United Nations S/PV.9861 (Resumption 1)*

Security Council

Eighteenth year

Provisional

9861st meeting
Tuesday, 18 February 2025, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Geng Shuang/Mr. Sun Zhiqiang	(China)
Members:	Algeria	Mrs. Ramdoum
	Denmark	Ms. Landi
	France	Mrs. Morghad
	Greece	Mr. Stamatekos
	Guyana	Ms. Savory
	Pakistan	Mr. Asif Khan
	Panama	Ms. Caballero Martiz
	Republic of Korea	Mr. June Byoung Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Grudinskiy
	Sierra Leone	Ms. Karim
	Slovenia	Ms. Carli Sitar
	Somalia	Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Kriss
	United States of America	Ms. Postel

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Practising multilateralism, reforming and improving global governance

Letter dated 3 February 2025 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2025/78)

*Reissued for technical reasons on 30 April 2025.

The meeting resumed at 3 p.m.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): Allow me to thank our briefers today.

Just a few years ago, there was vigorous debate on whether the world was becoming more multipolar. That debate has mostly ended, with everyone recognizing that we are now indeed in a multipolar order. The question is what we make of it. Many have read the rising multipolarity as a sign of a more dangerous and unstable world. With many poles, the argument goes, the chances of disagreement between the poles increase, as do the points of failure in the system. Yet history shows us that this is not necessarily the case. One of the longest periods of European peace was precisely the century between the Treaty of Vienna and the outbreak of the First World War, when the hegemonic European system was multipolar. Similarly, the détente in the cold war — a strictly bipolar system — was made possible, in large part, by a multipolar moment of sorts, where the United States, China, the Soviet Union, Western Europe and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries could form configurations that mitigated the existing cold war tensions.

There is clearly enough potential for a multipolar order to be stable and peaceful. What distinguishes a stable multipolar order from an unstable one is one word — diplomacy. And its basis is, and must be, international law and dialogue. Diplomacy, through the congress system, was what allowed the post-Napoleonic order to remain relatively peaceful in Europe. Intense high-level diplomacy was also what fuelled the multipolar system of the détente period. And how we engage in diplomacy also matters. The more institutionalized diplomacy of the nineteenth century, with its congresses and regular summits, appears to have worked better and lasted longer than the more ad hoc diplomacy of the twentieth century, which finally gave way to the new cold war of the 1980s.

One reason why multipolarity may not have been thriving by the end of the twentieth century is that the United Nations remained relegated to a secondary role. It lacked a more solid institutional framework, making it vulnerable to the shifting political winds of the following decade. Considering that a real multipolar system is taking shape, our challenge is to turn to the architecture of multipolarity. That essentially means making the United Nations fit for purpose and truly multilateral and multicultural. It also means leveraging other regional and plurilateral organizations that can work with the United Nations and taking into account the contribution of regional, subregional and bilateral arrangements to the prevention and peaceful resolution of disputes.

For a stable and peaceful multilateral order, we envision a layered architecture with three tiers — a reformed United Nations, where all poles of the system are represented at its highest decision-making bodies; a network of strengthened cross-regional arrangements, such as the Group of 20 (G20) and the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa group, which can help either with thematic areas or in deepening cooperation between its members and the international community as a whole; and finally, a strong grounding in regional organizations, which should be able to communicate fluidly both with each other and the tiers above, bringing local expertise and helping defuse tensions before they escalate to the global level.

We are currently witnessing a reshaping of the international order. This is a moment of acceleration of historical processes, marked by significant instability

and a gradual breakdown of the consensus within the collective security system established after the cold war. In an environment marked by growing geopolitical rivalries, major Powers have focused on enhancing their strategic capabilities, investing in advanced weaponry and military technologies and ensuring access to critical resources. Those tendencies have had an impact on multilateralism, as they deepen polarization and sideline important debates on global issues related to peace and sustainable development. We must reaffirm our commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism, and to an international order that is beneficial for the whole international community.

In 2024, Brazil chose reform of global governance as one of its three priorities during its presidency of the G20. At the second G20 meeting of Foreign Ministers, which was open to all Member States during the high-level week of the General Assembly in 2024, Brazil launched a call to action to promote the implementation of the global governance reform proposal through concrete actions, taking a step beyond the Summit of the Future. We invite all Member States to look carefully into that proposal.

In conclusion, the institutions we have today — imperfect as they are — already put us in a better position than we were in during the twentieth century. Our task now is to find ways to adapt them so that they can facilitate the effective diplomacy necessary for our new multipolar order. If we can combine the diplomatic energies of past eras of multipolarity with the robust institutions built over past decades, we will have the foundations for a multipolar architecture that can be truly peaceful, stable and able to deliver the prosperity that all our nations seek.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Jordan.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the friendly People's Republic of China for its excellent presidency of the Security Council this month and for organizing today's important meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his exceptional proposal for promoting multilateral action.

Our Organization has played an indispensable, pivotal role in preventing and containing conflicts since its establishment, promoting multilateral action, human rights and supporting sustainable development. However, today's changing global landscape poses new and complex challenges, calling for a renewed commitment to strengthening action and multilateralism and ensuring its effectiveness in addressing all issues on the international agenda. Partnerships among States, international organizations, civil society and the private sector are key to addressing our current challenges and achieving sustainable and comprehensive solutions. In the light of rapid international developments, the Pact for the Future, adopted by the General Assembly in September (resolution 79/1), has provided a vital framework for promoting reform and improving the global governance system. However, if we are to translate that commitment into reality, we require fundamental reforms that enhance the effectiveness of multilateral institutions, especially the United Nations, in order to ensure that they are up to the challenges in international peace and security and can provide the resources needed to support development and humanitarian initiatives, especially for the countries that are most vulnerable to crises, conflicts and waves of refugees.

In that regard, the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We must therefore strengthen the Council's unity and solidarity to ensure effective, swift and decisive action in the face of global crises. The consensus-based approach must be strengthened within the Council, prioritizing conflict resolution, peacebuilding and accountability. The Council and the General Assembly must work more cooperatively. As stipulated in

the Charter of the United Nations, the Assembly must strengthen its role in peace and security matters, particularly when the Council is unable to take action, and the Council's permanent members should avoid the use of the veto when it hinders the work of the Council. Moreover, expanding cooperation between the Council and regional organizations and other stakeholders will contribute significantly to strengthening peace and security and increasing the Council's effectiveness in facing challenges and threats, which are constantly changing.

In that context, we must not ignore the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, where the continuing waves of violence and the absence of political solutions pose a serious risk to international peace and security. It is therefore essential that the Security Council act decisively to maintain the ceasefire in Gaza, in accordance with resolution 2735 (2024), and ensure a cessation of hostilities in the West Bank, the protection of civilians and the delivery of sustainable, urgent and necessary humanitarian assistance. There is also a need to launch an effective international effort to resume the peace process and safeguard the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to freedom, self-determination and the establishment of an independent State on their national soil in accordance with the two-State solution.

We stress the rights of Palestinian refugees to return and compensation in accordance with United Nations resolutions. We also stress that there is no alternative to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and that it is indispensable in providing essential services that are a lifeline for nearly 6 million Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. We emphasize the urgent need for the Security Council to support UNRWA to enable it to fully implement its mandate. The Agency remains the sole body capable of carrying out its vital role in providing essential services that are indispensable to refugees and supporting the people of Gaza in facing the worsening humanitarian disaster.

In the light of those challenges, upholding the rule of international law remains necessary to ensure stability and justice at the regional and international levels. That requires full adherence to the rule of international law, strengthening dispute settlement mechanisms and respecting the role of the International Court of Justice and implementing its decisions. And upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations remains essential for the protection of countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity and the promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes.

With regard to narrowing the development gap between developing and developed countries, notably the digital divide, we must adopt a comprehensive approach that enhances international cooperation and provides sustainable financial and technical support, especially to countries affected by conflicts and those that bear the burden of those conflicts by hosting waves of refugees. That includes increasing investment in digital infrastructure and expanding access to modern technologies and national capacity-building through training and knowledge transfer. There is also a need to build capacities to address global challenges such as climate change, health crises and food security. To that end, we must mobilize necessary resources and ensure fair financing mechanisms that allow developing countries to implement effective development policies.

In conclusion, our common future depends on our ability to work collectively with vision and commitment. The multilateral system must be revitalized to meet the aspirations of all States. Through international cooperation, the promotion of peace and security and a firm commitment to international law, equality, human rights and sustainable development, we can build a just, peaceful and prosperous future for all. That is the basis on which this Organization was founded and which our States have committed to respect and implement.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Chaivaivid (Thailand): At the outset, I would like to thank China for convening this very important debate.

The world stands at a critical juncture. In the thick of rising geopolitical tensions, we have witnessed an erosion in international trust, commitments and obligations. Some even question the functioning of multilateralism, including the United Nations system, and whether it can still provide solutions to today's challenges.

Therefore, our gathering today presents an opportune moment to reflect and renew our commitment to the United Nations and reinvigorate multilateralism. To contribute to our discussion, allow me to highlight a few points.

First of all, we must reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism by upholding the Charter of the United Nations. Only with our full and unified support and respect for the principles in the Charter of the United Nations could the rules-based international order remain effective in maintaining global peace and stability. We stress that international law, rules, norms and principles must be applied without exception.

Secondly, a multidimensional approach is crucial for tackling global challenges. Peace, sustainable development and human rights are closely interlinked. United Nations organs and bodies, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and the Secretariat, have to operate in synchronization rather than in silos. We call for greater coordination and coherence across the United Nations system.

Thirdly, reform of global governance structures is necessary to ensure effective multilateralism. Greater representation of developing countries, particularly in decision-making bodies, such as the Security Council, is vital to fostering inclusivity and mutual trust. In addition, streamlining working methods within the United Nations system will further enhance the relevance and efficiency of its bodies and processes in the rapidly changing global landscape.

Fourthly, closer coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is key to making multilateralism more responsive and impactful. Regional and subregional organizations play a crucial role in translating global commitments into concrete actions, while also feeding local realities into policy-making processes at the global level. Thailand places high importance on enhancing a closer and more meaningful partnership between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, including through the implementation of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1).

Lastly, we must ensure that different multilateral platforms are complementary and not mutually exclusive. Thailand will continue to support the United Nations as the bedrock of the international system, while actively and constructively engaging in other multilateral forums and frameworks that also reinforce our collective efforts towards peace, security and sustainable development.

In conclusion, Thailand reaffirms its strong commitment to multilateralism. As we approach the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations in October, we stand ready to work with all Member States and stakeholders to ensure that the United Nations, as well as other multilateral architectures, remain relevant and fit for purpose and that collectively we are capable of addressing today's challenges while shaping a more peaceful, just and sustainable future that we all share.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): I would like to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States and to say a few words in my national capacity.

The African Group would like to thank China for organizing this important open debate, which is timely given the numerous challenges facing our world today, some of which threaten the foundations of multilateralism represented by this Organization and its founding Charter.

As the United Nations approaches its eightieth anniversary, it is indeed time for reflection on the way forward. The United Nations today is in dire need of a new vision and a more updated outlook that is compatible with the new global realities. Gaps and shortcomings must be addressed, and achievements must be preserved and built upon. We welcome the appointment of a Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Reforms, just yesterday, and we hope that his efforts will contribute to that new vision.

Allow me to briefly present a number of issues that Africa considers necessary in the course of this ongoing debate about the future.

First, it is imperative to ensure that international law remains the foundation on which relations between States are built and managed. We frequently hear talk about the importance of respecting the Charter of the United Nations and the need for the protection and promotion of its principles. However, the past few years have tested that discourse. The horrors that have been unfolding in the Middle East for more than a year and a half, along with rising geopolitical tensions and conflicts in various parts of the world, are testament to the fact that regardless of the rhetoric, the realities on the ground remain challenging. If we are to create a more just and equitable international order, we have to strengthen international law, enhance accountability frameworks and hold violators accountable.

Secondly, it is difficult to envision a future of enhanced multilateralism without reforming our global governance structures, foremost among them the Security Council. The Council has shown on a number of occasions that it urgently needs reform to make it more representative, just and democratic. Africa has always called and continues to advocate for the need to enhance African representation on the Council, in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, including by having two permanent African seats with veto power. That is a matter of common justice. The Council must also continue to refine and improve its working methods to be more transparent and inclusive, while also enhancing dialogue with other regional groups, organizations and mechanisms.

Thirdly, we will never achieve global governance reform without real and urgent reform of the global financial architecture, which is no longer compatible with the times. The financial architecture that was built in the aftermath of the Second World War has become an obstacle to comprehensive economic development and to bridging the divide between the global North and South. Reforming the international financial institutions was one of the key topics addressed at the Summit of the Future in September, and the Secretary-General continues to make every effort to that end. However, short of genuine political will on the part of developed countries, the global financial architecture, as it stands, will remain unjust, inequitable and lacking in transparency, and will continue to fail to meet the hopes and aspirations of millions in developing countries, including on the African continent. The upcoming Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Spain in June will be an opportune moment to make some of those reforms a reality.

Fourthly, the challenges facing the world today are complex and rapidly evolving, and therefore require multilateral frameworks that are flexible, agile and able to stay ahead of the curve. The existential threats presented by climate change, cybercrime and global health disasters, as well as the opportunities and challenges

posed by artificial intelligence, are all matters that must be addressed globally, with the United Nations leading the international response. Only this Organization can play that key role in a way that enhances cooperation and spares the world further conflicts and disputes.

I hope that this debate will contribute to the emergence of new and creative ideas that enhance and develop multilateralism, with a view to a better future for all of us.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

In my national capacity I would now like to address a number of legitimate issues before the Security Council related to our future. Do we want a future in which everyone has a right to self-determination and equality, or are we heading towards the legitimization of discrimination, racism, occupation, genocide and ethnic cleansing? The events in Gaza over the past almost year and half, and the discussion — rejected both in form and substance, internationally and regionally — of proposals that completely contradict the Charter, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, are all matters of grave concern. Do we abandon what the Charter says about establishing international cooperation as means to resolve economic disputes, along with the multilateral trading system represented by the World Trade Organization, or do we return to an era of trade wars and unilateral measures? And lastly, do we abandon international cooperation on issues such as climate change, migration, global health, water and food security and artificial intelligence, to find ourselves in a world where each contends with the others?

I am asking these questions and trusting that most of us realize the direction that we should move forward in together.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Maniratanga (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate the Chinese presidency on the relevance of the issues addressed during its stewardship of the Security Council in February. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the People's Republic of China for organizing this essential debate on practising multilateralism and reforming and improving global governance.

The theme we are addressing today is all the more critical because it coincides with the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General has emphasized, the United Nations was founded to promote peace, justice and human dignity. Those values remain more essential than ever in our common quest for a more equitable and peaceful world. By guaranteeing international peace and security after the devastation of two world wars, the United Nations embodies both multilateralism and the hope of a more secure and stable future. However, while applauding those achievements, it is important to recognize that the world is facing new and complex challenges that require an in-depth reassessment and reform of our system of global governance.

First, with regard to multilateralism, the 80 years of the United Nations provide us with a valuable opportunity to draw and learn lessons. Multilateralism remains indispensable for resolving today's global crises. In a world in which globalization, geopolitical conflicts and transnational threats such as climate change and terrorism are redefining the contours of collective security, it is vital that we reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism based on respect for rules and international justice. While the multilateral system has enabled the United Nations to play a key role in preventing conflict and promoting cooperation, it is clear that it must evolve to meet today's challenges.

Secondly, the Security Council, which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, is confronting clear limits in its ability to respond to global crises, often exacerbated by internal divisions and a lack of solidarity. It is also imperative to remedy the historic injustice towards Africa. In that respect, Burundi reaffirms its unwavering support for the Ezulwini Consensus, adopted in 2005 by the African Union, which expresses Africa's common position on Security Council reform. According to the Consensus, Africa demands two permanent seats with the right of veto, as well as other non-permanent seats for the continent, in order to remedy its underrepresentation in international decision-making. Despite the many intergovernmental negotiations on the subject, Security Council reform continues to be hamstrung by a lack of consensus among the great Powers.

Thirdly, international law is the basis of modern global governance, but its authority is too often eroded. The ineffective implementation of Security Council resolutions and disregard for various international agreements have undermined the authority of international law and the United Nations. It is important to ensure that international law is applied uniformly and fairly so that all countries, big and small, are treated on an equal and fair footing. Arbitrariness and double standards damage the credibility of our international institutions and must be eliminated.

Fourthly, developing countries, which are often the most vulnerable, must receive greater support. We must reduce the digital divide and the inequalities in resources for combating global challenges such as climate change, conflict and cybersecurity. It is crucial for those countries to have a greater say in international decision-making processes, including global governance institutions. The current system no longer meets the requirements of a multipolar world in which every nation, irrespective of its size, desires fair representation in international decisions. The marginalization of entire continents, such as Africa, is an obstacle to a genuinely inclusive and fair approach to global challenges.

Fifthly, amid enduring armed conflicts, growing economic inequalities, climate change and other factors, our global governance has proved incapable of responding effectively and concertedly. Stalled reform, the paralysis of various institutions and a lack of credible sanctions mechanisms illustrate the need for a thorough overhaul of the current system. There is an urgent need to build a new and more representative world order in which the countries of every region, in particular those of the South, will be able to make their voices heard and influence the decisions affecting the future of the planet.

Lastly, the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), adopted during the Summit of the Future in 2024, represents a historic opportunity to reform and revitalize multilateralism. Its effective implementation is crucial to responding to today's challenges. The focus should be on the creation of a global governance system that is fairer and more inclusive, one in which international cooperation ceases to be a dream and instead becomes a reality that benefits all of us, without exception.

Burundi remains deeply committed to multilateralism and wholeheartedly supports efforts aimed at reforming and improving the global governance system. Only collective action based on the principles of international law and multilateral cooperation will enable us to tackle global challenges with lasting effect. All Member States must come together to make progress on those goals and strengthen our global Organization so as to guarantee peace, security and well-being for future generations. As the late former Secretary-General Kofi Annan put it, international cooperation is the only path to a peaceful and prosperous future. Those words have particular resonance today at a time when we are seeking to reinvent multilateralism so that it is truly inclusive and effective.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Estonia.

Mr. Tammsaar (Estonia): Estonia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union later this afternoon, and I would like to add a few words in my national capacity.

We welcome today's important and timely debate. We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing. Estonia fully supports the multilateral system, which is based on international law with the Charter of the United Nations at its core. We also recognize that the multilateral system that has served us for nearly 80 years is being increasingly challenged. And yet an absolute majority of United Nations Member States are against attempts to reincarnate the neocolonial and neo-imperial concept of spheres of influences, supported by a "might is right" modus operandi in international affairs.

Human rights are an indispensable part of an international-law based multilateral system with the United Nations and its Charter at the core. Estonia, as a rule-of-law country itself, strictly observes the principles of the universality and indivisibility of human rights and stands for those principles as a candidate for the Human Rights Council for the 2026–2028 term.

To reinforce the multilateral system, we need a strengthened legal order and a revitalized United Nations. The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), which our leaders adopted in September, is a good start as we strive for United Nations 2.0, but the true test now lies in our dedication to implementing its provisions.

We also need to reform the Security Council, which is too often failing to act, owing to the geopolitical ambitions of key players and extensive misuse of the veto power. We have to improve the Council's working methods, implement all the initiatives aimed at limiting the misuse of the veto, including the French-Mexican initiative and the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, and take the veto initiative a step further. We have to ensure the full and consistent implementation of all provisions of the Charter, in particular Article 27, paragraph 3, which stipulates that parties to a dispute shall abstain from voting in related decisions of the Security Council. We should also strengthen the role of the General Assembly on matters of peace and security. The problem is not a lack of initiatives on our part. The real problem is the absence of the collective political will to push reform of the United Nations forward and resolutely defend the core values of the Charter. If we want to reverse the decline of the political relevance of the United Nations, we should change that trend as soon as possible.

I am compelled to remind everyone today that in 2014 Russia illegally occupied Crimea, and three years ago the Kremlin launched its full-scale aggression against Ukraine, in grave violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The global community, including the General Assembly, has unequivocally condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Three years on, Russia is still the aggressor and Ukraine is still the victim of the aggression. Russia's goals have not changed. It wants to finish off the Ukrainian nation and erase sovereign Ukraine from the map. That is why we remain steadfast in our support for Ukraine's right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter. Our own experience tells us that attempts to appease a dictator and neglect accountability for crimes of aggression and war crimes lead only to further crimes and bloodshed. If we are not able to achieve a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, the global consequences for all of us will be ten times worse.

We reiterate our unwavering support for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters. By supporting a just and lasting peace in Ukraine — and I want to underline the importance of a just peace — we are supporting the Charter and international law. With that in mind, I would encourage all of Member States to support the draft resolution entitled "Advancing a comprehensive, just and

lasting peace in Ukraine" (A/ES-11/L.10), to be adopted by the General Assembly on 24 February, the third anniversary of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Estonia is fully committed to doing its share when it comes to strengthening multilateralism and to reforming the United Nations so that the Organization reflects the realities of the twenty-first century and can effectively tackle today's numerous threats and challenges.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Ms. Ong (Singapore): I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this important and timely debate on how we can strengthen multilateralism in the United Nations system. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful remarks earlier this morning.

For the past 80 years, the United Nations has been the cornerstone of our global multilateral architecture, charged with maintaining international peace and security and fostering cooperation to forge collective solutions to global problems. Member States have reaped the dividends of the peace, security and development that the United Nations has helped to deliver. But the multilateral system today is under deep and sustained stress in the face of growing geopolitical contestation and conflict. In that context, doubling down to strengthen the role of the United Nations is the only way forward if we are to find solutions to the global challenges we face today. How do we do so?

Allow me to make a few points in that regard.

First, we must go back to the basics and return to the foundational purposes and principles of the United Nations. For small States like Singapore, a multilateral, rules-based system premised on the Charter of the United Nations and international law is the very foundation for our survival. The role played by the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, on behalf of the Member States of the United Nations, is therefore critical. The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) provides a clear pathway for progress to make the United Nations and the Council more relevant, accountable and fit for purpose. We must therefore intensify our efforts to implement and operationalize key elements of Annex II of the Pact. That includes renewing our commitment to disarmament, combating transnational organized crime and terrorism, and maritime safety and security. It also includes reflecting on the Organization's peace operations to determine how the missions' mandates need to evolve in order for such operations to be effective and well-regarded on the ground.

Secondly, we cannot discuss strengthening the role and relevance of the United Nations without addressing the urgent need for Security Council reform. In particular, the overuse, misuse or threat of use of the veto has seriously impeded the effective functioning of the Council, leading to paralysis and gridlock. We call on the permanent members to demonstrate leadership by upholding the Charter and respecting international law by adhering to Article 27, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter and refraining from voting on disputes to which they are party. We also strongly support initiatives that promote restraint and accountability in the exercise of the veto.

Thirdly, a stronger and more responsive Security Council must be able to anticipate, rather than react belatedly, after a crisis has erupted or escalated. Conflict prevention must play a far bigger role in the Council's toolkit. We call on the Council to work more closely and effectively with the other main organs of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, which could facilitate early warning and response. The United Nations Charter also contains a powerful preventive diplomacy tool in

Article 99, which highlights the important role of the Secretary-General to bring any matter he believes could threaten international peace and security to the Council. When invoked, the Council must then act quickly and in a more considered fashion, particularly in cases of humanitarian catastrophes and mass atrocities.

Finally, Singapore firmly believes in strengthening the leadership role of its elected members, who make up the bulk of the Council. The 10 elected members of the Security Council have proven themselves to be effective bridge-builders when the permanent members are divided. They should be encouraged to play a more active role. That includes allowing elected members to lead on key Council files, particularly those concerning their respective regions, where their knowledge would better allow the Council to anticipate and address potential crises before they develop into full-blown conflicts. Equally importantly, we need to address the new and emerging challenges and their potential to impact international peace and security. Those include artificial intelligence, climate change and maritime security.

As we approach the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Council and the United Nations itself must adapt to reflect the realities of the contemporary world or risk irrelevance. A stronger, future-ready United Nations begins with an effective and responsive Security Council and an active General Assembly at its core. I hope that today's debate will spur concrete action by Member States to secure our collective future of peace and security, on the basis of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. That will underwrite the role and effectiveness of the United Nations for the next 80 years.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We welcome the presence this morning of His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China this morning. We congratulate you, Sir, on your wise presidency of the Council, and we thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing.

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and with the statement delivered by the representative of New Zealand, on behalf of a group of 61 Member States.

Today's debate on the practice of multilateralism, the reform of global governance and respect for international law as an indispensable process for maintaining international peace and security is of paramount importance, especially as 2025 marks the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It is an opportunity to renew our commitment to the historic mission set when the United Nations was founded — to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war — and to build a just international order, with the United Nations at the forefront as the first step in the path of multilateralism.

In that context, the question of the Middle East, in particular the question of Palestine, stands out as one of the most significant unresolved challenges to date, and one that requires the urgent attention of the international community. The State of Qatar has been warning that stability in the region and the world cannot be achieved without a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question in accordance with international legitimacy, because Palestine is not a political issue of limited geographic scope, but rather a major issue that affects the fate of peace and stability in the Middle East region and the world at large.

In that context, we note that since the beginning of the war on Gaza, the State of Qatar has made mediation efforts, which culminated, on 15 January, in a ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement in Gaza between Israel and Hamas, in partnership with the Arab Republic of Egypt and the United States. We hope that the implementation

of that agreement will pave the way for a credible political process leading to a comprehensive and just peace for the Palestinian question, in a manner that achieves the right to self-determination for the brotherly Palestinian people and guarantees the establishment of their independent and sovereign State along the 1967 borders.

The State of Qatar renews its call for the adoption of a comprehensive approach that ensures conflict prevention and sustainable peace. In that context, we are proud of our mediation efforts, which have contributed to de-escalation and the resolution of many conflicts. Qatar's mediation efforts reflect a practical commitment to its foreign policy vision based on the principles of peaceful dispute resolution, dialogue and preventive diplomacy so as to bolster efforts to maintain international peace and security.

The State of Qatar affirms that double standards in the practice of international relations undermine the authority of the international rule of law. Therefore, ensuring the equal and uniform application of international law by all States and international judicial institutions must be a goal and a priority for all. In that context, we renew our call for strengthening the role of the Security Council in discharging its primary responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security. We therefore stress the necessity of accelerating the process of Security Council reform in order to enable it to meet the challenges of maintaining international peace and security.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar reiterates its principled and firm commitment to multilateralism. We also renew our call for accelerating the process of reforming and improving global governance so as to strengthen our collective capacity to respond effectively to global challenges.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): I wish to start by thanking China for organizing today's important discussion.

Poland perceives multilateralism as, first and foremost, cooperation based on trust and founded on equal and just rules, as well as the belief that working together is more profitable and beneficial than the alternative. Effective multilateralism must be built on the fundamental understanding of common values based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The current international order, anchored in the rule of law, was created in response to the atrocities and devastation of the Second World War. Although international law remains the bulwark against war, tyranny and injustice, it is being constantly undermined and breached. Its supposedly sacrosanct principles, such as the prohibition of the use of force or the threat of use of force, as well as sovereignty and territorial integrity, have been flagrantly violated in recent years. Those violations continue to bring instability and suffering in many parts of the world. From my region's perspective, the most glaring example in that regard is Russia, a permanent member of the Council, which has waged a full-scale aggression against Ukraine and is posing a constant and significant threat to the order based on international law.

In order to strengthen multilateralism based on trust and the rule of law, we should first of all focus on ensuring accountability for all of its violations. It is crucial that the aggressor bear the legal consequences of its illegal actions. International courts play a leading role in holding States and individuals accountable for violations of international law, including international crimes. Secondly, the international community should stand behind the victims of such violations. Thirdly, we see an important role for international organizations, including the United Nations, in strengthening international law and promoting friendly relations between States, based on common values and interests. In the context of the war initiated by Russia, we

therefore support the creation of a new special tribunal to try the crime of aggression against Ukraine and the establishment of a claims commission for Ukraine. We also encourage all States to join the agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

The adoption and ongoing implementation of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) is not only a joint success; it is also a clear signal that we are ready to make bold progress. Poland expects that by implementing the Pact we will be able to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations, including with regard to the work of the Security Council, which should play a special role in achieving peace and alleviating world crises. For a long time now, we have been witnessing one of the Council's permanent members — Russia — violate the Charter of the United Nations and abuse its veto power, thereby paralysing the Council. That only confirms that comprehensive reform is essential. The Council should prove its ability to adapt to the world's political dynamics. First, that goal could be achieved by responsible use of the Council's prerogatives such as the veto power. Secondly, the make-up of the Council should reflect the current geopolitical stakeholders. And thirdly, its working methods should be further adjusted to promote more equitable participation by all Council members.

There can be no peace without sustainable development and international solidarity. Poland advocates a holistic approach to development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding. We emphasize the importance of linking those three dimensions and inviting a wide range of stakeholders to participate. We underline the importance of supporting democracy, the rule of law and good governance, including transparent regulations and reliable electoral processes, and also of building resilience with whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to respond to crises in a coordinated manner. Sustainable economic and social development in the long term require strong and transparent public institutions, which are indispensable to building resilience in every area, particularly by creating an appropriate legal framework and a proper business environment that can attract private capital to finance investments and development needs. Using a variety of financial instruments to support partner countries in building strong institutions and ensuring good governance is crucial.

As we approach the eightieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, we all understand that no matter how hard we try, some threats will never be fully countered. Nevertheless, what we find concerning in that context is that some States are not merely trying to challenge the established order — they are seeking to overturn it completely. Their goal is to restore the concert of Powers, reinstate spheres of influence, bring back subjugation and dependence and revive old empires. Like many others, my country suffered as a victim of such practices and aspirations for centuries. In January, Poland hosted the commemoration of the eightieth anniversary of the liberation of the German Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Such tragic occasions remind us all of what preceded the current international order. Let us never forget what the bleak alternative is.

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

Mr. Van Schalkwyk (South Africa): The Republic of South Africa congratulates His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi and the People's Republic of China on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. South Africa would like to express its appreciation to China for drawing attention to the persistent challenges that we are seeing to the effective practice of multilateralism and to the critical need for reforming and improving global governance, particularly in relation to the Security Council and its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The Republic of South Africa, as a founding member of the United Nations, and as a country that benefited from United Nations solidarity during the dark decades of apartheid and discrimination, serves as an example of the positive impact of

multilateralism. It was only through sustained collective action and solidarity on the part of the international community that South Africa came to truly embrace the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. That includes respect for international law, the sovereignty and equality of all nation States and the inviolable human rights of all people. A commitment to multilateral engagement has enabled South Africa to become a robust participant in international affairs, including the General Assembly and the Security Council, as our country seeks to promote the importance of collective action and shared responsibility.

None of us can deny that the States Members of the United Nations are all interconnected within one global village. The negative impacts of violence, war, poverty, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change affect all of humankind. The global challenges of our modern era far exceed the capacity of any single country and require the collective and cooperative efforts of all Member States. While the United Nations has had many successes over the past 80 years, it has also experienced many failures, mostly owing to Member States' inaction and the inability of some to subordinate narrow self-interest to broad collective goals. We should remember that the United Nations is only as strong as the goodwill, positive intentions and commitment of its Member States. The achievements and failures of the United Nations are thus those of its Members.

South Africa urges the Council to recall the undertakings of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1). The Pact committed Member States to move away from the threat and use of force towards collective and peaceful cooperation, and to strive for a world that is secure, stable, peaceful and prosperous, respects international law, sovereignty and territorial integrity and in which political independence is upheld. The Pact also recognizes the need to rejuvenate and reinvigorate the multilateral system — including the Security Council and international financial institutions — reflect the current realities of the international community, effectively address the serious challenges that the world is facing and deliver positively on conflict prevention and resolution.

When Member States consider the future of the Security Council, we should not forget that the conditions that existed at the time when the United Nations was conceived no longer prevail. Reform of the Council is therefore urgent. Successful collective action, free from the overriding narrow national interests of a few, with a view to addressing increasingly complex global challenges that compromise international peace, security and sustainable development, will be possible only when meaningful reform of the Security Council is achieved.

In conclusion, the Republic of South Africa takes the position that positive and collaborative multilateral cooperation, through a consistent commitment to international law and the Charter of the United Nations, remains the best vehicle through which the international community can realize collective and lasting peace, stability, security, development and prosperity.

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

Mr. Llosa (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru is a founding member of this Organization, and as such, a firm believer that international peace and security are the supreme values that should guide the joint work of the international community, based on respect for the freedom of peoples and the defence and protection of human rights, as established in the Charter of the United Nations. My country has therefore been observing with growing concern the increasingly visible trends of scepticism and disenchantment with the Organization's effectiveness, a perception that extends to multilateralism and the other institutions of global governance. That is why we underscore the relevance of the debate that has been proposed for this occasion.

Today, like 80 years ago, the need to preserve international peace and security is an imperative that we must not ignore. The complex reality of today's world, which is subject to various threats, represents an enormous challenge, perhaps even greater than that faced in 1945, when consensus and a shared vision prevailed. However, this situation should also be seen as an opportunity to renew the efforts of nations to build a world in which respect for international law is the basis for stability and the rule of peace. In the specific case of the Security Council, it is necessary and important to make progress in its reform process.

United Nations programmes and mechanisms have been essential in promoting development, stability and inclusion around the world. In the current circumstances, we must strengthen them so that they become more effective and transparent tools and thus restore hope in the world, especially among the most vulnerable peoples, because throughout the history of this Organization, it has become evident that international peace and security are based on justice and equity.

Multilateralism must evolve to remain relevant and to meet the demands of the present and the future. We must not lose sight of the fact that our task is to build a more inclusive, equitable and effective international system as a prerequisite for peace.

Today, like 80 years ago, Peru is ready and firmly committed to contributing to efforts in that direction. As a founding member of the United Nations, Peru, which has actively contributed to efforts to strengthen multilateralism, reaffirms its commitment to the founding purposes and principles of the Organization as the most effective tool in addressing global challenges.

Together, we can work to ensure that the United Nations and the system of global governance continue to be key drivers for peace, security and development. May our actions serve as a legacy for future generations, showing that cooperation and commitment are the pillars of shared progress.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): For eight decades, the United Nations has been the cornerstone of multilateralism and the maintenance of international peace and security, an assertion that is now facing valid questions.

Ecuador therefore thanks the People's Republic of China and His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, for convening this meeting, which enables us to dialogue in search of answers to the problems posed by the complex international scene. I thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for his statement. I also thank the representative of New Zealand, who spoke on behalf of approximately 60 countries, for her statement, with which my country aligned itself.

The Charter of the United Nations, signed in San Francisco — together with international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions — told humankind that the strength of law must prevail over the law of the strongest. International law was therefore established as a pillar of multilateralism, and respect for it has become a sine qua non condition for sustaining and strengthening the multilateral system. However, geopolitical divisions have led to the breakdown of international law, which has hindered the Security Council's work in responding to deepening and escalating situations and conflicts and has also undermined the credibility of the entire Organization. Consequently, there is a shared responsibility of all States to respect the Charter of the United Nations, regardless of their political, economic and military weight, because that is the only way to restore the faith in effective multilateralism, that is, in a multilateral system

that is able to provide valid, collective and coordinated responses to the common challenges facing humankind.

International cooperation based on law, mutual respect and the pursuit of the common good is the only viable way to address challenges such as the climate crisis, pandemics, inequality, terrorism and transnational organized crime. Multilateralism is not just an option in the face of those scourges; it is also a necessity. Unilateral actions are inappropriate in a multipolar world.

However, there is a need for gradual reform of the multilateral system that includes at least three lines of action.

First, there must be a reform of the Security Council. Ecuador will continue to support a reform that is limited to an ethical model of democracy, based on the principles of rotation and accountability, adapted to the reality and diversity of the contemporary world, without new vetoes or privileges contrary to the sovereign equality of States — in other words, an ambitious but realistic reform.

Secondly, we also cannot wait for a reform of the global financial architecture and its institutions that responds to the needs of the global South. It is essential to address structural inequalities in decision-making and move towards equitable representation of developing countries.

Thirdly, global governance must focus on narrowing the gap between developed and developing countries, ensuring equitable access to resources, technologies and opportunities.

The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) has set out ambitious actions to achieve those goals. Now is the time to translate those commitments into concrete actions, ensuring an inclusive and results-oriented framework for cooperation. Effective multilateralism is not an abstract ideal, but rather an indispensable tool for building a world of peace and development. History has shown time and again that when States work together with will, determination and good faith progress is possible.

Ecuador stands ready to do its part and trusts that this debate will contribute to a more just, effective and representative global governance.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Ćurić Hrvatinić (Croatia): We congratulate you, Mr. President, on your presidency for this month and for organizing this important debate.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to underline a few points from my national perspective.

Multilateralism is not a zero-sum game. It builds on the understanding of shared responsibility and collective action to the benefit of all — a rising tide meant to lift all boats. And if multilateralism is favourable in simple and prosperous times, it is essential in the increasingly interconnected world of today to be a safe harbour, shielded by the rules-based international order, respect for international law and human rights.

Multilateralism relies on cooperation, trust, solidarity, equality and inclusivity. Without it, it is empty of true content and its mission deprived of purpose. And it is in that area that we have seen our global system retreat.

The cooperative spirit that has long underpinned international relations, embodied by the United Nations, is under severe strain. There is an urgent need for a continued and meaningful reform to tackle emerging challenges, including ones coming with new technologies and non-traditional security threats. It is crucial that

international institutions continue evolving to meet the demands of today's rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), with its 56 actions, is our implementation road map, aimed at making the multilateral system more effective, representative and capable of addressing current challenges and seizing opportunities ahead. It emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and participation in global governance. Its actions include reforming the Security Council and increasing its responsibility, efficiency, transparency and representativeness; strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission and reforming peacekeeping; enhancing the voice of developing countries in international financial institutions; establishing frameworks for digital cooperation and AI governance; and engaging and empowering more women and youth.

In 2023 and 2024, as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Croatia proudly championed prevention, including through promoting inclusion, identifying national prevention strategies and strengthening interlinkages between peace, development, humanitarian efforts and human rights. And we will continue on that path.

As we celebrate the eightieth anniversary of this unique Organization and its general body of work, we should remind ourselves of the centrality of multilateralism in maintaining world peace and prosperity. Our actions today — and every day — determine if we are letting it erode or are continuing to build on it and making it better.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

At the outset, allow us to convey our respects to His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi, Member of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and member of our Group, while welcoming his decision of choosing such a relevant theme for this meeting, particularly amid the current international situation. We also thank the Secretary-General for his valuable contribution to this debate.

The United Nations is the greatest expression of multilateralism. Our Organization, which emerged almost 80 years ago from the ashes of the Second World War, has made great achievements in various fields. Today's world, however, is not a safer one — not from a security, economic, financial, environmental, energy or food standpoint. In parallel, both multilateralism and the United Nations system as a whole are being continuously attacked and undermined. It is therefore up to us to ensure that the international system that we have built together is not condemned to the same fate as the League of Nations due to its inability to respond to the interlinked challenges of the twenty-first century or to the lack of political willingness from certain actors to accept the emergence of a multipolar world.

For example, this very Security Council, which is mandated by the founding Charter of our Organization to maintain international peace and security, remains at a deadlock on an issue to which we have historically attached great importance — the issue of Palestine. Its lack of timely action due to the abuse of the veto power by the United States Government, has enabled Israel to enjoy unprecedented impunity and has emboldened it to perpetuate its illegal occupation and continued aggression against the Palestinian people over time. Its actions in Gaza alone, over the past 16 months, have claimed the lives of more than 48,000 innocent civilians, including women and children, with more victims by the day. We therefore call on the United

States of America to shoulder its responsibilities so that this organ can effectively and fully discharge the critical mandate entrusted to it and preserve its legitimacy and credibility, particularly when it comes to promoting the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and the realization of a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects. That includes addressing the plight of the Palestinian refugees and the realization of their right to return, in accordance with international law, the relevant United Nations resolutions, the United Nations Charter and on the basis of the two-State solution, in a manner that allows for the establishment of an independent, sovereign and viable Palestinian State along the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Having said that, we hope that the recent ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip, which must become permanent and include the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, will be an important practical step towards the long-term stabilization of the situation on the ground and that it will also create the necessary conditions for unimpeded humanitarian access — consistently, safely and to scale — to those in desperate need and for improving the situation in the Middle East region as a whole. However, that does not absolve this organ. We therefore reiterate that all members of the Security Council must shoulder their responsibilities, including on the basis of the relevant provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and must also ensure that resolutions adopted by this organ on the question of Palestine are fully respected and implemented, mindful of the fact that these serve as the foundation for the attainment of the just and lasting solution that has eluded us for so long and that, ultimately, has perpetuated this historic injustice against the Palestinian people.

Against that backdrop, it must be said that, regrettably, the situation is no different in the development sphere. The global South is currently far from reaching the internationally agreed goals and targets, due to a prevailing system that, from its inception, was crafted under a colonial mindset aimed only at perpetuating dependence and dominance. The gap between North and South has only deepened in recent years, despite the availability of the resources needed for our developing nations to thrive. We therefore insist that the time has come for concrete actions in order to achieve the necessary reform of the international financial architecture, which is a prerequisite for the establishment of the just and equitable world order that we yearn for and will yield lasting peace and prosperity for all.

In an interdependent and interconnected world, we need multilateralism and the United Nations more than ever. We must engage in true multilateralism that is inclusive and takes into account the views, priorities and concerns of all, without distinction or exclusion of any sort, as each national contribution is essential to achieving the goals and realizing the pillars of the Organization, based on strict adherence and respect for international law. We need more dialogue and good-faith engagement — not less. We need more mutual respect, understanding and tolerance — not less. Ultimately, we need to promote a genuine culture of peace and recapture the spirit of unity that prevailed in San Francisco in 1945.

Against the backdrop of the current global situation, marked by increasing uncertainty, instability, mistrust and tensions around the world, there is no room for unilateral and punitive approaches or for the weaponization of common values and institutions for the sake of advancing selfish political agendas. Those approaches must be dismissed altogether, as must any type of zero-sum game or attempt to divide our world into blocs. The time has come for us to work together, decisively, seeking to build consensus in order to establish a fair, equal, sustainable, inclusive and indivisible global security architecture, on the one hand, and to overcome the pressing challenges and emerging threats ahead, on the other — whether such threats are in the field of development, climate change or cyberspace or are the result of

the re-emergence of supremacist ideologies that we all thought humankind had already vanquished.

Similarly, we call on all responsible members of the international community to join us in this common struggle for the defence of the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, in their entirety and interconnectedness, and for the promotion of strict adherence to their letter and spirit, insofar as they are the primary source of international law and the best guarantee for avoiding both a new world war and chaos in international relations. We emphasize that if we truly want to unleash and fully realize the great power of multilateralism, diplomacy and the United Nations as a whole, the Charter of the United Nations offers a clear path, provided that we do away with double standards, unilateralism and convenient interpretations of and selective approaches to the application of international law and the principles enshrined in that historic treaty, which remains a true act of faith in the best of humankind.

In conclusion, we affirm our readiness to uphold multilateralism, explore ways to achieve political settlements of the world's crises in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter and foster constructive discussions that enable us to enhance global governance. Together with the necessary progress in democratizing international relations and consolidating a multipolar system rooted in international law, we firmly believe that is what will allow us to promote social progress and ensure our people's welfare and standard of living in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, through greater solidarity, cooperation, justice and equality in international relations.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking China for placing multilateralism at the heart of this debate and the Secretary-General for his briefing.

Switzerland's commitment to multilateralism, based on international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is firm and unequivocal. Multilateralism is not optional. It is vital. Founded in the shared need for peace in the aftermath of the world wars, the community of nations is a bulwark against conflict and a space in which we can bring our know-how to bear and our ideas to fruition. Conversely, the dismantling of multilateralism raises the spectre of new rivalries, obstacles to ideas and products and the erosion of fundamental gains. History has shown that no country, however great, is capable of facing the challenges of an increasingly interconnected world alone. When multilateralism is weakened, we must reinvigorate it with political will and targeted reforms to make it effective. Our leaders routinely call for concrete ideas to that end, as they did at the General Assembly's adoption of the Pact for the Future (resolution 79/1) in 2024. Switzerland shares that interest in seeing tangible proposals. At the next review of the United Nations peace architecture and at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, we will pledge to make the Pact's recommendations for a more peaceful, just and prosperous world a reality.

Security Council action will remain decisive in achieving those objectives. Even after our recent term on the Council as an elected member, we have continued to call for an accountable, transparent and inclusive Security Council, in particular in our capacity as a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. We must be able to restrict and ensure the responsible use of the veto if we are to be capable of preventing the commission of atrocities under the pretext of stalemate in the Council. The privilege of serving on the Council goes hand in hand with responsibilities laid down by the Charter, especially in Article 27, paragraph 3. The rule that a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting on issues related to

it must be reaffirmed and observed from now on. Switzerland is also committed to an effective Security Council, capable of anticipating the sweeping changes of our times, which represent both progress and threats to humankind. Through the presidential statement on the impact of scientific developments for international peace and security (S/PRST/2024/6) adopted during our presidency in October 2024, the Council unanimously reaffirmed the pledge to leave no one behind as science, technology and innovation march ahead.

The Charter, international law and human rights are the foundations of our multilateral edifice. Peace and security, human rights and sustainable development are its three pillars. The principal organs of the United Nations are its keystone. Multilateralism must also be embodied in the exalted venues where we gather and where the most innovative ideas and most pressing human needs cross-fertilize. For almost 80 years Geneva has afforded the United Nations and other international, humanitarian and scientific organizations such a space. In August 2024, Switzerland invited the members of the Council there on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. That commemoration served as a reminder that the multilateral order rests on shared rules such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The adoption in May 2024 of resolution 2730 (2024), on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, and the support that the initiative drew from a large majority of Member States, is proof of the global commitment to international law and a rules-based system, even in wartime. If it is to remain the irreplaceable glue that binds people, ideas and values, multilateralism must be bolstered, not weakened. That means allowing people, ideas and discoveries to circulate unfettered and in safety for the greater good of all.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Ms. Moutchou (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The Kingdom of Morocco welcomes the holding of this high-level meeting dedicated to a fundamental issue of our times — the strengthening of multilateralism and the reform of global governance. We thank the Chinese presidency of the Security Council for its important and timely initiative, which invites us to reflect together on the future of the international system.

In 2025 we will commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, which is an opportunity to learn the lessons of the past and rekindle our commitment to a multilateralism that is more inclusive and effective and better suited to the twenty-first century. The anniversary represents not only a time for reflection but also an opportunity to strengthen international institutions for fairer and more effective global governance.

Today, when the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations are being tested by multiple crises, it is imperative to foster multilateralism and accelerate reforms for a more inclusive and representative system. The Kingdom of Morocco underlines the importance of rethinking multilateral action by devising innovative approaches with a view to tackling our current and future challenges. As His Majesty King Mohammed VI underscored in his message to the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in October 2023,

> “[t]he economic, social and political developments witnessed in recent years call for reforming the institutions and rules governing multilateralism. However, the basic principles underlying it ought to be consolidated and the spirit that drives multilateralism revitalized.”

The Kingdom of Morocco fully supports the Secretary-General’s initiatives aimed at strengthening the United Nations and its multilateral action. We acknowledge the United Nations as the most effective framework for cooperation in addressing

global challenges and strengthening international solidarity. The adoption of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) at the Summit of the Future in 2024 represents a significant stride towards revitalizing multilateralism, with the United Nations at its heart. It is now crucial to translate the Pact's commitments into concrete actions, in particular through the following measures.

First, the Security Council must be reformed so as to reflect current geopolitical realities with enhanced representation for developing countries, especially those in Africa. Secondly, the role of international law must be strengthened to ensure that international rules are applied fairly. Thirdly, we need greater inclusion of developing countries in global governance, particularly in the areas of trade, finance and security. Fourthly, cooperation must be stepped up to bridge the digital divide and build resilience to today's challenges, including climate change and cybersecurity. Fifthly, we need a fairer and more inclusive international financial architecture that affords greater support to the most vulnerable economies.

Morocco is committed to the values of dialogue and peace and has been working tirelessly for a renewed and pragmatic multilateralism aimed at advancing international peace and security. The Kingdom is fully committed to United Nations efforts for peace, including through the deployment of Royal Moroccan Army contingents within peace operations, reinforced by a supportive and active South-South cooperation focused on countering the root causes of conflicts related to poverty, in particular in Africa. We reiterate our commitment to the sacrosanct principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and firmly reject any form of separatism.

The United Nations was established to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", according to the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations. That commitment is now more relevant than ever. Today we have a historic responsibility to reform and reinforce multilateralism to ensure that it meaningfully and effectively addresses the challenges of the twenty-first century and the aspirations of all. Morocco reaffirms its commitment to working alongside all Member States to promote renewed multilateralism, based on solidarity and respect for international law, with more equitable global governance.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia.

Mr. Senbeta (Ethiopia): At the outset, I would like to join others in congratulating you, Mr. President, on China's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and its organization of today's debate on a topic of vital importance.

This year we will mark the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, an occasion that enables us to reflect on what we have achieved together as a community of nations. The importance of multilateralism and global governance, anchored in the United Nations, has been a hallmark of Ethiopia's foreign policy. In addition to its role as a founding member of the Organization, Ethiopia has been committed to collective security under the United Nations. We began contributing troops to the cause of world peace and security following its inception and continue to do so today. Like many in the global South, Ethiopia has long called for an effective and genuine multilateralism, a call that is also informed by its profound, age-old experience. When the then-League of Nations failed to listen to Ethiopia's appeal for collective action in the face of aggression, we had to carry the weight of defending our sovereignty on our own. As a founding member of the United Nations and the seat of the African Union, Ethiopia has also witnessed the timeless ideals of genuine cooperation that led to the independence of many of our sister African countries from the yoke of colonialism — a stain on the conscience of humankind whose justified end has not yet arrived, as was discussed at the recently concluded African Union Summit.

We recognize that we are once again at a historic juncture where our efforts to reform the current system should begin in earnest. The importance of reforming the international financial architecture cannot be an assignment-in-waiting while debt threatens to crush Africa's prospects for development. Africa, a continent of 54 States, still lacks permanent representation on the Security Council. Climate change is adversely affecting the lives of the most vulnerable. Emerging technologies such as cybertechnology and artificial intelligence require new governance norms. For decades the global South has been calling for change as it struggles in a system that is less and less responsive to the needs of the time. The prevailing multilateral system should be reformed to work together with regional blocs such as the African Union as a fundamental pillar of the international security architecture and should be ready to fund its initiatives.

There are opportunities for more inclusive global governance. Yet the outcome will also depend on how well we manage the risks of disorder and conflict. While every Member State can and should contribute to the vision of a better future, the more powerful must demonstrate willingness for reform. It is perhaps worth repeating the far-sighted warning of Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie, who said,

> "The great nations of the world would do well to remember that in the modern age even their own fates are not wholly in their hands. Peace demands the united efforts of us all. Who can foresee what spark might ignite the fuse?" (*A/PV.1229, para.35*).

Finally, let me reiterate our call for ensuring that our multilateral efforts to shape our future are anchored in the United Nations, where diverse voices can be heard. Genuine multilateralism, which embraces differences and values equitable representation in all its facets, is crucial to enhancing cooperation and sustaining international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Vasconcelos (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I heartily commend the People's Republic of China for convening this open debate to analyse the importance of improving global governance and in particular of the value of multilateralism.

The past few months have undoubtedly tested the international architecture in a way probably not seen since 1945, when the United Nations was founded. It is clear that now, almost eight decades after its creation, the Organization must adapt to the current dynamics of international relations and not allow its relevance to be put in question. The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) of September 2024 reinforced our countries' collective commitment to the United Nations and outlined specific actions for addressing both long-standing and emerging challenges. I would like to consider three points from Mexico's perspective.

First, we cannot be complacent about the status quo. We need to carry out comprehensive reforms of the multilateral architecture, ranging from the Security Council to international financial institutions. The proposals for reform must be commensurate with the enormity of the problems we face. We cannot replicate models that have shown their limitations. The veto is a clear example of how the particular interests of a single country can take precedence over the collective will of the international community. While advocating for comprehensive reform of the Security Council that will democratize it rather than reproduce privileges for a handful of countries, Mexico also calls on countries that have not yet done so to join the French-Mexican initiative on restricting the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities.

Secondly, the use or threat of force runs counter to the Charter of the United Nations, and the Council therefore cannot normalize any action aimed at opting

for the use of force over international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Mexico has already stated its position on some countries' invocation of Article 51 of the Charter, on States' inherent right to self-defence, to preventively use force on the territory of another State without its consent. That dangerous reinterpretation of international law undermines the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations and puts the collective security system of the United Nations in jeopardy.

Thirdly, there is a long list of treaties and conventions that the international community could negotiate to fill legal gaps on many issues, thereby avoiding the temptation to opt for unilateral action. Likewise, given the demand for accountability and enforcement of the rule of law, the universalization of the Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court and the acceptance by all countries of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice are more important than ever. There is no justification whatsoever for any action that seeks to hinder their independent and impartial judicial work.

Multilateralism is not just an option; it is a necessity to ensure international peace and security. It is at critical moments such as the current juncture that multilateralism should display its virtues, becoming the axis and reflection of geopolitical changes. Multilateralism, and especially the United Nations, represents our best bet to ensure that international relations are conducted through cooperation among nations and the legal certainty of international law, and never by the law of force. Mexico will continue to work to ensure that multilateralism remains current and regains the confidence that it has lost in recent years.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Iravani (Islamic Republic of Iran): We appreciate China for organizing this important and timely high-level open debate. We also thank Minister Wang Yi and the Secretary-General for their valuable briefings, and for reaffirming the vital role of multilateralism.

Multilateralism is essential for tackling global challenges, requiring adherence to international law, transparency and accountability. However, trust in multilateral institutions is declining owing to selective international law, unilateral coercion and violations of sovereign equality.

In that context, I wish to highlight the following points.

First, multilateral mechanisms lose their credibility when manipulated for political agendas. The selective enforcement of international norms, imposition of unilateral sanctions and economic coercion undermine the core principles of multilateralism. The United States and its Western allies, which enforce unlawful unilateral coercive measures, must be held accountable for the suffering, death and destruction they cause to targeted nations, including my own people, in blatant violation of international law and the basic principles of human rights.

Secondly, the Security Council must uphold its mandate to resolve conflicts through multilateral cooperation. However, its current structure fails to reflect global power shifts and the legitimate aspirations of the global South. To restore its credibility, the Council must become more representative, democratic and accountable. A truly inclusive body, with equitable regional representation, would enhance both its legitimacy and effectiveness. Regrettably, certain permanent members have repeatedly exploited the Council to advance their own political interests. A glaring example is the United States' persistent use of its veto to shield Israel from accountability for its systematic violations of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular its genocidal crimes against the Palestinian people and acts of aggression against other nations in the region. Gaza

is the rightful land of the Palestinian people, and Iran strongly condemns the United States' colonial plan to forcibly displace and uproot the Palestinians from their own land. It is a flagrant violation of international law and a grave assault on fundamental human rights.

Thirdly, the global financial system, shaped by outdated institutions, must be restructured to ensure fair participation for developing nations. Their marginalization deepens inequalities and hinders sustainable development.

We face a critical choice — allow divisions and unilateralism to dictate global affairs, or reaffirm our commitment to a just, equitable and rules-based international order upheld by the United Nations system. To do the latter, we must take decisive action.

First, global governance must be built on open, fair and transparent negotiations, ensuring disputes are resolved through diplomacy, not coercion.

Secondly, the United Nations must ensure all nations have fair access to technology, resources and trade, fostering sustainable growth for all.

Thirdly, closer collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the African Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS Plus, will reinforce collective security and economic resilience.

As a founding member of the United Nations, the Islamic Republic of Iran once more reaffirms its sustained commitment to effective multilateralism, grounded in international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Ray (Nepal): I wish to congratulate the People's Republic of China on assuming the presidency of the Security Council, and to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate.

The essence of multilateralism is working together, sharing responsibilities and recognizing that collective action is stronger than individual effort. There are numerous historical and contemporary examples that demonstrate that nations have repeatedly turned to multilateralism after other approaches could not succeed. We are confident that we need no more such experiments.

Multilateralism is more important now than ever owing to the interconnected nature of global challenges. Issues such as climate change, pandemics, economic instability and inequality require collective action and cooperation among nations. The United Nations, as the world's most significant multilateral institution, has embodied multilateralism through its structure, mission and impact for 80 years. It was built on the aspirations of a war-ravaged world to secure peace, uphold international law and promote shared prosperity.

The United Nations continues to provide a platform for countries to work together, share resources and find common solutions to those complex problems. We are happy to see that the United Nations has continued to evolve and reform. There are still much-needed reforms expected for long periods in the institution. However, heightening geopolitical rivalries, power struggles, rising nationalism, populism and protectionism are severely undermining the very essence of multilateralism.

At such a challenging time, the Pact for the Future, adopted last year (General Assembly resolution 79/1), provides us with a blueprint to revitalize multilateralism. Reforming and improving global governance are urgently needed. It is imperative that we make maximum efforts to reform the United Nations system, making it more representative, responsive, effective and capable of fulfilling its mandate. We

should reinvigorate the political will and strength to rebuild trust and reinforce the commitment to multilateralism.

In that context, the Security Council must be more effective and decisive through unity and solidarity. The Council should not be paralysed, nor should it be held hostage to any vested interest. We must reaffirm the primacy of international law, ensuring its equal and consistent application to all nations, irrespective of power or influence. The selective application of international agreements and the failure to implement Security Council resolutions undermine global trust in multilateral institutions.

I wish to emphasize that we must enhance and scale up our collective action to bridge the development and digital divides. Increasing the representation of developing nations in global financial institutions is highly important. Developing countries, particularly least developed countries, must be empowered to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes so that outcomes are responsive to the aspirations of all. Inclusive global partnerships are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and fostering a just, equitable and sustainable economic order.

Nepal firmly believes in the indispensable role of multilateralism in ensuring international peace and security, realizing sustainable development and promoting human rights. The Charter of the United Nations is the foundation of our international relations and foreign policy. We call for a renewed spirit of cooperation to uphold the United Nations Charter, strengthen multilateral institutions and ensure that no nation is left behind.

I would like to conclude by reiterating that the sky is vast enough for all birds to fly without collision.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of Kyrgyzstan.

Mrs. Kasymalieva (Kyrgyzstan): I congratulate the People's Republic of China on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, and we wish our Chinese friends a successful stewardship of the Council in the interest of international peace and security. We commend the Chinese presidency for convening today's open debate on such a highly relevant topic of the present time.

Kyrgyzstan was admitted to the United Nations in 1992, shortly after the declaration of its national independence. Since then, Kyrgyzstan has been an exemplary member that is fully committed to its own international obligations, international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Kyrgyzstan has also chosen multilateralism as a key foreign policy priority and has been pursuing multidimensional cooperation with the United Nations, as well as with fellow Member States. Today, as we prepare to mark the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, Kyrgyzstan voices full support for the Organization and the Secretary-General, Mr. Guterres, for the dedicated service to maintaining global security, addressing global social, economic and climate challenges and protecting human rights and freedoms.

We are meeting today at a turning point in modern history. The security crisis in the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe are pushing humankind closer to the brink of a new global conflict. We are already at the red line, beyond which only more cowards in international affairs will likely go. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan calls for the immediate détente of international tensions. What can Member States do to maintain international peace and security?

First, comprehensive multilateralism is the only way forward. All Member States should faithfully and unambiguously implement the principles and provisions of international law under the United Nations Charter, as well as fulfil the obligations

that United Nations membership entails. That is a guarantee for a secure future for humankind.

Secondly, the Security Council must live up to the very cause for which it was established and demonstrate genuine leadership in the maintenance of international peace and stability. The permanent members should listen to the opinion of the General Assembly and take decisions that meet the collective interests of the world community. We call for no more vetoes when it comes to stopping wars and conflicts.

Thirdly, the Security Council must also live up to the spirit of the times and meet the requirements of the current realities of international life in order to be able to fulfil the functions and responsibilities assigned to the Council. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan also advocates for the qualitative and quantitative reform of the Council, aimed at improving its working methods and expanding its membership on the basis of balanced regional representation. In particular, we believe that the expansion of the Council's composition would contribute to achieving our common goal of a more inclusive, transparent, accountable and effective Council in the twenty-first century.

Kyrgyzstan fully subscribes to the view that some regions and groups of States remain underrepresented and even unrepresented in the Council. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan recognizes the legitimate aspiration of African States for an enlarged membership in the Council. We share the respective vision of the Group of African States for Africa's enhanced representation in the Council. Kyrgyzstan notes with dismay that more than 50 small States have never served on the Council. In that regard, we welcome the proposal submitted that recognizes the need for resolving the question of the representation of small States and small island developing States in the Council. Kyrgyzstan is among the small States that have yet to serve on the Council. In that connection, we look forward to unanimous support from fellow Member States in redressing such a historical injustice and the election of Kyrgyzstan as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in June 2026.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Mrs. Gregoire-van Haaren (Kingdom of the Netherlands): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and China for organizing this open debate on the important topic of multilateralism. The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, still to be delivered. I would like to add the following points in our national capacity.

In our view, multilateralism, in its current state, requires a three-pillar approach. Multilateralism needs to be protected, strengthened and reformed.

I will begin with protect. For nearly 80 years, the Charter of the United Nations has been the foundation of the multilateral system. Yet the ongoing violations of the Charter are eroding the very principles that have upheld global stability for decades. We must stand firm in defending those principles. To that end, we must continue to denounce acts of aggression and human rights violations. We must strengthen accountability and fight against impunity to ensure that might does not make right. Multilateralism is like a bridge built over turbulent waters. It is strong when reinforced but fragile when compromised. If Member States chip away at its pillars instead of strengthening them, we may soon find ourselves with no safe passage forward, only widening divides beneath our feet.

My second point is: strengthen. The United Nations is the most legitimate and universal forum to address global challenges, and it needs to be strengthened. That is why the Kingdom of the Netherlands remains strongly committed to a robust United Nations that is fit for purpose, serving our collective aims for peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) from 2025 to 2026, we are dedicated to supporting the United

Nations efforts towards our sustainable peace. Effective cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission is essential. We therefore encourage the Security Council to reach out to the Peacebuilding Commission on a more regular basis for advice on peacebuilding priorities in specific country situations and mandates. The peacebuilding architecture review this year provides a fitting opportunity to further strengthen the relationship between the PBC and this very Council.

My third and last point is on reform. If we want a rules-based system to endure, all nations, big and small, must have a meaningful voice in shaping its future. It is therefore essential to reform our institutions to make them more effective and efficient, as well as more inclusive. The Security Council urgently needs to be reformed in order to remain effective and relevant in the twenty-first century. It is important to remember that membership of the Security Council is not merely a privilege; it comes with profound responsibilities. The Kingdom of the Netherlands supports a limited expansion of both the non-permanent and the permanent seat categories. We are supportive of proposals that lead to a better geographical representation, especially of Africa.

The fourth International Conference on Financing for Development also provides opportunities to further enhance the international financial architecture, building on what has been achieved so far. The Kingdom of the Netherlands will constructively engage in those discussions.

In conclusion, the United Nations Charter underpins and facilitates the international order. That came about with hard-learned lessons from history. Let us together safeguard that cornerstone of our shared values so that generations to come can inherit a world in which peace is not just a hope but a reality.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Gómez Hernández (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): In a few months, we will commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, the cornerstone of the rules-based multilateral system, which has provided an irreplaceable forum for the equal participation of all States in global decision-making. In these times of existential challenges for humankind, the United Nations remains our collective compass to jointly address the threats and opportunities of today's world. Yet multilateralism is facing an unprecedented crisis of credibility. The proliferation of protracted conflicts, the resurgence of unilateralism and public scepticism have called into question the effectiveness of the system.

We are concerned about the attacks on the United Nations, as well as the disinformation campaigns about its work, which jeopardize the well-being and assistance of millions of beneficiaries of humanitarian aid and basic services. We therefore reiterate our condemnation of the entry into force of legislation preventing the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in the occupied Palestinian territories, having a grave impact on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and jeopardizing the ceasefire that began on 19 January.

Despite its imperfections, we cannot forget that the United Nations has not only avoided a new world war but has also strengthened its role in peacekeeping, sustainable development and the protection of human rights. However, in the area of peace and security, the Security Council is deadlocked, eroding its credibility. In the face of flagrant violations of international law, the organ created to ensure global peace and stability is unable to respond.

Given that situation, Spain's proposed solution is more and better multilateralism. We call for reformed multilateralism, based on consistency, responsibility and

solidarity. We cannot allow international law to be applied selectively according to strategic interests. We must condemn violations of international law wherever and by whomsoever they occur, whether in Ukraine, Gaza or other geographical areas.

Faced with such violations, we champion accountability as a mechanism for justice, reparation and deterrence. We support both the International Court of Justice, the institutional guardian of the United Nations system, and the International Criminal Court, the cornerstone of the international criminal justice system.

We must reform the multilateral system to ensure its survival and restore trust in it. The Security Council must be more representative, effective, democratic and transparent. We advocate a Council with more non-permanent members and with the limitation of the right of veto, with a view to its full abolition. We must fully comply with the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Next June, Spain will host the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Seville. That is an opportunity not only to renew the financing agenda, responding to the demands of developing countries, but also to continue to reaffirm the importance of the multilateral system as a fair mechanism for resolving crises.

The assessment of these 80 years of multilateralism and the rules-based international system is positive. Now is not the time to go backwards. Let us commit to a revitalized, coherent and responsible multilateralism.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this most timely and extremely relevant meeting today. I align myself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and that already delivered by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of a group of countries.

Germany remains firmly convinced of the United Nations mission and mandate. We are also convinced of its ability to reform. Those convictions have only grown stronger after Germany had the honour to co-facilitate the negotiations leading to the Pact for the Future, together with our partner and friend Namibia and with the support of many States represented in the Chamber. By showing the readiness to compromise, we, the States Members of the United Nations, agreed on a blueprint for what we jointly need to tackle and how we jointly need to adapt this Organization. Five months on, we cannot afford to lose any more time. We must take action now. I would like to highlight three areas in which Germany steps in to support the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core.

First, on the future of peacekeeping, United Nations peacekeeping remains as relevant as ever in times of conflict and war, but we need to adapt peacekeeping to ensure that it can rise to the current and future challenges. That objective will be at the centre of this year's United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial, which will take place in Berlin in May.

Secondly, the Pact clearly calls for more efficient conflict prevention. As Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), I will both strengthen the PBC's role as a bridge-builder in the United Nations system and further foster its function as an inclusive platform for meaningful exchanges on conflict prevention. We look forward to building stronger linkages between the PBC and the Security Council.

Thirdly, we are seeing great potential in a revitalized General Assembly. We are convinced that the General Assembly, with its President at the helm, can play a key role in the follow-up to and implementation of the Pact for the Future. That also includes increased activity of the General Assembly in the area of peace and security.

Last but not least, the Pact has a strong commitment to the long-overdue reform of the Security Council. Text-based negotiations need to start as soon as possible to make that happen. We need to ensure that underrepresented regions and major contributors to international peace and security finally have a permanent seat at this table.

We have the opportunity; we have a blueprint; and we have excellent people to make the United Nations better and more functional. We do not have excuses. Germany stands ready to work with, and for, all partners.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of Türkiye.

Mr. Yıldız (Türkiye): I thank you, Mr. President, for taking this initiative for enabling the Security Council to consider this critical topic at a time when it is needed most. We also thank the Secretary-General and other participants for their engagement. Türkiye aligns itself with the joint statement delivered by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of the veto initiative co-sponsors and like-minded States. I would also like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

No country can overcome the challenges of the modern era alone. Global issues, such as pandemics, climate change, the food crisis, conflicts, terrorism, poverty and other pressing challenges, can be successfully tackled only through cooperation and solidarity, whereas today millions of people in Palestine still suffer the consequences of brutal attacks, illegally occupied territories, politicized humanitarian aid and forced displacements as a result of the related violations of international law and international humanitarian law. Poor governance, the rising threat of terrorism and outside interference, coupled with the impact of climate change, adversely affect millions in Africa, causing massive tolls of death, internal displacement, migration and suffering from hunger and famine. Effective multilateralism therefore is not a choice but a necessity, along with the maintenance of international law, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Türkiye has always been a strong advocate of multilateralism, with the understanding that it is imperative for a better, more equal, more resilient and more sustainable world. The United Nations has maintained its central role at the heart of multilateralism for nearly 80 years. Despite its flaws and need for reform, there is no alternative to the United Nations. It is the only intergovernmental global platform in which all States are represented on the basis of sovereign equality and are able to make their voices heard.

Rebuilding trust, developing partnerships and agreeing on common solutions should be our shared priorities. The Summit of the Future provided a crucial opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism and cooperative global governance in shaping a brighter, more equitable future. The Pact for the Future comprises an ambitious set of actions, setting forth the beginning of a long process. That course will hopefully make the United Nations more relevant and fit to face the complex challenges of our century.

We must devise new methods to increase the constructive, preventive and remedial role of the United Nations, based on mutual trust and cooperation. In that regard, we must reform the Security Council into a more democratic, representative, transparent, effective and accountable body. The reform must address the shortcomings of the Council rather than consolidating the already existing ones.

On that note, we cannot allow the intergovernmental negotiations process to be derailed by short-sighted ambitions or separate tracks. Reinforcing the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the international financial system should also be prioritized. Enhancing the representation and voice of emerging economies and developing countries in decision-making in international financial institutions is imperative.

Sustainable development is a shared goal that requires a collective response from the international community. Regrettably, the world remains far from achieving the zero-hunger target outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Turkey remains a strong development partner for the least developed countries in their efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Hence, Turkey hosts the United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries as the only United Nations entity exclusively dedicated to supporting their science, technology and innovation capacities.

As the most democratic and representative main body of the United Nations, the General Assembly is well positioned to play an increasingly important role on global matters. To strengthen multilateralism, we need a stronger General Assembly, and we fully support the intergovernmental process for its revitalization. Our efforts for a true and effective multilateralism must be centred on the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations. The purposes and principles enshrined in the resilient and visionary Charter must remain our guideline on the path forward.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Parvathaneni (India): We congratulate you, Mr. President, on the assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and appreciate the initiative in organizing today's open debate.

A theme that stands pronounced in today's open debate is the call for reformed multilateralism. While many speakers have already highlighted the dire need for reforms, I am confident that several others will also follow suit. That is a clear testimony to the need for reviewing and redesigning the 80-year-old architecture of this forum in order to make it fit for purpose. At a time when the world is increasingly expressing concerns about the ability of the United Nations to deliver effectively on pressing global issues, reforms are not a choice anymore but an imperative. Against that backdrop, I would like to highlight seven specific points.

First, India has been consistent, categorical and a major voice with regard to underscoring the need for reforms. I would like to quote Prime Minister Modi, who mentioned in his remarks at the Summit of the Future in September 2024 that "[r]eform is the key to relevance" (*A/79/PV.5, p.31*).

Secondly, the original structures and frameworks of the United Nations represent a different period in history. Our world has transformed, and the United Nations needs to change with the times. It has to be reflective of the current global order rather than 1945.

Thirdly, addressing the historical injustice to Africa has to be a central element of the reforms. To that end, India has always been supportive of the Common African Position. In that context, I would also urge Member States whose support to Africa has been limited to pro forma statements to clearly articulate their position on expansion in the permanent category, which is where Africa is not represented.

Fourthly, the global South cannot continue to be short-changed. India and major players in other parts of the world deserve their due representation in the structures of the United Nations. As regards the Security Council, that translates to permanent category membership.

Fifthly, three fundamental principles are essential to the success of Security Council reforms: an increase in membership of both permanent and non-permanent categories; the commencement of text-based negotiations; and linking ambitious timelines with concrete outcomes.

Sixthly, those opposed to the expansion of the permanent category support the status quo with a narrow focus. Their approach is non-progressive in nature, and that can no longer be accepted.

Finally, beyond the Security Council, the pre-eminent position of the General Assembly as the primary policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is to be respected in both letter and spirit.

I would like to emphasize that India is firmly committed to the cause of reforms, and we will work closely with our friends and partners. We call on all Member States to also join that endeavour for reformed multilateralism.

Beyond the focus of today's debate, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar, referred to an integral and inalienable part of India — the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir — in his remarks. I would like to reaffirm that Jammu and Kashmir has been, is and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. In fact, it is Pakistan that is in illegal occupation of parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan's campaigns of misinformation, disinformation, lies and falsehoods do not change the facts on the ground. Only last year, the people of Jammu and Kashmir took part in a successful election and voted in large numbers to choose their Government. The choice of the people of Jammu and Kashmir was loud and clear. Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir is vibrant and strong, unlike in Pakistan.

Pakistan is a global epicentre of terrorism, harbouring more than 20 United Nations-listed terrorist entities and providing State support to cross-border terrorism. Hence, it is a supreme irony when Pakistan pats itself on the back as being at the forefront of the fight against terrorism. India has been a victim of the acts of terror perpetrated by that country through terror groups, such as Jaish-e-Mohammed and Harakat ul-Mujahidin, among dozens of others.

There cannot be any justification for terrorism regardless of its form, type or motive. No political grievance can justify terrorism perpetrated against innocent civilians. This organ can make no distinction between good and bad terrorists. I request the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan to take note of that and not further waste the time of the Council in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*) I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Lagdameo (Philippines): Eighty years ago, we were among the few hopeful representatives from some 50 countries gathered in San Francisco in late spring that took part in the drafting and signing of the Charter of the United Nations, which created the Organization. At the first-ever General Assembly, the Philippine representative, Carlos P. Romulo, said:

> "We represent a nation that was recently born to the recovered freedom of the post-war world, the first-born State of the atomic age. The Philippine Republic is both consanguineous and coeval with the United Nations. The blood that the Filipino people shed for their freedom was shed likewise for the common victory. Their stake in the United Nations is the stake of an identical destiny, of shared anxiety and of hope and endeavour.
>
> "By the circumstances of our birth as a free and independent State, we are committed to the aims and purposes of the United Nations. The Philippine Republic has been the first beneficiary of the triumph of democracy. It has been established under a constitution that renounces war as an instrument of national policy." (*A/PV.41, pp. 818–819*)

Eighty years hence, as the world enters a new period of turbulence, we continue to place our stake in the United Nations and in the Charter that underpins it. Respect

for the rule of law safeguards global peace and security and enables the international community to confront complex current and future challenges. Throughout those eight decades, the United Nations has held itself up as a platform and pathway to address international peace and security. It remains a solid ground for its Member States — who now number 193 — to find convergence amid evolving crisis and conflict. Secretary for Foreign Affairs Enrique Manalo, quoting our President, affirmed that multilateralism "remains the single viable platform for collective action against transcendent global challenges". Nevertheless, we recognize the need to transform multilateralism to address evolving challenges, to make it more equitable and just and to bring to fruition the purposes of the Charter towards making peace, justice and sustainable development a reality for all.

As early as 1946, at the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Mr. Romulo, the representative of the Philippines, foresaw some of the issues that have hounded and hindered the United Nations. He spoke of the lack of representation from Asia and Africa and said that economic independence must be a balanced and reciprocal relationship. He also spoke of the need to ensure that information becomes instrumental in the maintenance of peace and free of control, and he advocated the self-government of non-self-governing territories, taking into account their political aspirations. Regarding the veto privilege of the big Powers and the Security Council, which the Philippines then helped to place upon the General Assembly's agenda, he said

> "No issue will probably be more passionately debated by this Assembly than the question of the veto. There are, as we have seen, powerful arguments on both sides. The Philippine Republic is one of the small nations, and our sympathies are entirely in favour of limiting this privilege to the extent that it will not continually obstruct our effort towards peaceful agreement and fruitful cooperation. At the same time, we have no illusions regarding the practicability, at the present moment, of establishing absolute voting equality among the nations of the world." (*A/PV.41, pp. 821 and 822*)

Eighty years later, that message resonates. The Philippines continues to stand alongside other nations in advocating to limit that privilege. An effective reform of the veto system will enhance the credibility of the Security Council. Fundamental to a transformed, effective multilateralism is an inclusive, representative, reformed and transparent Security Council. Security Council reform should be a package consisting of the enlargement of its membership and improvement of its working methods in order to create greater transparency and accountability of the Council to the general membership of the United Nations.

The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) sets out our path for the future. The Pact renews our collective determination to defuse tensions and seek the peaceful resolution of disputes. In signing on the Pact, States abide by the obligation to reject force and the threat of the use of force in settling their disputes. That is the essence of the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. We must act on our common resolve to make the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its centre, effective and capable. Multilateralism flourishes on the foundation of a rules-based order that provides conditions for trust, solidarity, equity and peace. We must ensure the meaningful participation of all Member States, in particular developing States, in global decision-making. That is enabled by bridging development divides, including through a transformed international financial architecture and enhanced access to innovation and to science and technology. We must deliver on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and waste no time in implementing the Global Digital Compact.

The Philippines is committed to that Compact and to strengthening the role of the United Nations in addressing today's complex crises, including the emerging threats in the digital, geopolitical, outer space and maritime domains. Throughout our 80 years of membership in the United Nations, we have a track record of being a dependable partner, pathfinder and peacemaker in world affairs.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to Mr. Lambrinidis.

Mr. Lambrinidis: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. At the outset, let me thank the Chinese presidency of the Security Council for convening this important meeting. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

This year, we mark the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations — the cornerstone of the rules-based multilateral system, providing an irreplaceable forum for equal participation in decision-making for all Member States and allowing us to address today's existential challenges and opportunities facing humankind together. For multilateralism to work, however, international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, must remain our collective compass. That means that our highest priority moving forward should be to ensure that violations are not met with impunity.

The devastating impact of those violations is evident across regions and countries, from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine to the Middle East, from Afghanistan to Myanmar and from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa to Haiti. Today, almost three years since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, the European Union reiterates its resolute condemnation of what constitutes a manifest violation of the Charter. We reaffirm our continued support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity — as the Charter commands — within its internationally recognized borders. That war of aggression has had global consequences that have affected almost every country in the world, including consequences on food and energy security, disproportionally affecting those in the most vulnerable situations. Now more than ever, we must oppose a world in which might makes right, in Ukraine as in every other place in the world.

Our commitment to accountability might also be our best hope of preventing such crimes in the future. If we cannot stop them — and unfortunately, we have not been able to stop many of them in recent years — let us at least try to prevent them in the future. The international criminal justice system, in particular the International Criminal Court (ICC), is of paramount importance in ensuring accountability for atrocity crimes and delivering justice for victims. The ICC should be able to independently carry out its mandate to fight impunity.

We welcome the fact that the concept note for this meeting (see S/2025/78) points out new security threats, including those related to climate change and cybersecurity. We can tackle those issues, but we can only tackle them together. The United Nations remains our compass, but like any institution, it must evolve with the times instead of continuing to reflect the world of the past.

In spite of all ongoing divisions and crises, there are signs of hope that effective multilateralism is possible. The adoption of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) and the long and thorny — but ultimately constructive — process leading to its adoption demonstrated that we can work together and achieve results. It shows that even under difficult circumstances, United Nations Members can agree on a broad set of actions, including sustainable development, international financial architecture reform, digital cooperation, youth and future generations,

peacebuilding, human rights and, for the first time, concrete commitments towards Security Council reform.

We need to revitalize the United Nations by implementing our commitments in the Pact for the Future. The EU supports comprehensive reform of the Security Council to make it more effective, inclusive, transparent, democratic and accountable to better reflect today's realities by strengthening the voice of underrepresented regions, especially Africa. The world needs a Security Council capable of fulfilling its mandate and delivering, including by fully adhering to Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter, which constrains veto use by obliging a party to a dispute to abstain from voting.

The current political momentum around reform, notably that of the international financial architecture, must also be translated into concrete and implementable deliverables. We look forward to working together constructively towards the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Seville, Spain, later this year. We are ready to engage with our partners on issues related to financing the Sustainable Development Goals, effectively implementing the EU's Global Gateway flagship sustainable development initiative, encouraging resource mobilization and promoting sustainable financing for environmentally responsible and socially inclusive development plans.

This year also provides additional opportunities to further improve the multilateral system. Look at peace and security: the review of the peacebuilding architecture, the review of peace operations, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the women and peace and security agenda, the twentieth anniversary of the responsibility to protect and the tenth anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda provide a unique chance to tackle challenges to peace and security in an inclusive and comprehensive manner.

We are acutely aware that efficient functioning cannot be ensured without proper financing. The EU and its member States are, collectively, the largest and most reliable financial contributors to the United Nations system — paying in full, paying on time and paying without conditions. We contribute more than 22 per cent to the regular United Nations budget and 21 per cent to peacekeeping operations, and we provide more than one third of voluntary contributions. Together with our member States, the EU collectively provides 41 per cent of global official development assistance, by far the largest contributors and partners around the world. We listen to the needs around the world, and we are committed to delivering. But we cannot do it alone. And we also need to support the United Nations in achieving much better efficiencies in delivering its mandate — our mandate — on the ground.

Eighty years ago, the principles and purposes of the United Nations were enshrined in the Charter. Eighty years later, we can say that despite its imperfections, the United Nations remains the greatest global endeavour for preserving peace, paving the way for development, upholding human rights and addressing existential crises such as climate change. It is our daily responsibility — so we feel at the European Union — to make that endeavour a reality.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Zimbabwe.

Mr. Mushayavanhu (Zimbabwe): We thank your delegation, Mr. President, for convening this crucial meeting, and we congratulate you on assuming the Security Council presidency for February 2025. We also thank His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi and the Secretary-General for their seminal insights.

The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations begins with these immortal words: we the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The Charter goes on to speak of equal rights for nations, large and small, and to make a solemn pledge to unite our strength to

maintain international peace and security. For nearly 80 years, those principles have guided our pursuit of a just and peaceful world. Yet today, as we face mounting crises — from conflicts and climate change to economic instability and technological divides — we must ask: are our global governance structures fit for purpose? If not, then reform is imperative.

The history of the United Nations teaches us that, when practiced with sincerity, multilateralism has prevented conflicts, facilitated decolonization, advanced development and safeguarded human rights. But too often, it has fallen short. Too often, responses to crises have been slow, decision-making unbalanced, and outdated structures have failed to reflect contemporary realities. The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) presents an opportunity to reshape that global governance so that it is fit for purpose in addressing today's pressing threats, such as climate change, pandemics, conflicts, economic instability and the growing technological divide.

Reforming the Security Council is central to that effort. Expanding its membership, particularly for Africa and the developing world — will enhance not only legitimacy, but also effectiveness. No nation should wield veto power as a tool to cause paralysis in moments of global crisis. Instead, the Council should uphold its primary purpose with credibility, fairness and efficiency. Equally important, the General Assembly, the most democratic and representative United Nations organ, must be strengthened. It plays a crucial role in shaping global norms, yet its influence remains limited when the Security Council remains deadlocked. Enhancing the General Assembly's role in peacebuilding and conflict prevention will make the United Nations more effective, legitimate and responsive to global challenges.

Beyond traditional security threats, we face climate change, food insecurity, cyberthreats and terrorism — challenges that transcend borders and disproportionately affect developing nations. The global governance system must provide greater support to those countries through technical, financial and strategic assistance. A security framework that ignores those threats is incomplete.

Justice in governance begins with the equal application of international law. Unilateral coercive measures violate sovereignty, stifle economic progress and punish ordinary citizens. Zimbabwe, like many others, continues to bear the burden of those unjust measures. True multilateralism demands respect for sovereignty, fairness and non-interference. The United Nations must stand firm against those violations, as called for in numerous General Assembly resolutions. Economic disparities remain one of the greatest barriers to a just global order, with unfair trade, an inequitable international financial architecture and technological exclusion fuelling underdevelopment. Solutions include fair trade, debt relief, a fairer international financial architecture and sustainable investment. Technology should unite, not divide, with inclusive artificial intelligence governance ensuring equitable benefits.

If we are to tackle the challenges ahead, the United Nations must be more inclusive, more transparent and more responsive to today's realities. The path forward is clear: a reformed, revitalized multilateral system that upholds the dignity, security and prosperity of all nations, large and small.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria.

Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria): Bulgaria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of the European Union and by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of a group of States. I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

First of all, I would like to thank the Chinese presidency for organizing this extremely valuable debate, which provides us with an opportunity to reaffirm our

commitments to international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the rules-based international order. However, in an era of escalating geopolitical tensions and growing instability, reaffirmation alone is not enough. We must urgently reform the multilateral system to ensure that it delivers tangible results for peace and security, as emphasized in the Secretary-General's report entitled Our Common Agenda (A/75/982).

The Security Council's credibility is at stake when it fails to act, allowing violence to escalate, civilian casualties to rise and humanitarian crises to worsen. Permanent members have a unique responsibility to ensure that the Council fulfils its mandate under Article 24 of the Charter — to act promptly, effectively and on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations, meaning rising above strictly national interests. Each instance of inaction only reinforces the urgent need for the Council's reform. Every veto or threat of veto should serve as a call for the General Assembly to exercise its authority under the Charter.

The *Assembly for Peace* digital handbook, referenced by many speakers today, highlights how the General Assembly has taken decisive action when the Security Council has failed to do so. A strong, engaged General Assembly is essential for a renewed multilateralism, as outlined in the Pact for the Future. The General Assembly must continue to assert its role, as it did by adopting the resolution of the so-called veto initiative (resolution 76/262), ensuring that the Charter is upheld in full and, where necessary, clarifying its provisions, including those concerning the use of the veto, in particular Article 27, paragraph 3. A robust framework is needed to prevent Security Council members from acting solely in their national interest and to the detriment of international peace and security. The debate on strengthening multilateralism must continue alongside our efforts to uphold the rule of law, ensure accountability and protect all human rights for all. Equally vital are reforms that accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, address global inequalities and enhance governance structures.

Finally, Bulgaria remains steadfast in its commitment to an inclusive, accountable and effective multilateral system that delivers peace, democracy and prosperity for all, with the United Nations and the Charter at its core. That can be achieved only through genuine partnerships, mutual respect and strict adherence to the rules and principles that sustain international cooperation.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Vinhas Tavares Gabriel (Portugal): Portugal aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and with the joint statement made by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of 61 countries. We thank China for convening this important debate and the Secretary-General for his insightful remarks.

Multilateralism is at the core of Portugal's foreign policy. It is a principle, an objective and a practice that define our engagement. We stand for a rules-based multilateral system, grounded in international law and the three pillars of the Charter of the United Nations — advancing peace, human rights and sustainable development.

The Pact for the Future (resolution 79/1), adopted five months ago, provides a road map for global governance reform, reaffirming the central role of the United Nations and enhancing multi-stakeholder engagement. Its success requires not just political will, but also a financial commitment to urgent priorities, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate action, food security, migration, equitable financing, artificial intelligence and humanitarian assistance. That cannot be achieved through unilateral actions that bypass multilateral institutions. The New Agenda for Peace, which inspired chapter 2 of the Pact, reinforced the global consensus on strengthening the role of the United Nations in preventive

diplomacy. The credibility of the Security Council depends on addressing threat multipliers — climate change, sea level rise, poverty and social exclusion, with the full integration of women and young people into the peace continuum.

The Pact also advances Security Council reform, promoting representation, inclusivity, transparency, efficiency, democracy and accountability. A responsible use of the veto is critical to preserving collective action. Portugal calls for the full implementation of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter, which requires parties to a dispute to abstain from voting, and strongly supports the veto initiative, the Franco-Mexican Declaration and the Code of Conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group.

The United Nations must also deepen its collaboration with regional and subregional organizations, including the African Union, supporting African Union peace efforts and aligning development agendas. Portugal is committed to strengthening the Council's effectiveness, notably through our candidacy for a non-permanent seat for the term from 2027 to 2028. As a trusted United Nations partner and net provider of security, we bring deep experience in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We also advocate for a more open and transparent Council, ensuring closer cooperation with United Nations bodies and better service to all Member States.

Addressing the root causes of conflict and building resilience, including through national prevention strategies, is essential. We uphold the consistent application of international law and support strong international criminal justice, anchored in the International Criminal Court. The multilateral system has its flaws; yet it remains the most effective mechanism for tackling global challenges. To remain relevant, it must adapt, reform and improve, not be dismantled.

Portugal is actively engaged in the discussion of the future of multilateralism, including the Security Council, as well as the international financial system, notably through our leadership in the financing for development process. We support a reform of the international financial architecture that is more representative and delivers adequate financing for the SDGs.

Besides the Security Council and the international financial architecture, we need a revitalized General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, with greater coordination across the United Nations principal organs. A resident coordinator system that effectively drives development and secures peace is key to a cohesive and impactful United Nations.

As we approach the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, Portugal remains convinced that multilateralism works. Through dialogue and cooperation, we can overcome divisions and make United Nations reform, albeit challenging, a reality.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvold (Norway): Let me first thank China for organizing a very timely and important open debate.

Norway is a dedicated multilateralist. Effective international institutions and cooperation provide predictability, strengthen our resilience and make us more secure. They serve our common interests. The lesson of the past 80 years is that there is no way to a peaceful and prosperous world other than through multilateral cooperation, based on international law. That is why we need a United Nations that is relevant and able to address the global challenges of our time. With the Pact for the Future, we have agreed on a framework for renewing and reinvigorating multilateral cooperation and reform. Let me highlight three brief points.

First, on the reform of the Security Council, the world has changed since 1945, and so must the Council. The lack of institutional reform undermines legitimacy and efficiency. The inability of the Council to act in many of today's most serious conflicts exacerbates that. Norway supports a reform that makes the Council more representative and more efficient. Both permanent and elected seats should be expanded, and the historical injustice to Africa should be addressed. The use of the veto should be limited rather than expanded. The frequent use of the veto has paralysed the Council, undermining its credibility. In line with the Pact for the Future, we particularly need to discuss how to ensure the consistent application of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations. No State should vote in its own case.

Secondly, regarding the rule of law, through generations of careful deliberations and negotiations, we have developed a corpus of international law, not least the United Nations Charter, that is the foundation of peaceful relations among States. Through the United Nations, we also established the other key principles that codify international humanitarian law, as well as international human rights law, including women's rights. We must be consistent in the application of the rules. We must avoid double standards. We must treat similar cases similarly, irrespective of the context. We must speak out if our adversaries violate those rules, and we must speak out if our friends violate them. We must support and protect the institutions that uphold the law, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. We must fight impunity, and we must be able to hold perpetrators to account.

Thirdly, with regard to economic governance reform, increasing inequality creates poverty, erodes trust and leads to populism and extremism within countries. The increasing inequality among countries undermines global trust, hence also the efficiency of the multilateral system. The Pact for the Future rightly addresses the need to increase financing for sustainable development, provide sufficient and timely debt relief to countries in distress, reform the international financial architecture and promote more inclusive and effective international tax cooperation.

Norway will continue to advance global governance reform to ensure that the United Nations remains relevant and able to fulfil its mandate, as stated in the Charter. That is to address the global challenges of our time, more specifically to maintain international peace and security, uphold human rights and advance sustainable development, namely, the three main pillars of the United Nations Charter.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Blanco Conde (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): When this Organization was established, we lived in a different world. Only the great visionaries and science fiction writers could have imagined globalization, the technological revolution, the rise of emerging markets, the green revolution, the marked demographic changes and, lastly, the Cold War and its aftermath. Those major trends have changed the world, and it may seem that this Organization, despite all the work that it has done over the past 80 years, has found it difficult to keep pace and adapt to the new times.

In 1945, our illustrious forefathers dealt well with the big picture, but the small picture was left aside. We can see that in the number of active conflicts that darken the prospect of the peace that we are striving so hard to achieve. There are more active conflicts now than in 1946. That emerging reality further highlights the great disparity among countries, where our global South, which never benefited from a Marshall Plan, has to move faster and faster in order not to be left behind. To put it in context, of the States with Security Council mandates, half are middle-income countries, and the other half are least developed countries. Only one country, Cyprus, can be said to be a high-income country.

According to the Norwegian academic Mr. Glenn Diesen, we are currently talking about the end of unipolarity and the rise of multipolarity, which is based on maintaining a balance of power to limit the expansionist and hegemonic ambitions of States. Mr. Diesen argues that diplomacy is a multipolar system that seeks to improve the mutual understanding of competing security interests and to reach a compromise that enhances the security of all States. It is essential to put oneself in the adversary's place and recognize that if the adversary's security concerns are resolved, one's own security is also enhanced. In that regard, multilateralism becomes even more important. We advocate a multilateralism that is appropriate to multipolarity. It must be renewed — that is true — but in a way that is conducive to fostering constructive dialogue. As they say in my country, people understand each other by talking.

One of the saddest consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic is that it caused us to distance ourselves from each other. We still remain distant. Diplomacy is close, not remote. Our intergovernmental processes must bring us closer together again so that we can negotiate directly. That would be a great thing, particularly in view of important upcoming processes such as the second World Summit for Social Development. There we hope to forge a new social contract that brings us closer to a renewed multilateralism and that champions the most vulnerable so as to leave no one behind.

The principal organs of the United Nations must also be reformed to adapt to the new geopolitical reality. Likewise, the processes that are under way must continue, and it is up to us to fully implement them. For example, there is the Pact for the Future, which calls for the full implementation of the Charter of the United Nations and the strengthening of the relationship between this Council and the General Assembly, in which the latter represents the embodiment of multilateralism.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that we will not be able to address today's megatrends if we do not update our approach accordingly. So let us get started.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Ms. Clase (Sweden) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank China for organizing this open debate on multilateralism and on reforming and improving global governance. Sweden fully agrees with the importance of this topic.

(*spoke in English*)

This year, we mark the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations. That is a moment for celebration but also a time to reflect on the Organization's achievements, as well as future challenges. Throughout its history, the United Nations has offered a unique platform for global dialogue. Strengthening multilateral cooperation and international dialogue is in our common interest. Together, we must ensure that our multilateral institutions operate in an efficient and responsible way and that they deliver results on the ground.

Today we face a staggering array of global challenges. The incidence of armed conflicts is growing against a backdrop of increasing geopolitical tensions. Climate change is widely considered a threat to global security and livelihoods. Terrorism, violent extremism and organized crime disrupt the lives of far too many people across the globe. Human rights and gender equality face a push-back in many countries. And, sadly, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals has fallen behind. The challenges ahead of us are so complex that they cannot be tackled by countries alone. In today's world, the United Nations is needed more than ever. Allow me to make three points.

First, the Summit of the Future was a powerful illustration of what multilateral cooperation can, and should, be about. Its outcome, the Pact for the Future, is the

blueprint for reform. The Global Digital Compact is the first comprehensive framework for digital issues, including artificial intelligence. Now it is time to put words into action and turbocharge the race to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Secondly, this Council — the organ responsible for upholding international peace and security — must be more transparent, representative and accountable. An integrated approach to peace and security is essential. Prevention and sustaining peace must take centre stage. Unfortunately, we seldom respond to early warning signals to prevent emerging conflicts. Post-conflict countries too often fall back into violence and insecurity. We must work across the three pillars of the United Nations — sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights — to deliver early and decisive action. We need to place a greater focus on the connection between education and economic development. This Council must also be ready to recognize the full range of threats to international peace and security.

Thirdly, none of that can be achieved without respect for international law. That includes respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, as well as strengthening accountability and ending impunity. We must resolutely act against attempts to undermine the Charter of the United Nations and its principles. Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a blatant violation of international law.

We must reaffirm our support for the international justice system. We must guarantee the independence and fully respect the integrity of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

Gender equality is a core value of the United Nations. It is deeply embedded within its principles and reflected in its Charter, making it a fundamental human right that the United Nations promotes globally. The current undermining of gender equality in many countries is deeply worrisome.

As we approach the eightieth anniversary of our United Nations, we must reinvest in a multilateralism that delivers results. The dilemma that we constantly face in multilateral diplomacy is how to get everyone into the act and still get action. The Pact for the Future shows that it can be done when we all make a serious effort. I thank you again, Mr. President, for convening this important debate.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Ms. Kalkku (Finland): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this very important open debate.

As the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations approaches, we are living through times when multilateralism is being truly tested. Multipolarity is often mentioned as a new model for the modern world. However, unfortunately, during the past years, we have begun to see one of its consequences — growing instability. Many have felt free to pursue their different goals by military means. The number of armed conflicts has risen to an unprecedented level since the Second World War. Borders have been crossed. Attempts are made to annex territories belonging to others. Respect for civilian life and infrastructure has collapsed in many conflicts, and international humanitarian law is often neglected.

The world has been moving in the wrong direction. Finland continues to believe that rules-based multilateralism, with reforms, offers the best model for the modern world. The majority of the United Nations membership consists of small States. There is no need to say that, for them, the United Nations and international law are indispensable. But the United Nations was not established only to support the existence and rights of small States; it was established to safeguard peace and stability for all members — we the peoples. The vision of multilateralism is still very much alive.

First, global progress may have been great enough to be irreversible. The vast majority of the United Nations membership stands for multilateralism. We pay our dues. The reason that the United Nations or its principal organs are criticized may be the fact that members have high expectations of them. Most of us want to see the United Nations deliver, perform and uphold the Charter. Spirited by multilateralism, we compromised and agreed on the Pact for the Future, which paves the way forward, together with the Sustainable Development Goals. Today many speakers have commented on the importance of implementing the Goals. The year 2015 was very challenging, but it was also a flagship year, with major multilateral achievements — the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. All three are highly relevant, even today.

Secondly, the United Nations system is not perfect, and it definitely needs reforms and modernization. Its organs need to function efficiently and better focus on solving major problems, instead of being sidelined. The United Nations membership has evolved remarkably in 80 years. But things would be much, much worse and chaotic without the United Nations. Innumerable staff and peacekeepers work all over the world pursuing a common ideal and to promote peace, sustainable development and human rights.

Thirdly, while international law is not always respected, it has actually grown in importance and coverage. New treaties have emerged, and States are increasingly placing their trust in the authority of judicial institutions, such as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

Fourthly, multilateralism works and progresses regionally, which, in turn, supports the United Nations. Many regional institutions have proved successful. Take the European Union, which has guaranteed peace and well-being among its membership after a very troubled history and grown into the biggest global development financier. Or take the African Union or important regional institutions in Asia and Latin America.

Bashing the United Nations has become popular, and, no doubt, this seems to be a dark hour for multilateralism. But the need for a multilateral system, based on international law, has not gone away; the need has grown. The United Nations can be successful only if we respect it, use it and turn it into a modern and efficient Organization, capable of standing for the Charter and our common ideals.

Does the United Nations need substantive reforms? Yes, it does. Can we afford to sideline the United Nations? No, we cannot.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of Pakistan has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Asif Khan (Pakistan): My delegation has been compelled to take the floor to respond to the statement made by the Indian representative.

No amount of fabrication or obfuscation can change the legal, political and historical reality. Jammu and Kashmir never was, nor is, a so-called integral part of India. Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognized disputed territory. One just needs to consult the United Nations official maps to establish that fact. In its forcible occupation of parts of Jammu and Kashmir, India is in contravention of multiple resolutions of the Security Council, which reaffirm that the final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir will be decided by its people through a United Nations-supervised plebiscite, that is, through the exercise of the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people. That inalienable right, brazenly denied by India for more than seven decades in gross violation of international law and the resolutions of this organ, is among the most fundamental rights of peoples — an ergo omnes right, which cannot be rescinded by unilateral actions.

Kashmir is being held by India through the brutal suppression of its people by an occupation army of 900,000 troops. Since 5 August 2019, building on its illegal and unilateral steps to consolidate its occupation of Jammu and Kashmir, India has undertaken demographic engineering to dispossess and disempower the Muslim majority of the occupied territory, in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Neither force nor fraud will succeed in extinguishing the Kashmiris' quest for freedom and self-determination.

Resolutions 91 (1951) and 122 (1957) clearly stipulate that no unilateral measures, including any sham elections under foreign occupation, constitute the final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir. Rather than misleading the international community and becoming blinded by hubris, India should implement its international obligation to allow the Kashmiris to exercise their right to self-determination, in accordance with the Security Council resolutions.

We also heard the Indian representative raising the bogey of terrorism to divert attention and achieve diplomatic point-scoring. It is most ironic that India, which is committing the worst form of State terrorism in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, is portraying itself as the victim. It is a familiar ploy of all occupiers and colonizers to paint legitimate struggles for freedom and liberation as terrorism. Instead of maligning others for terrorism, India should sincerely reflect on its own campaign of orchestrating targeted assassinations, subversion and terrorism in foreign countries. It is India that supports and finances terrorism against Pakistan by using its proxies, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, the Majeed Brigade and the Baloch Liberation Army. The country is insensitive to the tragic human dimension of terrorism. For a country that has been called out for running a global terrorism syndicate, no low is too low for India. The franchise of Indian State terrorism has gone from regional to global, reaching North American shores.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until the afternoon of Thursday, 20 February.

The meeting was suspended at 6.10 p.m.