A statement was also delivered by His Excellency Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo, President of Somalia.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter from the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of Security Council members dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jerry Matthews **Matjila**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Statement by the Secretary-General**

[Original: English and French]

Let me begin by congratulating South Africa on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December and on its leadership as Chair of the African Union (AU). I also welcome my dear friend Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, who is with us today.

Cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the African regional economic communities and other regional mechanisms has never been stronger. Our joint work has gained in depth and scope, particularly since we signed the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security in 2017 and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2018. This partnership is deeply rooted in the principles of complementarity, respect and African ownership, as well as the conviction that no single organization or State can overcome the challenges of our time on its own.

Since the beginning of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the African continent has shown exemplary leadership and solidarity. I commend the African Union and its member States for spearheading a rapid and coordinated response and for establishing a strong partnership between the World Health Organization and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. The African Heads of State and Government presented a compelling vision for peace and security through the flagship Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative and the Lusaka Master Roadmap 2016.

The United Nations has sought to support these initiatives in a number of concrete ways, including through technical assistance to mediation and disarmament capacities, such as the joint implementation of the African Amnesty Month initiative in seven countries in 2020; partnering with the African Union to create the African Women Leaders Network and its 25 national chapters; and investment in youth-empowerment activities, including peace education. I am also pleased to see the expansion of the operational support role of the United Nations, which is becoming not only a partner but also a service provider for the African Union.

With the support of United Nations special political missions and peacekeeping operations, our partnership has also yielded significant results at the country level. In Libya, the parties signed a ceasefire agreement under the auspices of the United Nations, and political talks have resumed. I am grateful for the continued and close engagement of the African Union in support of the ongoing dialogue processes, including as a Chair of the Security Working Group of the International Follow-up Committee. The Contact Group of the African Union High-Level Committee on Libya, chaired by the President of the Republic of the Congo, continues to be an important platform for facilitating the joint engagement of the United Nations and the AU in Libya. We look forward to continuing our cooperation, especially in supporting the African Union's organization of a Libyan national reconciliation conference.

In the Central African Republic, the United Nations has supported the establishment of the African Union Military Observers Mission, and we have seen progress in the implementation of the peace agreement brokered by the African Union with our support. The United Nations has also reinforced its engagement with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), following the establishment of the new ECCAS Commission in September. This stronger collaboration was exemplified by the recent joint visit to the Central African

Republic of senior officials from the United Nations, the AU and ECCAS in support of the country's efforts to consolidate peace. Our joint work and close collaboration will be critical in ensuring peace consolidation through the organization of free, credible and fair elections within the constitutional timelines.

The United Nations and the African Union continue to cooperate in South Sudan, where the ceasefire has mostly held, and where improved political stability across the country has generated cautious optimism. We are also working closely with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), including in South Sudan. Through my Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, the United Nations has also supported IGAD in the development of its regional response strategy for addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are also working hand in hand in the Sudan, where a new peace agreement between the Government and armed movements is the culmination of a year of constructive talks and a testament to the commitment of the parties to peace. It opens a new chapter, particularly for people living in Darfur, South Kordofan and the Blue Nile.

In Somalia, beyond our support for the African Union Mission in Somalia, we are supporting the Government on extending State control to additional areas and preparing for new elections.

Our two organizations also worked with the Economic Community of West African States in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea before and after elections and, in September, joined efforts to facilitate the establishment of the 18-month transition in Mali.

Together with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Office of the SADC Facilitator, we are supporting political and institutional efforts towards the implementation of Lesotho's comprehensive reform process. We are also cooperating with SADC to facilitate the reconfiguration of the Force Intervention Brigade and the joint strategy on the exit of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Despite these positive steps, the challenges loom large. New conflicts are erupting, the climate emergency is raging and the COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating fragilities and disproportionately affecting women and the most vulnerable. As in other parts of the world, trust is being eroded, underscoring the importance of good governance and respect for human rights, which are not just essential to the continent's development but are also crucial to peace and security. Dealing with the pandemic must not take attention away from maintaining peace and security in Africa.

As was highlighted in the high-level dialogue with regional and other organizations that I convened a few days ago, we see growing restrictions in civic space and increasing threats to minorities around the world. Furthermore, terrorist and violent extremist groups are exploiting the uncertainty created by the pandemic, as we are observing in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin.

I welcome and support the efforts of United Nations entities aimed at providing assistance to Member States in countering terrorist and related threats in various African countries. Enhanced cooperation with the African Union Commission and its African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism, along with regional bodies on the continent, is crucial in that regard. As an example, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism is working with the African Centre to develop options as part of a suite of United Nations inter-agency projects to assist Mozambique. But more must be done. I reiterate my appeal for African-led peace and counter-terrorism

operations to receive Security Council mandates pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter, as well as predictable funding guaranteed by assessed contributions.

I want to reaffirm my full support for the African Union's initiative, led by South Africa, to resolve grievances through dialogue. More broadly, I repeat my appeal for a global ceasefire. I also thank Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat for his call to all belligerents to stop fighting, allow access for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and enable political solutions.

Earlier this year, I commissioned an independent assessment of the United Nations-African Union partnership and the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union. It revealed a broad consensus that a strong United Nations-AU partnership is essential to addressing the range of peace and security challenges in Africa. Moreover, the United Nations-AU partnership is one of the most important relationships in the domain of international peace and security and a cornerstone of multilateralism. The process highlighted significant progress in our partnership, both in mission and non-mission settings, but also acknowledged areas for improvement.

Our two organizations and our action in Africa would benefit from a number of concrete steps: the further institutionalization of our cooperation at every level, since a sustainable partnership must be grounded in trust between the two organizations, which will also require a stronger collaboration between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council; ensuring the predictability of financing African Union peace support operations through assessed contributions; and doing much more to involve and engage women and young people in the peace and security agenda.

To foster resilience and prepare for the challenges of the future, we need to build more networked, inclusive and effective institutions to prevent conflict, reinforce good governance and boost service delivery. In short, we need a renewed multilateralism.

As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we have embarked on a deep reflection on how we can best move our common agenda forward. I count on the African Union to help lead the way. As Nelson Mandela said, "It always seems impossible until it is done." May his wisdom, compassion and example help us all and inspire us all to get it done.

Annex II

Statement by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat

I would like to thank President Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa and Chair of the African Union (AU) for inviting me to contribute to this high-level debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with a specific focus on the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union. I would also like to congratulate him on his country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

I also wish to thank South Africa, as one of the three African non-permanent members of the Security Council, for its strong leadership and coordination together with its two fellow African members in advocating African positions at the Council, in collaboration with the AU Mission in New York, the AU Peace and Security Council and the AU Commission at large. Bearing in mind that about 70 per cent of the agenda of the Security Council is devoted to issues of peace and security related to the African continent, it would seem obvious that Africa should have a permanent presence in the Security Council. This, however, is still not the case.

Enshrined in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the AU Constitutive Act and, indeed, article 17 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union is not only a necessity for both organizations but a prerequisite for the implementation of our respective mandates of promoting and upholding international peace and security. The signing in 2017 of the United Nations-AU Joint Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security by myself and Secretary-General António Guterres has further boosted our strategic partnership and cooperation, with a view to promoting Africa's ownership and leadership of peace processes on the continent. The subsequent signing, in 2018, of a similar framework agreement to harmonize the complementarity between the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the AU's Agenda 2063 was in keeping with the enhanced partnership between our two organizations to accelerate the development agenda for Africa, in recognition of the nexus between peace, security and human development.

Since 2007, in practice, the annual consultative meetings between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council have been key to strengthening Council-to-Council engagement. Meanwhile, on the ground, the two organizations have also increased operational cooperation and coordination by working hand in hand to support peace processes in the Sudan, Mali, the Central African Republic, Darfur, Somalia and other areas. In that regard, I want to highlight the strong support and commitment to the strategic United Nations-AU relationship displayed by Secretary-General Guterres.

For its part, the African Union is deepening its cooperation with the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, particularly with respect to consolidating our activities to maintain regional peace and security. Similarly, we continue to make joint efforts to ensure that the implementation of the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative works in tandem with the objectives that form our vibrant pan-African economic integration agenda.

But the Africa we want also believes in the principles of international cooperation in our increasingly multipolar world, with a view to addressing common challenges as one global community. In this regard, the United Nations-AU strategic partnership is a blueprint for multilateral cooperation. We have entered into similar strategic partnerships with the European Union, and we hope to reinforce cooperation

with other key member-driven organizations, including the League of Arab States, which has a large African membership, in order to strengthen strategic cooperation and better address shared threats to our common peace and security.

In that regard, I will continue to urge the international community, in particular the Security Council, to acknowledge the principle of burden-sharing for the maintenance of global peace and security. This should include the provision of predictable, sustainable and flexible financing for AU-led or -authorized peace support operations, based on the principle of the use of United Nations assessed contributions.

As we seek new ways to reinforce stronger multilateral cooperation, we must also address the contradictions in the Council that hamper, and sometimes prevent, the resolution of conflict in Africa. I wish the Council fruitful deliberations.

Annex III

Statement by the President of South Africa, Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa

It is an honour for South Africa to preside over this meeting as our term as an elected member of the Security Council draws to a close. During this year we have had the privilege not only of serving on the Security Council but also of chairing our continental body, the African Union (AU). We welcome the opportunity in this meeting to reflect on the efforts of the Council to resolve conflicts on the African continent and to further enhance the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations.

Over the past decade, the United Nations and the AU have deepened their relationship, with partnership agreements on peace and security, development and capacity-building. The most advanced cooperation between the two organizations is on peace and security, as provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirmed in many outcomes of the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements.

We are witnessing in Africa a continent that is taking responsibility for the complex challenges to its peace, security and development. It is working with the United Nations and other international partners in supporting African-led solutions to problems on the continent.

While the United Nations, through the Security Council, has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, we have to acknowledge the important role played by regional organizations, such as the African Union, to address threats to peace and security.

The African Union has recognized the nexus between peace and development. In that regard, it has aligned the African Peace and Security Architecture with Agenda 2063, the blueprint for Africa's development. The approach aims to prevent and end conflict through dialogue, mediation, peace support operations and a sustained focus on post-conflict reconstruction and development.

The invaluable role of the United Nations in support of those African-led initiatives cannot be overstated. We underline once again the need for the United Nations and the African Union to expedite deliberations to ensure that AU-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council are financed through United Nations assessed contributions.

The African Union is determined to silence the guns on the continent. We have made significant gains towards the achievement of this necessary goal, as evidenced by ground-breaking peace agreements in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, the Sudan and, most recently, Libya.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union must be flexible and strategic in order to confront the growing threat of terrorism, transnational organized crime, the illegal exploitation of Africa's natural resources and illicit financial flows.

We would like to recognize the important role played by African Union and regional-led peace operations on the continent, which have paved the way for United Nations peacekeeping in the most difficult of circumstances. They include the operations in the Central African Republic and Mali, which have set a precedent for regionally led peace operations transitioning into United Nations peacekeeping missions.

The novel African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur epitomizes the effective cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in protecting civilians and facilitating the path to peace. The African Union Mission in Somalia remains important in contributing to stabilization and the advancement of peace in Somalia, and we call on the United Nations and international partners to continue supporting its efforts.

We commend the bravery of the African women and men involved in United Nations peacekeeping efforts to protect civilians and support peace processes in Africa, as well as the contribution made by peacekeepers from outside the continent, whose dedication to the African cause is a demonstration of remarkable and selfless solidarity.

Through our cooperation, we also need to address the root causes and drivers of conflict in Africa, including development and governance issues. We must look at all the factors that may impede the realization of a peaceful and prosperous Africa. Despite the significant gains that we have made, we remain concerned about the immense humanitarian challenges the continent faces as a result of ongoing conflicts and the coronavirus disease pandemic. South Africa supported the Secretary-General's call earlier this year for a global ceasefire to respond to the humanitarian challenges posed by the pandemic, and we are heartened to note that his call has resulted in progress on some protracted conflicts on the continent. The pandemic has shown that solidarity and cooperation through multilateral action are the most effective means to confront a common threat.

This year is significant for women and girls across the world. This year we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and marking 20 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Those are cardinal policy frameworks that compel the international community to spare no effort in ensuring that women assume their rightful place in promoting and preserving international peace and security. We welcome the role played by women and youth in the prevention and resolution of conflict and peacebuilding. We are deeply concerned about the targeting of women and children, often through sexual violence used as a tool of war, terror and intimidation. Addressing that scourge is the litmus test for how effective we are in protecting our populations from the ravages of conflict.

Furthermore, we remain concerned about sexual exploitation and abuse by those who are charged with the protection of civilians. That is utterly unacceptable, and we must have no tolerance for such acts. We need to further strengthen the strategic cooperation between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. International peace, security and development can be achieved only if they are built from the collective efforts of all actors, drawing on the respective strengths of every one of the building blocks of the multilateral system.

I must applaud Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, a country that is part of the African diaspora, together with the African countries in the Security Council, namely the Niger, Tunisia and South Africa, for working jointly to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the AU for the peaceful resolution of African conflicts.

We will be taking this work forward when the African Union holds its summit on the Silencing the Guns initiative at the fourteenth extraordinary session of its Assembly, two days from now. I am certain that our deliberations today in the Security Council will make a valuable contribution to the success of the summit.

Annex IV

Statement by the President of the Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou

[Original: French]

At the outset, I commend this important initiative taken by His Excellency Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and current Chairperson of the African Union Commission. His leadership of the Security Council during the month of December will, I have no doubt, meet the expectations of Africa and the international community.

I also congratulate Germany, Belgium, the Dominican Republic and Indonesia as their successful terms on the Security Council come to an end.

This meeting is of major interest for the Niger, and undoubtedly for the other countries of the African continent and their partners as well, as it focuses on the current state of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU). We are certain that our high-level discussion and exchange today will be highly valuable in terms of effectively addressing the challenges facing our continent.

As everyone knows, Africa has been a priority item on the Security Council's agenda in recent years. Current statistics indicate that more than 50 per cent of the Council's agenda and 70 per cent of the peace and security situations addressed under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations concern African countries. That is a sad reality that calls for special attention and commensurate cooperation, as well as decisive and coordinated action, on the part of the African Union and the United Nations in the fulfilment of their mandates with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and the development and capacity-building of African countries in all areas.

We therefore welcomed the outcome of the fourteenth annual joint consultative meeting between the members of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, presided over by the Niger in September 2020, as well as the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/860) on cooperation between the two bodies through the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. Those reference instruments have led to a better understanding of the root causes of conflicts by highlighting the role and importance of the regional actors that already possess the mechanisms necessary for dealing with crisis situations.

In that regard, I would like to commend Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, for his efforts to establish a peace and security architecture specific to the African Union in accordance with the Lusaka Master Roadmap 2016. I also want to praise the very positive role played by the Economic Community of West African States in the area of peace and mediation in the region. All this is to say that the conditions for applying the principle of subsidiarity in carrying out and coordinating peace and security operations on African soil exist, and only in this way will we meaningfully give form to the concept of African solutions to African problems, which we support.

While the negotiation of various agreements under the auspices of United Nations, the African Union and other partner organizations and institutions is laudable, it is clear that such cooperation has not always been effective. As a case in point, the Libyan crisis has exposed the differences in the roles and responsibilities of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. The opposition of the Niger and other neighbours of our brother country Libya to any

intervention there has unfortunately gone unheard. Today Libya is facing chaos, which has led to the spread of arms and mercenaries and to instability in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin, as well as an unprecedented humanitarian and migration crisis.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has reminded us of the urgent importance of reforming the current system of global governance by enabling it to better mirror the fundamental principles of the Charter. The Niger therefore believes that the African continent must assume its rightful place within the organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and unquestionably in line with the aspirations of other regions of the world.

The cooperation between our two organizations should also take into account all factors that might constitute a threat to international peace and security or undermine our efforts in achieving them. It is therefore essential to ensure operational collaboration between regional organizations and the United Nations, which would lead to the establishment of development agencies focused on the primary goal of tackling the root causes of security problems in crisis-affected areas. Our responsibility is not just to resolve such security issues but above all to prevent them too.

The framework of our joint action should enable us to take into account new threats to peace and security such as pandemics, terrorism, the impact of climate change, cybercrime and organized crime, including through a new concept of United Nations operations. The same architecture should also enable the United Nations and the African Union to accord special attention to issues concerning young people, women and children. To that end, I would like to propose four suggestions.

The first concerns a new concept of peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations.

The second is the establishment of a mechanism to ensure the sustainable financing of peacekeeping operations led by the African Union or subregional organizations, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

The third concerns the strengthening of cooperation between the two Councils by emphasizing the coordination of their agendas and goals through an increase in the number of regularly scheduled meetings.

The fourth, as I mentioned earlier, is to ensure that African countries play a central role in the discussions and decision-making process of the Security Council, as African issues constitute the majority of the subjects it deals with.

Annex V**Statement by the President of Tunisia, Kaïs Saïed**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, allow me to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on the assumption by South Africa of the Security Council presidency for the month of December. I hope that your presidency will be a successful one and serve as the culmination of two years of Council membership and valuable efforts in the service of African and international causes.

We thank you as well for devoting this meeting to the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, a sound choice that reflects the critical importance we attach to strengthening the strategic partnership between the two organizations in dealing with questions of peace and security in Africa, which account for about 60 per cent of the work and time of the Security Council.

I must also reiterate to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres that Tunisia appreciates his valuable efforts to promote international peace and security and strengthen the role of the United Nations and multilateral action.

In addition, I wish to convey to His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, our appreciation for his efforts to advance African causes and promote peace and security on the continent.

In spite of United Nations and regional efforts, many regions of Africa have been mired for decades in tensions, violence, conflicts and instability and beset by fragility. This reality has exacerbated and complicated the situation, in particular given that the nature of conflict has changed and many developing threats to peace and security have emerged that not only have consequences at the local and regional level but can also affect international security and peace.

Accordingly, developing cooperation, promoting integration and strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union have become increasingly important in confronting challenges related to peace and security throughout the continent, coordinating efforts to manage and resolve crises and conflicts, advancing political solutions and developing strategies for security, peacebuilding and sustainable peace in the post-conflict stages through joint mechanisms and regular consultations between the two organizations.

We are satisfied with the gradual development of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, particularly in the past decade. The Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council have been holding annual consultative meetings since 2007 and conducting joint operations in African conflict zones. However, in view of the magnitude of the challenges and the increasingly dire repercussions of instability, we emphasize the need to further develop ties between the United Nations and the African Union and to promote and bring about a qualitative shift in cooperation between the organizations, from conflict management to partnership in areas in which pre-emptive action may be taken to prevent violence and conflict from recurring by addressing the drivers and root causes thereof.

In the same vein, we call for greater collaboration between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on joint assessments of conflict situations, formulating early and joint response plans, strengthening coordination and integration in mediation efforts to ensure that the parties to the conflict attain the results they seek, further developing the partnership

in peacekeeping operations and managing the transitions between United Nations missions and African Union missions.

Greater coordination and cooperation with African subregional organizations and groups will help address the challenges associated with achieving peace and security, given the important role those entities play in helping to address crises and resolve conflicts.

There must be greater coordination when it comes to taking decisions with regard to African issues being considered by the Security Council. When responding to crises, intervention by the African Union and subregional groups must be given priority, because African countries have the capacity to grasp and address the various pertinent issues and in keeping with the slogan of the African Union, “African solutions to African problems”. The recent intervention by the Economic Community of West African States to resolve the crisis in Mali is a perfect example of the effectiveness of such efforts.

We believe that the Secretary-General, acting in coordination with the African Union, should appoint more Africans to serve as Special Envoys to conflict zones in Africa. Doing so would make the post of Special Envoy a more effective tool in mediating conflicts and settling them peacefully, because Africans envoys have extensive knowledge of the local cultural terms of reference in which the relations between the various parties to conflicts are rooted.

In that connection, we once again call for additional support to be provided to African Union-led peace support operations through United Nations-assessed contributions.

We believe that it is not possible to address issues of security and peace in Africa without addressing their root causes, particularly the drivers of fragility. Those causes are complex and multidimensional, but each of them provides a breeding ground for tensions, violence and instability; contributes directly or indirectly to disrupting settlement processes and efforts to restore security and stability; and prolongs, complicates or reignites conflicts.

Addressing conflict-related challenges and instability in our continent requires continued cooperation, coordination and integration among the various United Nations, regional and international organizations as part of a comprehensive approach to peace that addresses not only the security aspect, but also the developmental, social and environmental dimensions, in line with the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union: The Africa We Want.

Annex VI

Statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, National Security, Legal Affairs and Information of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves

It is a pleasure to see you, Your Excellency and my brother Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, presiding over this virtual meeting.

We thank the Republic of South Africa for convening this important and timely discussion, and we express our gratitude to Secretary-General António Guterres; the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat; and the Presidents of the Niger and Tunisia for their insightful remarks. As a committed member of the A3+1 group — the three African members of the Security Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines — and of the sixth region of Africa, we place particular emphasis on the theme of today's debate.

The strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), as envisaged under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is a critical instrument in our global security architecture, and one that significantly bolsters the international community's efforts to maintain international peace and security. Since the signing, in 2017, of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the partnership has grown from strength to strength, not only as a mechanism for sharing the collective burdens of security, but also as an avenue for the international community to gain access to and benefit from the immeasurable expertise of local and regional actors, grounded within the unique historical and contemporary realities of the African continent.

We have seen the tangible benefits of this growing partnership in the positive developments in the peace processes of the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Sudan. And with the adoption of today's presidential statement (S/PRST/2020/12) on Burundi, we are pleased that that country can now be removed from the Security Council's agenda.

We believe that lasting solutions can never be imposed but must emerge organically from within. In that regard, we maintain that the positions and priorities as articulated by the African Union, including in the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and the Silencing the Guns initiatives, present the surest pathway to lasting peace and security across the continent.

At a time when the world is facing the complex and overlapping effects of the coronavirus disease pandemic, rampant climate change, growing ecological destruction, mass human displacement, the proliferation of violent extremism and other contemporary drivers of human insecurity — many of which are felt most acutely in African countries — deeper coordination between the Council and the AU Peace and Security Council would significantly improve our collective security efforts both in conflict-affected countries and those in post-conflict settings.

The nuanced perspectives and principled advice of the African Union should be sought out, systematically and as a matter of priority, ahead of all mandate renewals and mission transitions for peace operations on the African continent. The Security Council should also consult with the AU regularly on the implementation of mandated priority tasks for peace missions in those areas, such as security-sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, in which the African Union has a wealth of expertise and can provide operational guidance.

We have also borne witness to the comparative advantages of the African Union playing a more involved role in peace operations in a number of contexts,

such as the African Union Mission in Somalia and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. To that end, our delegation fully supports the use of United Nations assessed contributions for AU-led peace operations. We also encourage both Councils to communicate more regularly in a manner that allows African perspectives to be fully reflected in Security Council decisions on African issues, and to pursue in earnest all modalities for information-sharing, including through joint field visits.

Finally, we echo the calls of the African Union to end all unilateral economic sanctions imposed on African countries so as to assist in the creation of conditions conducive to economic recovery, growth and stability.

The immense challenges of today cannot be solved through incrementalism or an outmoded zero-sum game of militarism. Instead, we need principled and pragmatic multilateral solutions. Indeed, no country is an island unto itself, and our contemporary threats to international peace and security can be solved only through collective action and solidarity. To that end, we encourage a further deepening of the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union to fashion comprehensive development and reparative solutions to the main causes of insecurity, including those grounded in historical wrongs committed against our global African civilization. As we seek to build back better from the coronavirus disease pandemic, we must remain ever mindful that a peaceful and prosperous Africa is a central pillar of a safe and secure world.

Annex VII**Statement by the Special Representative of Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Yi**

[Original: Chinese]

China supports South Africa's initiative to convene today's high-level debate. We welcome President Ramaphosa, who is presiding over today's meeting, and thank Secretary-General Guterres and Chairperson Faki Mahamat for their briefings.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has exacerbated global crises, had a profound impact on the political, economic and social development of African countries and poses a host of new challenges to peace and security on the continent. The United Nations is duty-bound to take active measures to help Africa weather the storm. China proposes that efforts be made in the following four areas.

First, we should demonstrate a united front in the fight against the pandemic in order to help strengthen Africa's health and safety defences. We must leverage the coordinating roles of the United Nations and the World Health Organization to mobilize global resources in support of the African Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak of the African Union (AU) and broaden Africa's access to medical supplies, medicines, therapeutic technology and capital. By assisting Africa, we will shore up global efforts against the virus.

Vaccines should be a global public good and made accessible and affordable for African countries. United Nations agencies such as the World Food Programme, UN-Women and UNICEF should all play their respective roles in helping Africa to break transport bottlenecks and ensure last-mile delivery of supplies, medicines and vaccines so that people and vulnerable groups in impoverished and remote areas can receive timely and effective medical treatment. We must take a long-term view and support Africa's efforts to strengthen public health prevention and control systems and improve its ability to respond to major infectious diseases, with a view to building a global health community for all.

Secondly, we must continue working towards the goal of silencing the guns in order to restore peace and stability for the African people. Seventy per cent of Security Council agenda items involve Africa. Without stability in Africa, international peace will remain elusive. The United Nations and the African Union should therefore work closely to advance the African Union's Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 initiative and the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire, encourage warring parties to focus on overcoming the pandemic, turn their swords into ploughshares and stop the violence.

We must continue to implement the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhancing Partnership in Peace and Security and strengthen cooperation to prevent and mediate conflicts and achieve lasting peace. The Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council must build on their annual consultative meeting mechanism to enhance their level of cooperation. The Security Council must assume its responsibility to help Africa improve its independent capabilities in peacekeeping, stability and counter-terrorism, accelerate the establishment of the African Standby Force, a rapid response force and an early-warning mechanism, and to support sustainable and predictable financing for the AU's peace and security operations.

Thirdly, we must deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to help bring prosperity to the African people. As set out in the AU-United Nations

Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations and the AU will prioritize poverty eradication, enhance cooperation in areas such as agriculture, education, health, and infrastructure, support the African Continental Free Trade Area, mitigate the economic fallout from COVID-19 and improve people's well-being. Developed countries should take more concrete steps in the areas of official development assistance, debt relief and technology transfer. International financial institutions should channel more resources into Africa, which is a vibrant and promising continent, as an investment in the future of humankind.

Fourthly, we must promote fairness and justice to help Africans benefit from the progress of global governance. The global governance system should be improved and strengthened to mitigate inequalities in rights, opportunities and rules. The United Nations must do more to meet Africa's needs and accommodate its interests in rule-making, resource allocation and staffing. The representation and voice of African countries should be increased. Africans must be involved as equal participants and important contributors to global governance, since no one understands Africa better or is better placed to offer solutions to African issues than the African people themselves. When addressing African issues, the United Nations should respect the wishes of the African people, enlist the aid of the AU and other regional and subregional organizations and encourage and support Africa's own initiatives and solutions.

China has always been a true friend and partner to Africa. Guided by sincerity, genuine results, a spirit of unity and good faith, China has always put the interests of African countries above its own. We are ready to play our part as Africans pursue the great dream of development and the revitalization of their continent.

Under the auspices of President Xi Jinping, the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19, attended by President Ramaphosa, was held earlier this year in support of Africa's COVID-19 response. The leaders of China and Africa pledged to strengthen solidarity and work together to defeat the virus. Together we set a fine example of international cooperation against COVID-19. China has sent eight teams of medical experts and professionals to 16 African countries to share information on controlling the spread of COVID-19. We have established partner schemes with 46 hospitals in 42 African countries and shipped emergency supplies to almost all countries on the continent. The construction of the headquarters of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, a project that we are glad to support, will start this year.

To maintain peace and security in Africa, China will honour its pledge to provide the AU with free military assistance, worth \$100 million, and has extended military aid to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel through multilateral and bilateral channels. As we speak, more than 2,100 Chinese peacekeepers are serving in six United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. The United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, founded on China's pledge, has always focused on supporting Africa's capacity-building for ensuring peace and security, as part of the joint efforts to silence the guns in Africa.

To promote prosperity and development in Africa, China has worked with Africa to formulate and implement 10 major cooperation plans and eight major actions to help Africa build more than 6,000 kilometres of railways and roads and construct nearly 20 ports and more than 80 large-scale power plants. China has signed agreements with 12 African countries on debt service suspension and has cancelled interest-free loans due at the end of 2020 owed by 15 countries. China and Africa have enhanced cooperation in emerging areas, such as the digital economy,

smart cities, clean energy and 5G. The two sides are also pursuing high-quality cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative.

China will continue to provide strong support to the African people in their pursuit of peace. We are glad to extend a helping hand as African countries move towards modernization and will continue to speak in support of Africa on the international stage. We are prepared to be Africa's partner and work with it to build an even stronger China-Africa community with a shared future.

Annex VIII**Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belgium, Sophie Wilmès**

[Original: English and French]

At the outset, let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, which is for both South Africa and Belgium our last month at this virtual table. I would also like to thank the Permanent Mission of South Africa for convening today's debate on the issue of cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations.

I would like to focus today on four points: first, the long-standing partnership between the African Union and the United Nations; secondly, the African Union's work in the Great Lakes region; thirdly, the importance of solutions that respect local contexts and, lastly, the sensitive issue of sanctions.

First of all, we welcome the long-standing and productive partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. Since its establishment in 2008, the institutional framework has become stronger, while allowing for frequent exchanges that result in joint efforts in response to common challenges. Nonetheless, we can and must do better. A solution must be found to ensure adequate and sustainable funding of African Union peace operations. We wish to reiterate our support for United Nations funding.

We would like to emphasize Belgium's willingness to further strengthen the institutional bonds between the United Nations and the African Union. Above and beyond key cooperation between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, there are several areas with opportunities for greater synergy, such as the women and peace and security agenda. In addition, the African Union's work and discussions on transitional justice are extremely relevant to the work of the United Nations.

Secondly, we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the African Union's commitment to the Great Lakes region. Ahead of the upcoming chairmanship of the African Union by the Democratic Republic of Congo, we welcome the enhanced role of the African Union in promoting a positive regional dynamic and supporting United Nations efforts in that regard. We hope that the African Union will also be closely involved in the further implementation of the new United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. Similarly, we welcome the lead taken by the African Union regarding Burundi. While some challenges remain, we have turned a page. As a strategic partner, alongside our European friends, we would now like to begin to write a new chapter in our bilateral relations.

Thirdly, we continue to support African solutions to African problems. A good example is the African Union's Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 initiative. It accurately identifies several issues and challenges, including terrorism and climate change, and also points to various long-standing causes of conflict, such as the illegal exploitation of natural resources, that have yet to be adequately and comprehensively addressed.

New conflicts on the African continent continue to deserve an initial response from the African Union or its subregional organizations, and we support the African Union in that common effort. However, the principle of subsidiarity should never imply inaction. Greater synergy between the African Union and subregional organizations, as well as optimum complementarity between the African Union

and the Security Council, is essential to accelerating progress towards common objectives. It is in that spirit that Belgium expresses its support for the recent African Union initiative for dialogue in Ethiopia.

Lastly, allow me to say a few words on sanctions policies. They are rooted in the values we share at the United Nations and are a tool for promoting international peace and security, preventing conflicts and upholding respect for international law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Belgium strongly supports the restrictive measures of the European Union where they prove necessary. They target those responsible for unfavourable acts and are designed not to harm civilian populations. We remain committed to ensuring that the humanitarian space is protected under all circumstances.

Annex IX**Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Pham Binh Minh**

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's important meeting. I also sincerely thank Secretary-General Guterres and Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, for their insightful briefings.

In the past few decades, Africa has made important strides towards greater regional integration. Efforts to promote stability and security, inclusive social and economic development, justice and governance are being implemented. Peace is now a reality across the continent. Endowed with cultural diversity and abundant resources, Africa has the true potential to become a global powerhouse of the future. The contributions of African nations to regional and international peace and security cannot be overstated. The African Union (AU) and subregional organizations have become key drivers of progress. The AU's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and its strategic partnership with the United Nations provide important frameworks for enabling the African Union to be an integral part of the global governance system.

Yet conflicts continue to overshadow many parts of the region. Sustainable development in Africa is further hindered by emerging threats, especially terrorism, transnational organized crime, climate change and food and water insecurity. While the Ebola outbreak is still fresh in the memories of many, African countries are now heavily affected by the coronavirus disease pandemic. These collateral challenges compound the problems of already fragile situations, especially in conflict-affected areas. In the face of such uncertainties, collective efforts on the African continent, led by the AU, are more crucial than ever.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security is clearly identified in the Charter of the United Nations. Within this framework, United Nations-AU engagement has grown into a strategic partnership central to the implementation of peace initiatives across the region. Indeed, such engagement is exemplary and mutually reinforcing. Enhanced cooperation between the two organizations has enabled the effective utilization of global efforts and expertise, as well as regional ownership, in addressing region-specific issues. With regard to this process, regional mechanisms such as the AU have also been empowered to play a more robust and active role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, through the deployment of peacekeeping and peace missions and the establishment of regional frameworks for sustaining peace.

The partnership between the United Nations and the AU could be further strengthened in three key ways. First, it could be strengthened by supporting the AU's coordination efforts on regional issues, on a basis of respect for regional visions, values, culture and history. With effective international support, the members of the African Union could translate their valuable insights and experience into real solutions for defusing local conflicts and tensions.

Secondly, it could be bolstered by strengthening strategic cooperation between the United Nations and the AU at both the institutional and operational levels, including by supporting the implementation of the AU's Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thirdly, it could be strengthened by expanding interregional cooperation to help Africa, as well as other parts of the world, cope with global problems that affect all nations alike. It would be of significant benefit to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the AU, for instance, to explore more opportunities

for sharing experiences and best practices in addressing common challenges and realizing regional goals.

Viet Nam holds dear its traditional friendships with African countries. Throughout history, the national struggle for independence and quest for post-conflict reconstruction and development of Viet Nam has occurred in parallel with those of our African brothers and sisters. Viet Nam's very first peacekeepers have been deployed to United Nations peacekeeping operations in South Sudan and the Central African Republic, and Viet Nam will continue this momentum in extending its strong support for Africa's path to peace and development.

During our tenure on the Security Council, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will remain one of our consistent priorities, as exemplified in our initiative to preside over the first ever Council briefing on United Nations-ASEAN cooperation in January (see S/PV.8711). Building on this vision, we stand ready to contribute to enhancing cooperation between ASEAN and the AU in the future, for the common progress of Africa and Asia.

Annex X**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Urmas Reinsalu**

I join others in thanking the Permanent Mission of South Africa for organizing today's debate and the briefers for their insightful statements.

The importance of partnerships among the United Nations, the African Union and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security cannot be overemphasized. The Sudan is an excellent example of how playing on the strengths of respective organizations can support people's aspirations as they transition from decades of dictatorship to democracy and bring peace to their country.

Previous speakers have already highlighted many other examples that show how close cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union builds and sustains peace on the continent. Estonia recognizes the close link between security, prosperity and good governance and therefore remains committed to the holistic approach of supporting peace and security in Africa. The coronavirus disease pandemic has further underscored the need for strengthened cooperation, as we are best positioned to address the pandemic and its effects together. It is obvious that closer cooperation between these two organizations should be our common goal. In that regard, I would like to highlight three thematic areas where Estonia would like to see cooperation further strengthened.

First, we see great potential for cooperation in the area of conflict prevention. We support the Secretary-General's call for strengthening early-warning mechanisms to ensure preventive, timely and effective action. I would also like to express Estonia's full support for the Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 initiative. The concrete steps outlined in the action plan are crucial to contributing to peace, stability and security in Africa, while addressing the root causes of conflict. Strengthening respect for human rights, good governance, the rule of law and democracy is at the heart of prevention efforts and also contributes to the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism. Additionally, we see value in maximizing the trilateral cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union in the areas of conflict prevention and mediation. These complementary resources, strengths and linkages pave the way for a more effective response.

Secondly, Estonia would also like to see further cooperation in the field of climate change, whose devastating effects we are already witnessing, from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa. We need to be proactive about this driver of conflict before the situation further degrades and disrupts the lives of millions of people.

Thirdly, Estonia supports further cooperation related to the women and peace and security agenda. We must continue our efforts to ensure that African women and girls participate in all aspects of social activity, including conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. We also stress the importance of joint action between the United Nations and the African Union to end conflict-related sexual violence, as well as violations and abuses against children affected by armed conflict.

I would like to conclude by citing a well-known African proverb, which is very fitting for today's debate. It says, "If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." I am convinced that by further strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, we can go far quickly in helping to bring about peace, prosperity and a brighter future for the African people.

Annex XI**Statement by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany,
Heiko Maas**

We will remember 2020 as the year when the virus engulfed our planet. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has caused great harm and added to geopolitical tensions. But it has also made evident the value of international cooperation. The virus, climate change, violent conflicts — we can defeat those challenges only if we join hands across countries and continents and when multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations and the African Union (AU), are at the heart of our response. That is why today's debate is timely, and I thank President Ramaphosa of South Africa for organizing it. Germany strongly supports closer cooperation between the United Nations and the AU. We advocate a bigger role for Africa in the United Nations — particularly through Security Council reform, with a permanent seat for Africa — and remain one of the largest bilateral supporters of the African Union.

I see three areas for even closer cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. First, I see it in the fight against the virus. The AU's Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations agencies have done a remarkable job in bolstering Africa's response to the pandemic. They will now be crucial to making vaccines true public goods on the African continent. To that end, the AU can team up with the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and its vaccine pillar, COVAX. Germany has been supporting the WHO and Africa throughout the pandemic. We have just donated more than 120 million medical masks to the WHO, of which a large part will go to African countries.

Secondly, we welcome even closer United Nations-AU cooperation in ending violent conflicts, including at the level of the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. There is hope for progress and there is work to be done in the Sudan, where we are committed to supporting the peace process and the transition to democracy; in Libya, where we have made considerable progress towards a political solution and in Ethiopia, where the United Nations, as a first step, has been allowed access to Government-controlled areas in the Tigray region. Mr. President, we highly appreciate your commitment, as the current AU Chair, to making this possible.

Let me reiterate our support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire. I urge all countries to act on resolution 2532 (2020). The fighting around the world must stop.

Germany also strongly supports the AU's Silencing the Guns initiative. We have partnered with the AU to cut the flow of weapons into conflict areas and to train arms-control experts.

As a member of the Council, Germany has made it clear that real peace and reconciliation are impossible without accountability, respect for human rights and the equal participation of women. That is why we must all stand by the commitments we made in resolution 2467 (2019) to protect and empower survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

Thirdly, the AU and the United Nations are natural partners in the fight against climate change. The consequences of climate change for peace and security are real, particularly in Africa. From the Sahel to Somalia, droughts, hunger and displacement are catalysts for conflict. Germany has therefore firmly placed climate change on the Council's agenda, with the support of virtually all its members. We have established an informal expert group of members of the Security Council on

climate and security. The Niger and Germany co-chaired the group's first meeting last month, in which we looked into the effects of climate change on the security situation in Somalia.

The pandemic, violent conflicts and climate change are challenges that will stay with us next year. But by working together, we can make 2021 the turning point towards building back better in Europe, Africa and around the world. The United Nations and the African Union will be key in this endeavour, and Germany stands ready to provide its support.

Annex XII

Statement by the Minister for Africa of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, James Duddridge

I wish to thank the President, as well as Secretary-General Guterres and Chairperson Mahamat, for their informative briefings as part of this important debate.

As the United Kingdom's Minister for Africa, I am keen to work closely with the African Union (AU), which is a personal priority for me. In fact, I was the first United Kingdom Minister to make an overseas trip after the first wave of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic when I visited the AU Commissioners in July. The United Kingdom is investing up to \$27 million in the African Union COVID-19 Response Fund to tackle the disease and save lives.

In my remarks, I will focus on three key aspects of how the United Nations-AU partnership can bolster the fundamental purpose of the United Nations, which is the maintenance of international peace and security. The first is the early identification of risks to regional peace and security; the second is coordinated efforts to mediate and encourage peaceful resolutions to conflict and the third is coherent support in implementing peace agreements, consolidating democratic governance and building peace.

Both the United Nations and the AU would benefit from more integrated analysis in order to identify the emergence or re-emergence of conflicts. We should not shy away from identifying underlying drivers of instability and conflict and having honest conversations about where we must act. The United Kingdom is proud to support the AU's Continental Early Warning System, and I look forward to visiting the Early Warning Centre on my next trip to Addis Ababa. But accurate and timely information must be coupled with plans for effective and early action, which needs to happen at the State, regional or continental level. The African Union's support to elections in Madagascar two years ago and its mediation in the Sudan last year were impressive examples of what it can do. However, in other cases, action by the AU and the United Nations has either come too late or not at all. The key to greater shared success is consistency in our approach.

That brings me to my second point. When conflicts do emerge, the United Nations and the AU bring complementary skills to the table. We are all deeply concerned by the situation in Tigray, where the immediate priorities are securing greater humanitarian access and ensuring the protection of civilians and human rights. The United Kingdom will continue to support AU-led efforts in that regard. I urge all parties to accept credible offers of support to establish the conditions for a sustainable political solution.

That brings me to my third point. Once conflict is brought to an end, the real work of building and sustaining peace begins. Continued partnership between the United Nations and the AU is vital to seeing the peace agreement through in the Central African Republic, brokered through their joint efforts. The next milestone is credible, inclusive and peaceful elections later this month.

Strong cooperation is particularly important during peacekeeping transitions, as the United Nations or AU presence reconfigures to meet evolving conditions. I hope that the AU will be able to provide its expertise and political support to the work of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, helping the Sudan's transition to democracy.

African Union forces currently play an invaluable role in Somalia. I pay tribute to the brave men and women of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the African Union-led peace operation. Looking ahead, the Somali security forces

are now stronger but still need support. I will encourage greater effort in that regard, from the AU, the United Nations and others, to ensure that the AU-led mission evolves in response to Somalia's increasing capabilities.

Predictability and sustainability in financing are an important element of the AU's ability to deploy operations like AMISOM. The United Kingdom supports, in principle, access to United Nations-assessed contributions for future AU-led peace support operations, on a case-by-case basis and subject to certain key conditions.

It is abundantly clear that a deeper and broader partnership between the United Nations and the AU is indispensable as we strive towards our shared goal of a conflict-free Africa. The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting that partnership.

Annex XIII

Statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Febrian Ruddyard

I wish to echo other delegations in welcoming you, Mr. President, to the Security Council and thanking you for convening this important debate. I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, for their briefings.

We welcome the presidential statement just adopted on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union (S/PRST/2020/11). This is indeed a timely meeting.

As captured in the saying “neighbours know best”, regional and subregional organizations have unique capacities and knowledge on the ground, which greatly contribute to the prevention and resolution of conflict, as well as to sustaining peace. In that context, we welcome the significant progress made in deepening the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), which is crucial to addressing the complex and evolving peace and security challenges in Africa. We are also heartened to note that it has contributed to positive developments in many African countries, including the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Sudan.

The gains achieved must be sustained. Enhanced cooperation is key in such efforts, particularly as the continent is facing multiple challenges, including terrorism, organized crime and the multidimensional impacts of the coronavirus disease pandemic. Against that backdrop, allow me to highlight three areas where partnership between the United Nations and the AU can be further enhanced.

First, we must enhance collaboration between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. We note that the two Councils met in September and discussed several important issues, including the situations in Mali and Somalia and the Silencing the Guns initiative. We also appreciate the valuable role of the three African members of the Security Council in articulating the African perspective during Council deliberations.

We concur with the Secretary-General’s view on the importance of strengthening collaboration in conflict prevention. In that connection, we commend the mediating role undertaken by the AU in several situations this year. It is imperative to ensure that the Security Council provides the necessary political backing in situations where the AU leads.

Secondly, we must enhance partnership in peacekeeping and peace support operations. The Council must continue to support regional and subregional peacekeeping efforts and peace support operations. That can be achieved through the exchange of knowledge, expertise and training, among other things.

For its part, Indonesia remains fully committed to supporting sustainable peace in Africa. As part of Indonesia’s contribution, we currently have more than 1,500 personnel, including 98 women peacekeepers, on the continent, serving in seven United Nations missions. In that context, the indispensable role of women in peacekeeping operations must not be overlooked. We therefore wish to advocate for further cooperation between the United Nations and the AU in advancing the greater participation and role of women in peacekeeping operations, as envisioned in resolution 2538 (2020).

We also commend the commitment of the AU and its member States to addressing terrorism, including through initiatives such as the Joint Force of the

Group of Five for the Sahel, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the decision to deploy the African Standby Force to the Sahel region.

Thirdly, more needs to be done to address the root causes of instability. From various briefings on situations in African countries, we understand that many factors concerning peace and security in Africa are interrelated. The partnership between the United Nations and the AU should therefore be guided by that interconnectedness. It must be able to provide effective responses to the evolving realities and challenges on the ground.

We welcome the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which acknowledges the importance of building national capacity to address the root causes of conflict. Such a partnership needs to be nurtured on a basis of good faith, honesty and sincerity. It must also take national priorities into account in order to ensure strong ownership and successful implementation.

Finally, ever since we hosted the inaugural Asian-African Conference in 1955, Indonesia has remained faithful in its unwavering support for and solidarity with the African nations. In that spirit, we wish to reaffirm our strong support for the noble pursuit of silencing the guns in Africa and promoting the African Union's Agenda 2063 in order to realize a conflict-free and prosperous Africa. The Council should rest assured that Indonesia's commitment to being a true partner to Africa will endure far beyond its tenure on the Security Council.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

We would like to begin by thanking His Excellency President Ramaphosa for presiding over this important meeting, and his country for its stewardship of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. We also thank the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for their briefings today.

The Dominican Republic recognizes the strong collaboration between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in particular with the African Union (AU), during a difficult time for all countries owing to the devastating social and economic effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union is more pertinent than ever, with its primary objective of effectively addressing conflicts on the continent and seeking systematic and coherent solutions. In that regard, we welcome the joint meeting held between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council in September, aimed at enhancing collaboration between the two Councils in the pursuit of peace and security in Africa. Both Councils should redouble their efforts to adopt standardized procedures, especially in the area of conflict prevention, including joint field visits where appropriate.

In that context, we reiterate that conflict prevention requires greater investment. Focusing on the root causes is essential in order to prevent conflicts from occurring in the first place and defuse crisis situations before they escalate.

The United Nations and the African Union have worked together successfully on conflict resolution, concrete examples of which include the peacebuilding processes in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau and peacekeeping through the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Multinational Joint Task Force.

Despite those advances, issues such as violent extremism, terrorism, corruption and impunity continue to be major factors for instability in some countries in the region. Combined with the adverse effects of climate change, they constitute a real threat to political stability. In addition, the increase in the number of internally displaced persons and refugees helps to aggravate the humanitarian situation in a large number of countries in the region.

Similarly, there continue to be difficulties in meeting the demands of populations, ranging from effective arms control to combating impunity and establishing a common regional security framework to create the conditions for integration and development across the entire continent.

We therefore believe that cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union should be stepped up in order to provide assistance in all relevant areas through the exchange of experiences and good practices. Strengthening coordination while investing in capacity-building should be at the heart of our efforts. Using the comparative advantages of each organization could lead to better use of resources, less overlap and greater efficiency. In order to achieve that, strong cooperation is essential.

While the United Nations should continue to strengthen its support for the AU-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the Silencing the Guns initiative, its collaboration should also extend to greater coordination with Africa's regional

cooperation mechanisms. The meaningful participation of women and young people is critical in that regard and requires joint action.

Finally, Africa faces multiple challenges that have been exacerbated by the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengthening multilateral cooperation is the answer. Let us unite our efforts to achieve a peaceful and stable Africa.

Annex XV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nicolas de Rivière**

[Original: English and French]

I commend South Africa, as the current Chair of the African Union and President of the Security Council, for choosing to highlight the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. It is a strategic partnership, not only in terms of preventing and resolving crises in Africa, but also because we need the African Union and African States to be able to respond to global threats. That is why we support the efforts of the Secretary-General and the African Union to strengthen this partnership.

The African Union plays a major role in the prevention and resolution of political crises in Africa. We saw it in Madagascar in 2018 and in the Sudan in 2019. This year, once again, the South African presidency succeeded in arranging African Union mediation on the issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Those successes must be acknowledged. We also welcome your mobilization for a peaceful resolution of the crisis in Ethiopia, Mr. President.

The Security Council must support the African Union's commitment to the prevention and resolution of crises on the continent. That principle is at the heart of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, on cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations. The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union is also of strategic importance in security matters. The African contribution to peacekeeping is invaluable, and we have a collective interest in strengthening it. France supports the development of sustainable and predictable financing for African peace operations, including through United Nations-assessed contributions.

African countries must be able to ensure their own security and strengthen their regional cooperation within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture. Meetings between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council should enable progress to be made on this issue in 2021. The Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel is an example to be promoted. Our objective is for it to become fully autonomous, but that still requires the most ambitious support possible, to which the Security Council must contribute.

The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union can go even further by supporting projects to concretely implement the Silencing the Guns initiative, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We encourage the African Union to continue its efforts to operationalize the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Cooperation must also be strengthened in the face of health threats. Resolution 2532 (2020), which we co-authored with Tunisia, calls for a cessation of hostilities and for greater cooperation between regional and international organizations in facilitating the fight against the pandemic. The African Union has contributed to the global effort by very quickly mobilizing the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. President Macron has advocated for a moratorium on the debt of African countries. France has pledged to mobilize €1.2 billion to help African countries fight the coronavirus pandemic.

The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union can be successful only with the involvement of civil society. I commend the African Union Special Envoy on Youth Solidarity for her determination to bring the demands

of young African women to the Generation Equality Forum that France will host together with UN-Women and Mexico. Their demands will be heard. We call on the Special Envoys of the United Nations and the African Union to work together so that actions on the ground benefit women and young people more systematically.

I want to conclude by once again congratulating South Africa on this meeting and its presidency this month, and more broadly on its biennium in the Security Council. The past two years have enabled your country to contribute significantly to the success of the multilateral method, Mr. President.

Annex XVI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vassily Nebenzia**

[Original: Russian]

We welcome your personal participation in today's debate, Sir, in your capacities as President of the Security Council and the current Chair of the African Union (AU). We also welcome the participation of the high-level briefers, Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. We thank them for the information and assessments they have shared with us today.

Russia consistently advocates for strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. The dialogue between the two organizations on issues of peace and security in Africa has made genuine and tangible progress in recent years. Two framework agreements have been signed and are being successfully implemented. The Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council have been holding annual meetings and full-fledged conferences. The discussion of key problems on the African agenda in those formats, as well as joint events, field trips and visits by special representatives, helps to enhance the effectiveness of joint efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, which has now completed its mandate, and the assistance provided by the United Nations to the African Union Mission in Somalia and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel are examples of successful cooperation on the ground.

We are pleased that the African voice in the Security Council is united and resonant. We welcome the high level of coordinated action between the three African members of the Council, together with the like-minded Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We appreciate the South African delegation's contribution to the work of the Security Council in addressing key problems in the maintenance of peace and stability over the past two years.

It is important that Africans are increasingly taking the initiative in dealing with peace and security issues on their continent. In that regard, we should not omit to mention the efforts that you have made, Mr. President, to resolve the situation regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and the crisis in northern Ethiopia.

The decisive attitude of regional players is clearly evidenced by the flagship AU initiative to put an end to armed conflict on the continent. We believe that United Nations cooperation with African regional organizations should be based on the understanding that regional actors should be the ones to take the lead in defining the paths to settling disputes on the African continent, based on Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The aim of our global Organization to provide multifaceted support to these efforts is in the spirit of the African Union's declared principle of African solutions for African problems. We believe that the effectiveness of further cooperation on this track will depend on how the following priority issues are resolved.

First, we understand the concerns of our African partners regarding the provision of resources for African peacekeeping operations. It is important to improve their predictability, reliability and flexibility. We are ready for further constructive dialogue on this both in the Security Council and on other platforms within the Organization, once we have agreed on a united position on financing peacekeeping missions within the framework of the AU.

It is also important to work on conflict prevention and the development of an early warning system on the African continent. Nor must we relax our efforts to counter the influx and spread of illicit weapons.

We believe that the growing terrorist threat requires special attention. Terrorist organizations are taking advantage of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to consolidate their positions. The recent severe deterioration of the situation in the Sahel-Sahara region is particularly alarming. We are ready to share our experience in countering terrorism with our African partners and to implement projects to help countries on the continent build their capacity to address threats of terrorism and extremism.

Lastly, optimizing United Nations cooperation with African countries would also help to resolve problems related to the illegal unilateral sanctions that continue to be imposed on various States in Africa. In that context, we would like to once again express our support for the Secretary-General's call for an end to unilateral restrictive measures that undermine States' ability to address the COVID-19 pandemic effectively. We also continue to advocate for the timely review of Security Council sanctions regimes. They must not affect the ability of States to respond to the threats such as organized crime and terrorism through efficient security bodies. Also, such regimes must not aggravate the humanitarian situation.

In pursuance of the decisions of the first of its kind Russia-Africa Summit that was convened in October 2019, our country will further develop equitable cooperation with African partners. At this point, our priority is to help Africa overcome the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and improve the epidemiological situation. We reiterate our readiness to promote cooperation on this track among other things in terms of supplies and the start of production on Sputnik-V, the vaccine that Russia successfully presented at the United Nations not long ago.

Annex XVII**Statement by the Political Coordinator of the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations, Rodney Hunter**

I thank you, Mr. President, and President Ramaphosa for organizing today's discussion. I also thank the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) for their comprehensive overviews this morning.

The African Union has proven itself, time and again, as an indispensable partner to the United Nations on the African continent. In recent years, we have deepened cooperation between the United Nations and the AU, recognizing each organization's distinct advantages, shared values and common interests. Together we are firmly committed to the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

We recognize the good work of both the United Nations Office to the AU and the AU Peace and Security Council, whose close collaboration in decision-making is critical for preventing and responding effectively to conflicts across the continent.

We also praise the United Nations for its wide-ranging support to the AU's Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative and its political, technical and logistical support for the African Union's mediation and peace agreement implementation efforts in the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, South Sudan and the Sudan.

We appreciate the coordinated efforts of the United Nations and AU to address instability in Somalia. Despite a perilous operating environment, the joint efforts will bring long-term stability and security to the Somali people.

We similarly recognize United Nations-AU efforts in Darfur over the past decade — particularly through the work of the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) — to protect civilians, support the extension of State authority and monitor human rights violations and abuses. The United States remains committed to ensuring UNAMID draws down responsibly. We also expect to see the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan be well-positioned to take over key responsibilities from UNAMID, including support for the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement.

And at this very moment, the strong United Nations-AU partnership has been crucial to addressing the conflict in Tigray and the unfolding humanitarian emergency that threatens stability across the region. The violence has already caused tens of thousands to flee their homes and imperils the lives of many more, both through direct attacks on civilians and because of ethnic discrimination. Working together and with the support of the international community, the United Nations and the AU are best positioned to secure the protection of civilians; to secure free, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access; and to push for a peaceful, durable solution.

The United Nations and the AU have also jointly undertaken efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19 throughout the region. The African Union Commission is working tirelessly to complement efforts by Member States and to support and implement a continental response to the pandemic. The United Nations has contributed by developing security plans and assisting with the formulation of guidelines for peace support operations to ensure protection from COVID-19 transmission during the pandemic.

We also applaud the United Nations and the AU on their cooperation to promote the women and peace and security agenda, including the October 2019 high-level solidarity mission to the Horn of Africa. Women and girls continue

to be disproportionately affected by conflict, and it is essential to increase the representation of women at all levels of decision-making related to peace and security. The needs and perspectives of women and girls must be included in all aspects of conflict prevention, management and resolution to better protect and respond to the needs of the entire population. Doing this will lead to more durable peace in future.

Building on this momentum, we look forward to continued work with the AU and the United Nations on improving the quality of our peacekeeping efforts, including preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and addressing allegations thereof levelled at personnel from both organizations on the ground in Africa. We continue to be deeply troubled by continued allegations against peacekeepers in the Central African Republic. It is essential that both the AU and the United Nations create effective mechanisms to prevent exploitation, abuses and misconduct and to promote accountability when allegations arise. We urge all troop- and police-contributing countries to strictly enforce the United Nations and AU zero-tolerance policies.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank South Africa for its leadership in the African Union over the past year, including establishing an inclusive strategy to address COVID-19 on the African continent. This has been tremendously helpful in addressing this health crisis and containing the economic fallout of the pandemic. Your work, President Ramaphosa, and the dedication of your country and your people to the people of the continent has literally saved innumerable lives. We also appreciate the positive role you played in securing the AU a mediation role in the negotiations around the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The African Union is an essential partner in working towards peace and security, and we look forward to our continued collaboration in future.

Annex XVIII

Statement by the President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo

It is a great honour to have been invited to participate in this important and timely dialogue on cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations, with a specific focus on the African Union, by His Excellency Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa. I congratulate South Africa on its presidency of the Security Council and thank all the members of the African Union and the Security Council for their continued cooperation and support in Somalia's journey to stability, progress and sustainable development.

Somalia, as a member of both the African Union and United Nations, sees both organizations as twin, complimentary agencies for peace, security and sustainable development across the African continent and beyond. In this globalized, interconnected and interdependent world, we must not be misled by simple and neat geographical demarcations but rather be guided by the necessity to progress and prosper together on a global scale. What the coronavirus disease pandemic continues to teach us all is that, the more effective partnerships we can build and maintain, the better the opportunities for win-win development for all.

The focus of this meeting on the effectiveness of African Union-United Nations partnership in contributing to the resolution of conflicts in Africa and sustaining peace, including contributing to the African Union's ambition to silence the guns on the continent in the near future, is extremely timely.

Sadly, across the African continent, while many conflicts are winding down, new conflicts are breaking out. The peace and security challenge of Africa is one that has a strangulating effect on its peoples' opportunities. It is also a stain on national reputations and a source of frustration and disappointment for international partners and investors. While Africa is no longer the "hopeless continent", it has not totally succeeded in silencing the guns that made it appear such a failure to the rest of the world. Indeed, conflicts everywhere, including the African continent, are dynamic, complex and difficult to resolve without addressing root causes. However, no meaningful analysis or action is possible in the pursuit of conflict management or prevention without dialogue and robust partnerships.

Since the adoption of resolutions 1809 (2008) and 2033 (2012) there has been strong partnership between the peace and security architecture of the United Nations and the African Union, which has been bolstered by regular interactions. Furthermore, the annual report of Secretary-General António Guterres, on strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa (S/2020/860), clearly highlights the strong spirit of collaboration and clear commitment to approaching peace and security challenges together. This is a practice that must be nurtured and a strategy that has to be further institutionalized to be even more effective.

In Somalia, the United Nations-African Union partnership is clearly evident in the operations of the forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which are bravely fighting alongside the Somali National Army to defeat the last remains of international terrorism in the form of Al-Shabaab. With Security Council and African Union support, we are working on successfully transitioning full security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali National Army at the earliest opportunity. However, we are fighting a tough and determined international terrorist group with global ambitions and absolutely no regard for human life.

Accordingly, it is my Government's sincere belief that we cannot be expected to fight a national fight of global significance with the United Nations arms embargo hampering our efforts. The Security Council and African Union partnership must now, more than ever, either lift the arms embargo or support Somalia in finding a structured path out of the embargo so that we can defend our people properly and provide the stability the region, continent and world need to recover better from the socioeconomic crisis brought on by the coronavirus disease.

In all matters of peace and security, it is fundamental to seek peaceful political solutions through dialogue and mediation, as envisaged by the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. It is also paramount to address the root causes, which often are many and complex. In Somalia, we are working hard on this through ongoing reconciliation and by completing the constitutional review process to ensure inclusive politics, fairness, justice and economic opportunities to cement our peace and stability.

No partnership is perfect, and the United Nations-African Union's collaboration in peace and security on the continent could benefit from a better alignment of scarce resources and more joint activities to build the capacities of the people and institutions of conflict-affected States. The partnership must also be even more proactive and act when the earliest conflict warning signs are clear. Accordingly, maintaining peace and peacebuilding activities must be prioritized and executed effectively, as they are more beneficial and less fiscally onerous than peacekeeping for all stakeholders.

In Somalia, we say "One finger does not wash your whole face", so the United Nations-African Union partnership for peace and security in Africa is an important initiative we must all support and invest in. In Somalia, we understand the pain of conflict and that the long, steep and harsh road back from it is never easy. However, what is also evident from our experience is that there must be a greater focus on addressing root causes, early conflict-prevention measures and resources, human and financial, to transition from fragility to sustainable peace and security. In this regard, the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in enhancing peace and security in Africa has never been more important.
