



# Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

**8548**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Thursday, 13 June 2019, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Sheikh Al Sabah . . . . . (Kuwait)

*Members:*

Belgium . . . . .	Mrs. Van Vlierberge
China . . . . .	Mr. Ma Zhaoxu
Côte d'Ivoire . . . . .	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic . . . . .	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea . . . . .	Mr. Sipaco Ribala
France . . . . .	Mr. Delattre
Germany . . . . .	Mr. Shulz
Indonesia . . . . .	Mr. Djani
Peru . . . . .	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland . . . . .	Mr. Czaputowicz
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Nebenzia
South Africa . . . . .	Mr. Matjila
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Allen
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Cohen

## Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States

Letter dated 31 May 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2019/455)

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

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

## **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

### **Cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States**

#### **Letter dated 31 May 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2019/455)**

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/455, which contains a letter dated 31 May 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, and give him the floor.

**The Secretary-General:** I thank the Government of Kuwait for convening this discussion on issues of priority to the League of Arab States and outcomes of the Arab Summit.

I want to express my warm welcome to Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. We have been working together on many of the most difficult issues that our two organizations confront and it is for me an enormous pleasure to see him sitting in the Security Council.

From day one, I have prioritized cooperation with regional organizations to prevent conflict and sustain peace. We know that no single organization or country can address the complex challenges our world faces today. Global problems require global solutions. That is

why partnerships remain essential to maximizing our impact on people's lives and advancing a global order based on international law.

Our cooperation with the League of Arab States is pivotal. I was honoured to attend the Arab League Summit in Tunis in March and appreciate the Tunis Declaration's reaffirmation of the "universal and noble values and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations" (*S/2019/306, appendix I, third preambular paragraph*). Our two organizations share a common mission to prevent conflict, resolve disputes and act in a spirit of solidarity and unity. We work together to expand economic opportunity, advance respect for all human rights and build political inclusion.

Today, we recognize an expectation from the peoples of the region — indeed, from people around the world — for a new social contract for education, jobs, opportunities for young people, equality for women, respect for human rights and a fair share in national wealth. We understand the impulse for a more inclusive vision rooted in cooperation, respect and dignity. We appreciate all efforts to help break the vicious cycle of conflict while establishing a new security architecture.

Within the challenges facing the region lies the opportunity to build on the words and intentions of the charters of our two organizations for action that will bring real change to the peoples of the Arab world and beyond.

In relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for example, we maintain our collective commitment to the vision of two States, based on relevant United Nations resolutions, long-held principles, previous agreements and international law. As I have said before, there is no alternative to the two-State solution. There is no Plan B. Ending the occupation that began in 1967 and achieving a negotiated two-State outcome is the only way to lay the foundations for enduring peace.

In Syria, deadly escalation in the country's north-west has displaced hundreds of thousands, and if continued could result in broader humanitarian catastrophe for the 3 million people residing in greater Idlib. After more than eight years of violence, Syria's conflict continues to take a devastating toll on the country's civilian population, impose burdens on neighbouring States and threaten international peace and security. I reiterate my appeal for full respect for international humanitarian law, which must

prevail in all circumstances, including in the combat against terrorism.

The alarming violence in Syria is a stark reminder of the urgent need to forge a political path to a sustainable peace for all Syrians. This will require an inclusive and credible political solution, based on resolution 2254 (2015) in its entirety, including the convening of a constitutional committee that is credible, inclusive and balanced. The support and active engagement of the international community, including the States members of the Arab League, will be essential. And, of course, any solution must respect the territorial integrity of Syria, including the occupied Syrian Golan.

Regarding Libya, I would like to thank the League of Arab States and its member States for its continued support for the efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and my Special Representative, including through the Libya quartet. However, I remain deeply concerned about the impact of the armed clashes on the country and on the region. There is no military solution. We need to work towards a ceasefire and a return to the negotiating table.

I welcome Iraq's sustained and active outreach to strengthen its relations with neighbouring countries. Conversely, Iraq needs the continued and sustained support of the region and the international community to help rebuild the country and overcome the trauma and impact of Da'esh. Iraq's Arab neighbours have a critical role to play. The United Nations will continue to assist the Government of Iraq, including through stabilization and reconstruction support, as well as in facilitating regional dialogue and cooperation on border security, energy, environment, water and refugees.

The League of Arab States is vital in supporting Lebanon's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Let us do more to help Lebanon — a country that has been significantly affected by regional developments and the generous hosting of large numbers of refugees — in strengthening State institutions, upholding its international commitments and remaining stable and secure.

In Yemen, we continue to work towards a resumption of negotiations leading to a sustainable political solution. Every effort is being made to address the extraordinary suffering on the ground in what remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis. The implementation of the 2018 Stockholm Agreement will not only significantly improve humanitarian access,

but will also help the way towards a lasting political settlement. All these efforts require patience, good faith and the continued commitment of all of us to preserving and building on gains.

I note with deep concern this morning's security incidents in the state of Hormuz. I strongly condemn any attack on civilians vessels. The facts must be established responsibilities clarified. If there is one thing the world cannot afford, it is a major confrontation in the Gulf region.

In Somalia, the international community must remain united in supporting political progress and the development of security institutions. The League of Arab States is a key partner, both as an organization and through its individual members, for political support and economic development.

The Sudan is going through a delicate transition. The United Nations is working with regional partners, especially the African Union, in supporting this process with the objective of enabling the Sudanese parties to reach agreement on an inclusive, civilian-led transitional authority.

On all these efforts and more, we continue to invest in building our engagement with regional and subregional organizations, including through regular consultations and collaboration. Such activities with the Arab League include our biennial general cooperation meetings, sectoral meetings, capacity-building exercises and staff exchanges.

With this in mind, I am pleased to inform the Council that the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States in Cairo will become operational this very month. I am very grateful to the Government of Egypt for its support and hospitality. I fully expect that the Liaison Office — the first funded by the United Nations regular budget — will improve the effectiveness of cooperation between our two organizations. I intend to continue this fruitful engagement and deepen our collaboration to advance the vision set out in the Charter of the United Nations, in the interest of the peoples we collectively serve. As we look ahead together, the Council can continue to count on my full and active support.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit.

**Mr. Aboul Gheit** (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives me pleasure to extend my sincere congratulations to the State of Kuwait on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June and to express my deep appreciation for its role as the Arab member of the Council. I especially commend its initiative to convene this meeting in order to elevate the level of partnership between the League of Arab States and the Security Council within the general framework governed by Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing, and for his firm commitment to strengthening the cooperation and institutional coordination between our two organizations in a manner that enhances the complementarity of our activities in maintaining international peace and security in the Arab region. I also thank him for his commitment to the two-State solution.

I speak today coming from a region rife with conflicts and deep crises, some of which are excessively difficult to resolve. Those conflicts and crises have had a severely negative impact on generations of our peoples, who have fallen victim to vicious cycles of anger and frustration. As the Secretary-General noted, most of these conflicts and crises are on the Security Council's agenda, yet regrettably and for a variety of reasons, the Security Council has not been able, in some cases, to adopt a clear position towards them or act on those positions it had already reached.

The complex situation in Syria has entered its ninth year without the emergence of a genuine horizon for the political solution which the international community has called for since the eruption of the crisis in 2011. In Yemen, the Yemeni people remain the victims of a humanitarian crisis that results primarily from the insistence of an outlaw faction on seizing control of the capital of the country and posing a clear threat to Yemen's neighbours and to maritime navigation in its surrounding waters. Libya has fallen anew into military hostilities that have come to threaten its societal fabric and its chances of completing its political transition to preserve its unity. As for Somalia, we continue to work with other partners, as the Secretary-General noted, in solidifying the pillars of security and stability and consolidating peace there and in the entire Horn of Africa, which is a region of direct geographic proximity and importance to the Arab world.

Having said all that and more, I cannot neglect or ignore the centrality of the Palestinian question in the minds and conscience of the Arab peoples and leadership. The ongoing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories is and will remain the main source of destabilization and radicalization in the Middle East region and beyond. That region will never enjoy security or genuine stability without an end to the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, the establishment of the independent Palestinian State and the attainment of a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

A host of additional factors have contributed to exacerbating all these conflicts and instigating turmoil elsewhere in the region, foremost among which are the unprecedented regional and international interference in the internal affairs of Arab countries; the spread of militias and armed groups that are fighting against national armies and challenging the authority of States and threatening their sovereignty and territorial integrity; and the growing threat posed by terrorist groups that are afforded support, funding and media platforms that allow them to commit their crimes and disseminate their message based on murder and hatred.

In addition, I refer to the condemned and alarming developments with regard to the targeting of oil tankers in the Arabian Gulf yesterday and on 12 May, as well as the ballistic missile attacks on the territory of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia two days ago. These dangerous developments must, in our view, compel the Security Council to act against those responsible in order to maintain the security and stability of the region. Some parties are trying to set the region aflame, and we all must be aware of that.

While the League of Arab States looks forward to enhancing the effectiveness of its partnership mechanisms with the United Nations, and with the Security Council in particular, to resolve these conflicts and crises and address all these challenges, it has also become determined to exercise a more effective role in contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security in our Arab region, defending the Arab national security of its member States and deterring the dangers that threaten them, all in accordance with the Charter and international law. The emergency Arab Summit that was held in Mecca on 31 May was the most recent and perhaps best testimony to this. The Arab leaders gathered in an extraordinary

session and condemned the terrorist acts that targeted oil installations on Saudi territories and commercial vessels in the territorial waters of the United Arab Emirates. They further reiterated their full solidarity with both countries in the face of Iranian interference and practices, as well as the crimes perpetrated by the Houthi militias, supported by the regime in Teheran.

I find it important in this regard to clarify that the maintenance of the security of the Arab region is a central condition for the preservation of the international security system, and that threats and acts which undermine Arab security will have serious consequences that will not stop at the borders of our Arab region. International solidarity is therefore essential in order to send an unequivocal and unambiguous message to all our neighbours that subversive activities are no longer acceptable and that concealing themselves behind regional proxies or through grey-zone operations that are non-attributable to their original perpetrators is a tactic that is rejected by all of us.

My principal message to the Security Council today, as a representative of the oldest regional organization to be granted observer status in the General Assembly, in 1950, is based on our desire to establish a broad and solid platform to elevate the level of consultations between the League of Arab States and the Security Council and to consider ways and means to translate that coordination into further support that will advance the joint and complementary activities between our two organizations, similar to those arrangements in place with other regional organizations and in a manner that enhances efforts to maintain international peace and security in the Arab region and their credibility, in conformity with the provisions of international law, the objectives of our two organizations, and the principles and purposes of their charters. To that end, allow me to present a number of observations and proposals.

First, any fruitful cooperation between the League of Arab States and the Council should be underpinned by the establishment of a permanent and institutional arrangement for the exchange of information — transparently as well as frankly — between the two sides in order for the Council to be apprised of the views and assessments of the regional organization concerned and able to articulate the appropriate position and adopt the proper measures, in conformity with this vision and these assessments, when addressing any matter related to the region. This request is not in fact entirely new;

it merely requires the commitment to putting it into effect, as it already constitutes an established principle in the relations between the Council and other regional and subregional organizations.

Secondly, there is a parallel need to advance the level of coordination and interaction with the Arab League on the part of the United Nations special representatives and envoys to Arab conflicts and areas of crises in a manner that truly results in a unified and common understanding of the causes of the eruption or continuation of these conflicts, leading to coordinated and complementary action by both organizations to resolve them.

I commend in particular the commitment shown by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya, my dear friend Mr. Ghassan Salamé, and his cooperation with the League of Arab States, especially during the current critical stage in Libya following the outbreak of hostilities around the capital Tripoli and the reversals in the political process that he used to oversee and which the Arab League fully supported and continues to support. We also highly appreciate the approach of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in regularly coordinating and interacting with the League of Arab States, especially to address the severe financial crisis that has afflicted the Agency's budget and endangered its operations in the service of Palestinian refugees. This form of cooperation provides a positive example that we hope will be followed to maximize the coordination between the Arab League, the envoys and senior officials of the United Nations and others concerning issues related to the Arab region.

Thirdly, there is a long-standing history of institutional cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in various areas of common interest to both organizations. We established an organizational framework for this relationship almost 30 years ago when the two sides signed an agreement on cooperation in 1989 and proceeded afterwards to update the text of the agreement by signing an additional protocol in 2016. The agreement and the mechanisms emanating from it, along with the preparations currently under way by the United Nations to open a permanent liaison office to the Arab League in Cairo — to which the Secretary-General has referred — provide a comprehensive framework for advancing the

cooperation between the United Nations system and the Arab League.

We trust that this framework can be employed to further develop the cooperation we aspire to with the Security Council, not only in resolving armed conflicts but also in addressing all threats to international peace and security in the Arab region in its broader perspective, be it with respect to disarmament and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, combating terrorism, the protection of civilians in armed conflict or humanitarian crises, the flow of refugees and internally displaced persons and irregular migration. I pledge to take care of and cooperate with the liaison office, providing it with all the support it needs to carry out its mandate in Cairo.

Fourthly, the cooperation that we aspire to achieve with the Security Council and United Nations agencies must expand to encompass all stages of early warning, mediation, good offices, preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding and peace sustainability. There are multiple examples of joint action that we have undertaken together in these fields, perhaps the most notable of which was the appointment of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States to Syria in 2012 and the establishment of the Libya quartet, which is comprised of representatives of the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the European Union and the African Union.

I believe that we must draw the lessons learned from these and other experiences and strive to replicate their positive results in other situations, whether existing or emerging, that require joint action to prevent the eruption or deterioration of conflicts, leading to their resolution and ensuring them against the possibility of reoccurrence. We also welcome, in this regard, the institutional support provided to us by the United Nations to strengthen the internal capabilities of the Arab League in maintaining international peace and security in the Arab region, which we hope to further develop to the point of establishing and deploying peace missions in the field to Arab crisis areas in the near future. This practice is highly useful and we appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General and the important resources he provides to us. Other practices are being undertaken at the level of the Arab League thanks to his support.

Fifthly, despite the severity of the challenges facing our region, the League of Arab States, as a regional organization and collective of its Member States, remains an active partner in the multilateral system and a major contributor to efforts to maintain international peace and security, not only in the Arab region but also in areas in geographic proximity to the Arab world and other crisis areas.

Certain Arab States — like Egypt, Jordan and Morocco — are among the top troop- and police-contributing countries in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Other Arab countries — such as Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar — are among the largest donors of humanitarian assistance to address the humanitarian crises in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Somalia, as well as in supporting the budget and activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. We all succeeded in bridging the gap in the Agency's budget last year, and we hope that this year will be just as successful.

Arab countries have also exercised a significant diplomatic role in sponsoring historic reconciliations in the Horn of Africa and provided further financial and logistical assistance to the countries of the Sahel to enhance their capabilities to combat Boko Haram and other terrorist groups active on their territories. There are also distinguished Arab institutions, such as Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, that are partnered with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and support dialogue among religions and peoples in a way which promotes the culture of peace, moderation and tolerance in our Arab region and beyond.

I believe that these contributions, among many others, all feed into the process of strengthening cooperative relations between the United Nations and the Arab League and demonstrate the benefits of the cooperation and complementarity that can and must be achieved between us.

Sixthly and finally, it is incumbent upon me to once again warn against the dangers of maintaining the status quo of the Palestinian situation to the security and stability of the entire Middle East region. This is especially pertinent given Israel's continued oppressive practices against the Palestinian people and its feverish attempts to expand by annexing Arab lands, even to the point of doubting the Palestinian right itself and the just Palestinian question. Rather, it seeks to legitimize

the occupation of the territory and then proceed to illegally annex it by recognizing occupied Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, casting doubt over the just cause of Palestinian refugees, which the Organization has been sponsoring for 70 years.

While I trust that the Council is fully aware of the consistent positions espoused by the Arab League on this issue over the decades, I also trust that it recognizes the gravity of the issues I refer to. Attempts to resolve the Palestinian question outside the framework of international law, while ignoring the established final-status issues based on the two-State solution, or to create an alternative economic or development track perpetuating the occupation constitute a devastating blow to the international legal architecture, the credibility of the Security Council and the basic principles upon which the United Nations was founded. In this regard, I call on the Council to fully assume its responsibilities, without selectivity or double standards, to provide international protection to the Palestinian people, enforce all its previous resolutions and compel Israel to fully comply with implementing them.

*(spoke in English)*

Allow me, in conclusion, to clearly state that we are fully aware of the internal political dynamics surrounding the Security Council's approach — or lack thereof — to many of the complex crises afflicting the Arab region. I am confident that the Council also appreciates the complications and tensions that sometimes permeate our own Arab system and curtail its ability to collectively respond to the security challenges it faces.

Yet these considerations should not be an excuse for inaction or lead to any abdication of the Council's commitment to upholding the foundational principles of international law. I remain equally convinced that advancing the cooperative partnership between the United Nations and the Arab League is an indispensable means of enabling both the Security Council and our regional organization to assume their inherent responsibilities and better discharge their duties in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security in our region.

This partnership alone is not sufficient to resolve the multiple emergency situations that atrophy the Arab region, yet it is an important prerequisite that embodies our collective political will to address these crises and act in a complementary manner that truly reflects the

letter and spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. It also affords the Council the added legitimacy and credibility it often requires to elaborate the most appropriate course of action and secure the requisite support for its decisions vis-à-vis our region.

**The President** *(spoke in Arabic)*: I thank Mr. Aboul Gheit for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Allow me, first of all, to take this opportunity to welcome His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and to thank them for their participation in today's meeting. We greatly appreciate their important and valuable briefings and their confirmation of the importance of strengthening cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

As explained in the concept note we have distributed (S/2019/455, annex), the State of Kuwait convened today's meeting in order to consolidate the important principle established in Chapter VIII of the Charter of United Nations Charter. This principle encourages regional organizations to address regional issues and crises in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, while utilizing the Security Council to identify solutions capable of resolving these conflicts and maintaining international peace and security. As stipulated in paragraph 3 of Article 52 of the Charter,

“The Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies.”

Resolution 1631 (2005), which encourages the Security Council and regional organizations to advance cooperation, stresses also that the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations must cooperate in the maintenance international peace and security. Today's meeting is the first of its kind under this agenda item and can be considered the beginning of a new stage in cooperation between these two organizations.

As the Council is well aware, the League of Arab States, as a regional organization, was founded on 22 March 1945 — just before the United Nations was founded on 25 October 1945. Relations between the

two organizations date back to the 1950s and are based on General Assembly resolutions and the cooperation agreements of 1960 and 1989, as well as the protocol of amendment of 2016. Those documents make up the framework for the relationship between the two organizations and call on them to further deepen and expand that cooperation.

In that context, we welcome the upcoming opening of the United Nations liaison office to the League of Arab States, pursuant to the agreement reached in the protocol of amendment that I have just mentioned and General Assembly resolution 73/267, adopted at its seventy-third session, which affirms that the opening of the liaison office will improve the effectiveness of cooperation between the Secretariats of the two organizations. It also emphasizes the importance of and need for further strengthening cooperation between the two organizations in order to achieve their common objectives and goals.

There is a genuine mutual desire of the Secretaries-General of the two organizations to advance the cooperation and partnership between the organizations. The participation of His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the work of the League of Arab States at the summit level and the continued participation of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States in high-level meetings of the General Assembly clearly demonstrate their commitment to pursuing cooperation between the two organizations.

In its presidential statement S/PRST/2012/20, the Security Council recognized efforts by the League of Arab States to contribute to collective endeavours to settle conflicts in the Middle East peacefully as well as to promoting international responses to the transformations experienced in the region. The presidential statement also recognized the importance of strengthening cooperation on capacity-building with the League of Arab States in the maintenance of international peace and security and expressed the determination of the Security Council to take effective steps to further enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

However, the level of cooperation continues to be below expectations and aspirations even after the signing of the 2016 protocol of amendment between the two organizations. Given the challenges and major threats facing our region and the complex

political events, there have been nine Arab issues on the Council's agenda. The Council has been seized of some of them for many years, foremost of which is the Palestinian question that is central for Arab countries and represents the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Without achieving a lasting, just and comprehensive solution to that conflict, tensions and instability will persist in the region.

I support what the Secretaries-General of the two organizations have said this morning, namely, that we condemn the attacks on the oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman. That is the most recent event in a series of acts of sabotage that are threatening the security of maritime corridors as well as the energy security of the world. That is a threat to international peace and security. The international community has called for taking all necessary actions and measures to prevent more tensions in this sensitive region of the world.

In considering various aspects of cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, in line with the content of the presidential statement, we would also like to highlight a number of positive developments in those relations, namely, the holding of the first consultative meeting at the level of Security Council Permanent Representatives and their counterparts of the League of Arab States on 21 May 2016. A number of issues of common interest were discussed at that meeting, and we hope that such consultative meetings will continue in the future given their importance and role in terms of exchanging views on addressing Arab issues. We hope to continue the ongoing periodic consultations between the two Secretariats at all levels to exchange information and strengthen coordination and follow-up mechanisms, particularly in political and security areas.

In that regard, we emphasize the crucial role of coordination between the two organizations, especially when it comes to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General who deal with current issues in the region, such as the crises in Syria, Libya, Yemen and Somalia, in order to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of those crises and strengthen the capacities of the two organizations to find effective solutions to them through common action in many areas such as conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, particularly in post-conflict settings. We also need to focus on building civilian capacities and humanitarian assistance as well



as ensuring human rights, addressing refugees and migration issues and combating terrorism.

Strengthening cooperation between the two organizations requires an institutional framework, which would shape that relationship and provide it with a legal basis. The State of Kuwait has made great efforts in order to set up such a legal institutional framework, which could lead to a new era of cooperation between the two organizations. We hope to complete that task before the end of our Security Council membership.

Developments in the region once again demonstrate the importance of respecting the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, foremost of which is respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, as well as non-interference in their domestic affairs and not to use or threaten to use force against them. That requires from us more cooperation and work to bridge the gap between the resolutions adopted by the Council and by regional organizations and the implementation of those resolutions. We are convinced that the League of Arab States can positively contribute to the United Nations efforts to overcome the challenges facing the States of our region.

In conclusion, we reaffirm the complete conviction of the State of Kuwait that the most important foundations for international peace and security are respect for the principles of the Charter, the ability of the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities and implementing the Council's resolutions. We believe that the non-implementation of such resolutions is one of the key reasons behind tensions and destabilization regionally and internationally. At the same time, we reaffirm our absolute conviction in the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue, negotiation and mediation in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter. It would be remiss of me not to thank States members of the Council for their support and endorsement of the draft presidential statement that will be adopted at the end of this meeting in order to advance and strengthen the relations between our two organizations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland.

**Mr. Czapotowicz** (Poland): Poland welcomes the opportunity to participate in today's briefing and

discussion on cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States. I would like to express my gratitude to His Excellency Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait, for his valuable initiative. I would also like to express my appreciation for today's substantial briefings by Secretary-General António Guterres and Secretary-General of the League of Arab States Ahmed Aboul Gheit.

Recently, I visited the secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo. It gave me the opportunity to have a more comprehensive understanding of regional attitudes to developments in the region, including the organization's role and relevance in offering constructive solutions. Poland sees added value in closer and more operational cooperation between these two important organizations. We are also active in enhancing bilateral contacts with Arab countries and contributing to the efforts aimed at addressing regional challenges. That is why we find this debate timely and attach great importance to its outcomes.

At the present time, the Arab world is facing many challenges. The situation in the Middle East and the North African region does not make us feel optimistic. The protracted internal conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Libya have negative consequences for those countries' neighbours. Terrorism, radicalization, illegal mass migration and climate change exacerbate the negative impacts of unresolved conflicts. The region is experiencing multiple humanitarian challenges. Millions of people in Syria, Yemen, Libya and Palestine face deprivation and problems with access to food, medical care and education, while many of them are stranded in the middle of military conflicts.

It is our duty as the international community to do our utmost to end these peoples' suffering and bring peace and stability back to the region. We cannot overlook the tension in relations between Iran and Arab countries or the need to de-escalate it in the wider region, particularly in the Gulf. Further, the Middle East peace process cannot effectively move forward as long as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains without a solution. Indeed, the need to maximize the cooperation among regional and subregional organizations is pressing if the activities undertaken by the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the African Union, the European Union and other important contributors, in particular the United States of America, are to achieve some degree of synergy.

In recent years, we have witnessed an increase in the use of mediation as a crisis management tool to work towards the peaceful resolution of conflicts. However, for it to be effective, a strong commitment by relevant regional, subregional and universal organizations is required. Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides a solid basis for this kind of cooperation, which was underscored by the Secretary-General in his report on this very issue (S/2018/592). Only by working together can we enhance our capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts and other crises that threaten humankind.

Obviously, success is never guaranteed, but we are making progress in this area. Today's meeting is further evidence of that fact. We have to remember, however, that in order to achieve milestones in working together, we need to learn how to identify mutual benefits and avoid destructive competition. There is no other way to attain that objective than to regularly assess the cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. In my opinion, it would also be useful to draw from experience and the examples of best practices developed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, particularly with regard to confidence-building measures. I think that this practice should be taken into serious consideration by the League of Arab States.

Let me reiterate that it is not possible to resolve political and strategic differences without coming to a compromise between key actors at the regional and global levels. Resolving peace and security challenges in the Arab world requires external mediation and support. Although national and international actors are engaged on the ground, their policies are somewhat uncoordinated, if not at times contradictory. Finding viable solutions to existing challenges requires the development of a broader front among those engaged. A coherent vision rather than a zero-sum-game approach is needed. That vision would require some level of coherence among such major actors as the United States, the European Union, China, Russia and others.

With that in mind, Poland, together with the United States, hosted a conference in Warsaw in February on security in the Middle East. The meeting was an occasion to start a process that we hope will help to tackle the concrete security problems of the Middle East and bring greater stability and confidence to the region. At the meeting, foreign missions, senior officials and ministers from more than 60 countries, including Arab

States, Israel and the countries of the Middle East, the 28 countries of the European Union and the United States discussed how to solve the security problems of the region. We agreed that we should continue the process through engagement in working groups. We hope for the widespread participation of representatives of States in the search for concrete solutions for the Middle East on such issues as the combat against terrorism, the proliferation of weapons, cybersecurity, maritime and aviation security, energy, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

The United Nations and the League of Arab States must join forces and develop closer cooperation so as to find a way to strengthen peace and stability in the Middle East. We would all benefit from bringing cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States to a new level. We welcome the opening of the United Nations Liaison Office to the League of Arab States in Cairo just announced by the Secretary-General. This and other measures mentioned by the briefers will help to enhance the cooperation between the two organizations.

**Mr. Singer Weisinger** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour to see you here in the Chamber once again, Mr. President, and we welcome you to New York. We commend the Security Council's substantive programme of work under the presidency of the State of Kuwait, including this important briefing.

We express our immense gratitude to Secretary-General António Guterres and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for their briefings, and to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland for his statement.

Based on conviction and experience, we firmly believe that, through cooperation and inclusive dialogue, a better result can be achieved — and one that contains a broader range of considerations and recommendations that allow us to come closer to more suitable and lasting solutions. Accordingly, we support efforts and strategies that deepen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations as fundamental building blocks for the maintenance of peace and security, on the basis of the Charter and relevant law.

The so-called multilateralism network or multilateral collaboration, which was created to address the excessively complex, multidimensional and unpredictable challenges we face and to improve

collective security, is a major feature of the culture of the United Nations, and it is extremely significant in the Middle East, thanks to the contributions of the League of Arab States. In keeping with that indispensable model of collaboration that the United Nations maintains with other regions of the world through its representative bodies, and in the light of the persistence and nature of the conflicts in the Middle East and surrounding regions, including the question of Palestine and the conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen, which take up a large part of the Council's agenda, we agree with the assertion that we would benefit from a comprehensive regional approach, which is why it is important to strengthen our partnership with the League of Arab States.

Experience throughout the conflict cycle, including efforts aimed at prevention or to achieve the peaceful resolution of conflicts, allows us to recognize the contributions of regional and subregional organizations, whose direct impact and relationship to the realities on the ground are unique and non-replicable, particularly in terms of cooperation on issues related to water, human rights, sexual violence in conflict, migration, refugees and counter-terrorism — central themes in the collective effort for international stability.

We therefore agree on the importance of an effective partnership between the United Nations and the League of Arab States through regular consultations and coordinated action at strategic and operational levels, and welcome as positive developments the forthcoming opening of a United Nations liaison office at the League of Arab States headquarters in Cairo and the League's efforts to build capacity in prevention, management, mediation, negotiation and peacekeeping.

We also welcome today's meeting and its effective follow-up, aware that the Council can only benefit from a deepening of the cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in areas related to security policy, thereby contributing to the collective effort aimed at resolving the conflicts that persist in the Middle East in fulfilment of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the region to live in peace and security.

**Mr. Matjila** (South Africa): We join others in thanking you, Mr. President, for presiding today over the first-ever Security Council meeting on the cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States. We also thank Secretary-General Guterres

and Secretary-General Aboul Gheit of the League of Arab States for their briefings. We would also like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland to today's meeting.

I want to join the Secretaries-General in condemning today's attack on the maritime vessels in the Gulf of Oman. We must keep the sea lanes safe for global commerce and travel.

The Charter of the United Nations gives the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Chapter VIII of the Charter also recognizes the complementary roles of the United Nations and regional organizations in this regard. Political and strategic alignment between the Security Council and regional organizations has yielded effective results, as we have seen in the cases of Somalia and the Sudan, among many other examples. Such coordination should be enhanced and become more formalized and structured, which is why South Africa has consistently championed the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

As Council members are aware and recall, South Africa played a pioneering role in the adoption of resolutions 1809 (2008) and 2033 (2012) to further strengthen the relationship between the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council and the Security Council. Through these resolutions, we, as a country and as a representative of the African continent, demonstrated our collective political will to strengthen coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

We also believe that cooperation among regional organizations is equally important, especially in instances where there is overlapping membership, which is the case with the League of Arab States and the African Union. In these instances, regional organizations should collaborate on developing regional solutions to such common challenges as the prevention and resolution of the conflicts, in particular those ravaging Africa and the Arab world.

South Africa is of the view that cooperation among global and regional bodies is critical to reaching a deeper understanding of regional challenges, seeking solutions for regional peace and security, and implementing agreed solutions, agreements and frameworks. We have found that since the start of cooperation between the Council and the AU Peace and Security Council,

the relationship between the two has been meaningful and useful in finding common ground on peace and security issues on the African continent. South Africa wholly supports improved and increased cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States as this is pertinent to dealing with conflicts in the Arab region.

South Africa appreciates the efforts of the League aimed at promoting peace in the Middle East region, especially those intended to further the Middle East peace process, the oldest peace and security item on the Council's agenda. It is therefore vital that the United Nations strengthen its engagement with the League of Arab States. In this regard, South Africa welcomes the appointment of Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari as the Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, which was created as part of the Secretary-General's proposed reforms of the United Nations peace and security architecture.

We emphasize that in its cooperation with the League of Arab States, the Council should be consistent in addressing all of the conflicts in the Middle East, rather than selectively choosing some to the detriment of others. The underlying causes of uprisings and long-standing conflicts have to be addressed in a coordinated manner. We have not seen such an approach applied to the Middle East. There has been swift international reaction to some conflicts, while in others such cooperation is lacking. This is evident when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian question, and it is unacceptable.

As we continue to consolidate and strengthen cooperation among the United Nations, the League of Arab States and regional organizations, we call on the members of the Council to value and support these relationships and consistently make use of them in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We support the draft presidential statement that will be adopted at the end of our deliberations.

**Mr. Cohen** (United States of America): I welcome the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland to the Security Council today. I thank all speakers and briefers, including Secretary-General António Guterres, for their contributions to today's debate.

The United States supports continued cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations, including on key issues such as counter-

terrorism, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and natural-resource management. We appreciate the efforts of the United Nations to establish a liaison office in Cairo to enhance coordination and look forward to it opening soon.

The United States also values its important partnership with the League of Arab States, and we thank the League for working with us on our vision of a stable, prosperous and secure Middle East, including the League's ongoing support for President Hadi Mansour and the legitimate Government of Yemen, as the United Nations mediates between the parties to reach a political settlement to end the conflict in that country. We also value the League's key support for the Global Coalition to Defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS).

Today all of the territory that ISIS once held in Iraq and north-east Syria has been liberated. The 75 nations and five international organizations of the Global Coalition should be enormously proud of this achievement. Working by, with and through our allies and local partners, we have launched an unprecedented military-stabilization, counter-messaging and law-enforcement effort to counter the evil ideology of ISIS and prevent attacks against our homelands, our personnel, our citizens, our citizens and our interests.

We also commend our friends and allies within the League of Arab States for standing firm on not readmitting Al-Assad's Syria and not normalizing relations with his regime until a political settlement consistent with resolution 2254 (2015) has been achieved. International solidarity against normalizing relations is critical in helping bring the Al-Assad regime to the realization that there is no military solution to the conflict. Only a political solution as outlined in resolution 2254 (2015) will achieve long-term peace and stability for Syria and its neighbours.

Iran remains the most significant threat to regional peace and security, engaged as it is in numerous malign activities in the region. The United States welcomes the 31 May statement of the League of Arab States, issued following its meeting in Mecca, in which it called out Iran for its destabilizing behaviour. Iran has gone to great lengths to prolong regional conflicts that radiate instability across the region and exacerbate human suffering. The United States is pressing the Iranian regime to end its role in these conflicts and curtail its support for proxy militias. Individually, the States of the

region are susceptible to Iran's coercion, intimidation and malign behaviour. Indeed, Iran has deployed many of its resources to perpetuate its revolutionary ideology and malign activities in the region. It should be countered by a strong unified front.

It is unacceptable for any party to attack commercial shipping, and today's attacks on ships in the Gulf of Oman raise very serious concerns. The United States Government is providing assistance and will continue to assess the situation.

Turning to Middle East peace, the White House is working on a vision for peace that will offer a brighter future for all and will release it when the time is right. We hope all stakeholders will read the plan with an open mind and be willing to engage constructively. We look forward to discussing ideas and strategies on how to achieve a more prosperous future for the Palestinian people with international stakeholders at the upcoming workshop in Bahrain later this month.

The United States supports continued cooperation between the League of Arab states and the United Nations and looks forward to seeing a strong relationship advance progress toward a more stable, prosperous and secure Middle East.

**Mr. Delattre** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, and the Secretary-General of the Arab League, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, for their enlightening briefings, which made it possible to draw up a precise overview of cooperation between the Arab League and the United Nations, as well as for the very promising approaches they proposed to deepen this cooperation.

I would also like to thank the Kuwaiti presidency for taking the initiative to organize today's meeting and to welcome the presence among us of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait and Poland.

Today's meeting provides a new opportunity for the Security Council to exchange views on the common issues and challenges of the Arab world in a cross-cutting manner, following on from the informal interactive dialogue that France organized in March as part of our presidency of the Council, in order to seek points of agreement and convergence between us.

First of all, I would like to return to the scale of the political and security challenges facing the Arab world today, which more than ever justifies a sustained

dialogue between the United Nations and the Arab League. These issues concern us all because of their impact on international peace and security.

On the security front, I am thinking in particular of the terrorist threat, with the persistent menace of Da'esh and the radicalization of minds. I am also thinking of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to both State and non-State actors.

At the political level, it is essential to support the United Nations efforts aimed at finding political solutions to the conflicts in the region, particularly in Syria, Yemen and Libya. These solutions must allow for the strengthening of institutions and respect for the rule of law, as well as inclusive and sustainable development that benefits all, without discrimination. I am thinking in particular of Syria, where military operations in the Idlib region must be brought to a definitive end and progress must be continued towards a political solution under the aegis of the United Nations and on the basis of resolution 2254 (2015). I am also thinking of Yemen, where we actively support United Nations mediation and call on all parties to engage constructively with it in the implementation of all the commitments made in Stockholm in December 2018.

On method, it is essential that we reaffirm together our commitment to dialogue and regional cooperation in the very spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. Yesterday, I had the opportunity to reaffirm our full support for the role of the United Nations in conflict prevention and mediation (see S/PV.8546). Today, I would like to highlight the key role of regional organizations, in particular the Arab League, whose action is more essential than ever to build consensus among Arab States and respond to global challenges affecting the region and beyond.

In a context marked by the worrying rise in tensions in the Gulf, as illustrated by the new incidents against two tankers in the Arabian Sea today, which are of deep concern to us, restraint and de-escalation are more necessary than ever. As the Secretary-General has just pointed out, the world simply cannot afford a major confrontation in the Gulf region. It is all the more essential to work together to gradually establish a regional dialogue that could be the appropriate framework for structured exchanges on all areas of concern. In this regard, I would like to commend Kuwait's long-standing commitment to keeping the channels of dialogue open and to building bridges

despite the differences we are experiencing. This is also the meaning of France's action.

Finally, I would like to stress the importance of respect for the fundamental principles of international law, which determine international peace and security. Any unilateral decision that deviates from them would be doomed to failure and would considerably weaken the order based on international legality. In this regard, I recall the first and foremost the political settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and our full commitment to the two-State solution. In this context, too, the Arab League and the United Nations have in common that they have defined clear parameters within the resolutions of the Security Council and the Arab Peace Initiative. Any effort, particularly economic, must be carried out within this framework.

In that context, close cooperation between the Arab League and the United Nations is more necessary than ever and must be further developed. In this regard, I would like to welcome the forthcoming opening of a United Nations liaison office at the Arab League in Cairo, which has just been announced. This is an important step towards further collaboration between the United Nations and the Arab League.

The strengthening of exchanges between the members of the Security Council and the Arab League is also an important point. In this regard, we welcome the Council's commitment to invite the Secretary-General of the Arab League to come and brief it on an annual basis.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our desire to promote a better understanding by the Security Council and the United Nations of regional dynamics. This involves, in particular, creating spaces for cross-cutting discussions, as we are doing today and as we did in March during our presidency. The Council could also meet informally with the Special Envoys and Special Representatives for the North Africa and Middle East region once a year, in the presence of a representative of the Arab League. The meaning of these efforts is to move away from a logic of division or even confrontation that is as futile as it is risky and to create a dynamic of partnership. For this reason, there is no alternative to dialogue. There are no shortcuts. That is why it is so important to disconnect our automatic controls and to constantly seek convergence between us.

It is in that spirit that France will continue to support the strengthening of the partnership between

the United Nations and the Arab League. It is in the same spirit that France will continue to exchange with the countries of the region as well as with the Arab League both bilaterally and within the European Union to provide a common response to its challenges. The Summit of the Two Shores, which we will host in Marseille on 23 and 24 June, will be another opportunity to foster such dialogue.

**Mr. Djani (Indonesia):** First of all, I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres, as well as the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, for their briefings. I would also like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland to the Chamber.

Indonesia welcomes the convening of today's briefing, under Kuwait's presidency, to further enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in resolving conflicts. We would also like to highlight Kuwait's excellent role in the region in that regard.

As we often state, Indonesia believes in the principle that neighbours know best. Cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security is consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and important to achieving lasting solutions. Enhancing such cooperation has been a recurring theme for Indonesia's membership of the Security Council, including through the adoption of document S/PRST/2007/42, during our presidency in 2007. We have always championed the need for the greater involvement of regional organizations, as we have done in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region on peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In that regard, permit me to share several points.

First, the League of Arab States, with its 22 members, remains of great importance and relevance. In recent years, it has assumed a leading role in maintaining peace and security in the region. It has facilitated the pacific settlement of disputes between its members, adopted clear stances on the conflicts in the region and supported humanitarian situations. Its member States have also been actively participating in United Nations peacekeeping missions. However, many countries of the Arab region remain afflicted by conflicts. Therefore, we commend the renewed determination of the League of Arab States to strengthen its role in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustaining peace in

the region. The League of Arab States is best placed to envision conflict-specific solutions, considering its unique understanding of the dynamics of the situations involving its members. It should continue to advance a comprehensive regional approach, particularly in resolving long-standing conflicts in the region.

I should like to concur with the statement made by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States earlier today on the issue of the continuation of Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territory. We condemn any effort leading to the illegal annexation of Palestinian territory, which would further destabilize the Middle East. We will continue to work with our brothers and sisters towards the aim of the Arab League to achieve the vision of a two-State solution, based on relevant Security Council resolutions and internationally agreed parameters. We also concur with the statement made by Secretary-General Guterres that there is no plan B.

Secondly, cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States should be enhanced, building on respective comparative advantages, based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that such cooperation should be more structured to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability. We recognize the merit in having regular briefings and annual informal meetings between the Council and the League of Arab States. However, interactions between the two should go beyond those meetings and enable a more meaningful dialogue that delivers concrete actions. In that regard, we welcome the appointment of an Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, as well as the opening of the United Nations Liaison Office in Cairo.

Thirdly, there should be a greater focus on prevention and mediation. Indonesia believes that tackling the root cause of conflicts is imperative to preventing conflict or relapse into violence. There is a nexus between peace and security and development. In many instances, potential conflicts diminish when there are economic and social developments that lead to greater opportunities and well-being of the people. Therefore, it is important to remain proactive in identifying and addressing the social and economic root causes of violence. In addition, the mediation efforts of the League of Arab States should be promoted and supported. Information-sharing, joint early warning and empowerment to enhance the capacity of the League of Arab States are areas that could be further explored. On many occasions, we have underlined the importance

of horizon-scanning so as to prevent conflict or ensure that emerging conflicts will not escalate further.

In that vein, we are deeply concerned about the most recent developments near the Strait of Hormuz, including the attack on two oil tankers earlier today. Such attacks should be condemned. We call on all countries of the region and elsewhere to exercise restraint and work together to help de-escalate tensions in the region.

Indonesia views the League of Arab States as an important partner, both historically and strategically. We signed a memorandum of cooperation in 2016 to promote cooperation on many issues. We will continue to work together with the League of Arab States and countries of the region in pursuit of global peace and security, in promoting a culture of peace and tolerance, in combating terrorism and in addressing development challenges and the myriad issues facing the world today.

Lastly, we welcome the draft presidential statement prepared by Kuwait regarding this very important issue.

**Mr. Ma Zhaoxu** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres and Secretary-General Aboul Gheit for their briefings. We also thank Kuwait for its initiative in convening important meeting.

China welcomes the draft presidential statement to be adopted by the Security Council, concerning cooperation between the United Nations, its Security Council and the League of Arab States (LAS).

China supports the continued deepening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as envisioned in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and efforts to consolidate and strengthen collective security mechanisms to jointly maintain international peace and security. The LAS has long worked to promote peace, stability and development in the Middle East and actively advocated political solutions to hotspot issues. It has made unremitting efforts for a united and strong Arab world. Recent years have seen close cooperation between the United Nations and the LAS in easing regional tensions and resolving hotspot issues. We appreciate the efforts of Secretary-General Guterres and Secretary-General Aboul Gheit in that regard. Indeed, the LAS has become an important bridge for cooperation and exchange between the United Nations and the Arab world.

With regard to methods to promote cooperation between the Council and the LAS, I would like to make the following proposals.

First, we should pursue dialogue and consultation and advocate inclusive reconciliation in improving the regional security situation. As many problems in the Middle East are intertwined, all parties need to treat each other as equals, consult extensively, seek common ground and build a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security architecture. They should solve problems through dialogue, good offices, mediation and other peaceful means and continuously enhance mutual understanding and trust.

Secondly, we should strengthen coordination in our joint efforts to resolve hotspot issues. With its experience and geographic, historical, cultural and other advantages, the LAS can play a greater role in solving problems, such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and those in Libya and the Sudan. The United Nations should assist the LAS in enhancing its capability in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and provide support to it in personnel training, institution-building and logistical assistance in order to forge synergies.

Thirdly, we must advance the fight against terrorism and prevent violent extremism. The Middle East has been plagued by terrorism and violent extremism. The League of Arab States is an important partner in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The two bodies can cooperate in countering terrorism through joint projects and by strengthening information-sharing, capacity-building and coordinated actions in our joint response to the challenges we face in combating terrorism in the Middle East.

The eighth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum was held in Beijing last June. At its opening ceremony, President Xi Jinping announced the building of a future-oriented strategic partnership of comprehensive collaboration and common development between China and the Arab States designed to usher in a new era of cooperation between the two sides. China will firmly support and help Arab countries in achieving stability and development and in uniting and strengthening their cooperation in order to jointly maintain peace and stability in the Middle East. China is also ready to work with others to promote greater cooperation between

the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, such as the League of Arab States, support multilateralism and work together to build a community of a shared future for humankind.

**Mr. Allen** (United Kingdom): I thank the Secretaries-General for their briefings today. I want to congratulate you, Mr. President, and Kuwait on organizing this first meeting with the League of Arab States under this agenda item. We agree with others that sustainable long-term peace and prosperity is best achieved through coordinated efforts. As the regional situation continues to evolve, the League of Arab States has shown resolve and perseverance in working to strengthen regional security and stability. Stronger cooperation will enable us all to confront the urgent challenges that we share in the region and that demand the international community's immediate attention.

To begin with the Sudan, the international community must support the demands of the Sudanese people for a better future. We expect the Transitional Military Council to act on their demands and engage in dialogue to agree on a swift transition to civilian Government. We utterly condemn the use of force against peaceful protesters, and we encourage all partners, including in the League of Arab States and especially those with influence over the Transitional Military Council, to support the African Union's mediation efforts and the calls for an end to violence and a swift transfer to civilian rule. Stability will come with an inclusive agreement, not with violence and exclusion. We will continue to engage with all sides to that end.

On Syria, the United Kingdom's position remains clear. Peace through a negotiated political settlement is absolutely essential for the sake of the people of Syria and the region. We have all recently seen again horrifying scenes of civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and schools, being bombed in Syria, this time in Idlib. We cannot shirk our responsibilities as members of the Council. Working with the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria and with the League of Arab States, we have to redouble our efforts to seek a negotiated political settlement in line with resolution 2254 (2015), which remains the only sustainable solution to the conflict. The United Kingdom will not resume engagement with Syria or consider reconstruction until a credible, substantive and genuine political process is firmly under way. And I echo the comments of the



United States Ambassador on the importance of the League of Arab States' suspension of Syria.

With regards to the Middle East peace process, the United Kingdom remains committed to a two-State solution, leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State, based on the 1967 borders and with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both States. We have consistently called and continue to call for an immediate end to all actions that undermine the viability of a two-State solution, including terrorism, anti-Semitic incitement, settlement expansion and the demolition of Palestinian property. We should all encourage all parties to abide by international law and promote peace, stability and security.

Turning to Libya, the United Kingdom remains deeply concerned about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation. The protracted and worsening violence benefits no one and serves only to demonstrate that there is no military solution. We call on all involved in the conflict to commit to an immediate ceasefire, allow unfettered humanitarian access and resume political talks. Achieving that will require compromise on all sides. We remain fully supportive of the United Nations-led political process and the efforts of Special Representative Salamé as the only way to achieve security and stability in Libya.

It has now been four years since the devastating conflict in Yemen began. Without a political settlement, the horrific suffering of millions will continue. The United Kingdom fully supports the United Nations and Special Envoy Martin Griffiths as he continues his efforts to secure agreement by the parties to the conflict to implement the Stockholm agreements. We encourage both parties to continue to engage constructively with the Special Envoy and Lieutenant General Lollesgaard.

We are deeply concerned about the reports of explosions and fires on vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important shipping lanes. Freedom of navigation is vital to the global economy and all of our interests.

The challenges facing the region are immense. All of us sitting around this table today must show agility and prioritize practical action in working together to address them. We believe that the United Nations and the League of Arab States can achieve more when they work together in that spirit.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are very pleased to see you presiding over the Council today, Sir. We are grateful to Kuwait for convening today's meeting and for initiating presidential statement, on cooperation with the League of Arab States, which we support. We consider it essential to strengthen our cooperation with the League, considering the continued potential for conflict in the Middle East. We believe that just as there should be African solutions to African problems, there must be Arab solutions to Arab problems. We thank Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, the Secretary-General of the League, for their detailed briefings. We share many of the views they expressed. For our part, we would like to focus on the following points.

Our colleagues around this table can affirm that the Security Council attaches a high priority to the issues of the Middle East and North Africa, almost as much as to those of the African continent as a whole. That is not accidental. The region is going through a difficult, tense period that began with some ill-considered steps aimed at interfering in the affairs of sovereign States of the region.

There are ongoing active conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen. We are seeing potential for an escalation of the protests in the Sudan. There is still much to be done to strengthen stability in Iraq. The problem of Western Sahara is awaiting resolution. The Israeli-Palestinian settlement is at the epicentre of this turbulence, and its international legal framework has recently been eroded by the unilateral steps taken by key players in the Middle East peace process. Terrorism and extremism continue to escalate, and social and economic problems are becoming more acute. All of that undoubtedly increases the relevance of the League of Arab States as a mechanism for multilateral dialogue and the coordination of the collective efforts of regional stakeholders, as well as for limiting destructive outside interference in the region's affairs.

We want to see a strong, united and effective League of Arab States that can raise the profile of the Arab world in preventing conflicts, overcoming deadlocked situations and providing a collective rebuff to the challenges facing the region that I have just described. We must unite in order to achieve one of the most important goals facing us right now, which is launching a regional dialogue aimed at establishing a security architecture in the Persian Gulf, where we

believe tensions are being artificially ratcheted up with regard to Iran. There is a Russian concept for this issue whose scope we believe could eventually be expanded to cover the entire region of the Middle East and North Africa and serve as a basis for this dialogue. We know that Secretary-General Guterres has frequently expressed similar ideas.

We support developing the cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations to its full potential. We would therefore like to see a regular synchronization of watches between our two organizations on current regional issues that are on the Security Council's agenda, as well as the exchange of experiences in resolving crises and other problems that are obstacles to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security. In our view, cooperation between the Security Council and the League can help to develop balanced international approaches to addressing Arab problems, as well as new mechanisms for cooperation in settling regional crises. Specific areas for such cooperation could include anti-crisis mediation efforts; aligning positions on serious conflict situations, particularly in Syria, including specific measures to assist post-conflict recovery in the Syrian Arab Republic; working together to resolve the Palestinian question on an internationally recognized legal basis; humanitarian activity; tackling the problem of sustainable development in the Arab world and developing a strategy capable of countering new and emerging challenges in the region, including the growth of terrorism and illicit cross-border migration.

Russia will continue strengthening its partnership with the League on a mutually beneficial basis. We hold regular consultations on current international and regional issues. The fifth ministerial session of the Russian-Arab Cooperation Forum, held in Moscow on 16 April, and its outcomes—an action plan for the period from 2019 to 2021 and a joint communiqué—reaffirmed our converging positions on a broad spectrum of issues, including the Israeli-Palestinian settlement, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, the Sudan, Somalia, counter-terrorism, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and dialogue among civilizations.

Speaking of dialogue among civilizations, I should not omit to mention the situation of the Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities who have fallen victim to destabilization and have become hostages to extremist rhetoric throughout the Middle East and North Africa. In our view the League could play a

positive role in helping to spread a culture of interfaith and inter-ethnic peace, and we are ready to share our experience in that area.

In conclusion, we would like to underscore that Russia will remain an honest and unbiased partner that our Arab friends can depend on.

**Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the initiative of the Kuwaiti presidency in convening this meeting.

We appreciate the concept note (S/2019/455, annex), which encourages us to reflect on the current state of cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States. We warmly welcome your presence, Mr. President, and that of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland. We thank Secretary-General António Guterres, and his Arab League counterpart, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, for their briefings.

Through its Hispanic heritage, Peru shares historical links with the countries of the Middle East. We recognize the rich cultural, scientific, religious and ethnic diversity of its peoples, as well as their continuing desire for peace and prosperity. However, we deplore the persistent regional challenges that have led to serious threats to international security, as is evident in the conflicts ravaging Libya, Yemen and Syria, as well as in other scenarios that require the urgent support of the international community and action on the part of the Council. We are also concerned about the recent attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman, which we firmly condemn and which must be investigated.

In these sensitive situations, Peru considers it particularly important to strengthen multilateralism and relationships between the United Nations and regional organizations, in line with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. We emphasize the synergies that this kind of approach fosters in an increasingly interdependent world, thanks to the comparative and complementary advantages that these bodies can offer. In that connection, we recognize the effective leadership of the League of Arab States in its efforts to promote peace and stability in the Middle East, to which it contributes a profound understanding of the dynamics and underlying causes of the conflicts in that part of the world. That compels us to reaffirm the crucial role played by cooperation between the Council and the League of Arab States and to emphasize the need to reinforce it. In that regard, we welcome recent developments aimed at promoting this partnership,

such as the decision to establish a United Nations liaison office in Cairo and a more fluid exchange of information in areas such as the conservation and management of water resources, the fight against terrorism, sexual violence and migration.

However, we believe it is essential to ensure that this relationship is a predictable one that enables issues that are particularly critical for the region, such as those relating to peace and security, to be more effectively addressed. We therefore have a positive view of the proposals to establish a consultative framework between the United Nations and the League in addition to the holding of an annual meeting between the members of both organizations.

We encourage accelerated efforts to arrange greater collaboration on conflict prevention through enhanced mediation, the facilitation of dialogue, early-warning and rapid-response systems and confidence-building. We also believe that opportunities for improved coordination should extend to the areas of the protection of civilians and of humanitarian assistance, where both organizations can and must work together to ensure compliance with the provisions of international humanitarian law and human rights law. In that regard, Peru stresses the benefits of this Council and the League of Arab States joining forces to overcome the current stalemate in the peace process between Israel and Palestine, which means promoting a resumption of direct negotiations leading to a two-State solution. The validity and relevance of the Arab Peace Initiative is an important example of the contributions that the League of Arab States is in a position to make.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Peru's commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East, which guarantees the protection of the civilian population, respect for international humanitarian law and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

**Mr. Schulz** (Germany): I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres and, of course, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for their briefings. I would also like to extend a very warm welcome to the Foreign Minister of Poland.

We very much welcome your initiative, Mr. President, to discuss this issue here today at the Security Council. During Germany's presidency of the Council seven years ago in 2012, we convened a discussion on the very issue at hand today (see S/PV.6841), in an illustration

of our long-term commitment to comprehensive partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in order to tackle protracted conflicts. We believe firmly that stronger ties between the United Nations and the League of Arab States and greater exchange and collaboration can make a significant contribution to preventing crises and managing conflicts, improving human rights situations, combating terrorism and mitigating the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons in the region. The list of conflicts and challenges in the region is a long one, as we all know. Ongoing conflicts such as those in Libya, Syria, Yemen and Sudan, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, present us with complex conflict dynamics. I do not want to go into all of these issues today in detail, but I would like to highlight two issues.

The first concerns Syria. To echo several of my colleagues, I would like to underscore Germany's strong commitment to a negotiated political settlement on the basis of resolution 2254 (2015). We are currently following the deadly escalation in the north-west of the country with great concern, and we reiterate our appeal to all actors to fully respect international humanitarian law, which must prevail in all circumstances.

Secondly, I would also like to comment very briefly on last night's security incident in the Gulf of Oman. We strongly condemn the attack on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman. Like every act of sabotage, it constitutes another serious threat to the security and safety of maritime traffic in the region, but such incidents could also add to the tensions already present in the region. That is particularly worrying and disturbing, and we must closely follow the situation as a matter of great concern.

The long list of challenges in the region highlights the urgency of regional dialogue in order to address the root causes of conflicts, such as underlying grievances, and reconcile those conflicting interests. Our organizations bear a particular responsibility for constructively addressing and working towards de-escalating such conflicts. The League of Arab States can provide an important platform for promoting enhanced regional dialogue. Such dialogue can facilitate the identification of shared interests and opportunities for political, economic and security cooperation within the region, which ultimately helps to overcome existing mistrust and tensions.

A particularly relevant area for cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States is human rights. Presidential statement S/PRST/2012/20 notes the intention of the League of Arab Nations and the United Nations to cooperate on the promotion of human rights, freedom of expression and respect for and promotion of the rule of law. Seven years later, we note with some concern the trend in some countries to restrict the space for civil society and human rights defenders. It is a priority for Germany to defend human rights worldwide. As we noted at yesterday's briefing (see S/PV. 8546), we do not view human rights as they are too often seen in the United Nations context, namely, in a negative context. It is not just about naming and shaming. We see human rights as a positive element that can contribute to resolving the root causes of problems. I think that is how we should approach human rights. Equally, the promotion of women's rights, women's equal participation, the protection of religious minorities and the promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights are key to achieving fair and prosperous societies.

In February, the European Union (EU) and the League of Arab States held their first summit in Sharm El-Sheikh. The key outcome was the joint commitment to further develop a strategic partnership between the EU and the League of Arab States through effective multilateralism within the international rules-based order, including increased cooperation with the United Nations. In her statement at that meeting of Heads of State and Government, Chancellor Merkel highlighted the need for joint approaches to tackling shared challenges, even where there might be disagreement on particular issues.

In that spirit of strategic partnership between the European Union and the League of Arab States, Germany is also clearly supportive of stronger ties between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. In that regard, the Secretary-General mentioned the fact that he was honoured to attend the Arab League summit in Tunis in March. That is extremely positive, but we would also like to emphasize that cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States is most fruitful when it extends to all United Nations bodies and forums. A comprehensive understanding of processes, in particular on human rights issues in the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women, is key to strengthening the multilateral system, to which our organizations are committed. The

upcoming opening of the United Nations liaison office to the League of Arab States in Cairo will play a key role in deepening our institutional relations.

Before concluding, let me say that we greatly welcome the draft presidential statement on this important issue.

**Mr. Adom** (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the holding of this high-level briefing. We are delighted to see you, Sir, once again presiding over our discussion, which is part of the very rich programme of work of the Kuwaiti presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. Like those who spoke before me, I would like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for their informative briefings on the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in maintaining international peace and security at both the regional and the international levels.

The regions of the Near and Middle East, North Africa and the Horn of Africa are facing conflicts whose intensification is a source of concern for the international community. Despite the multifaceted involvement of the United Nations in the pursuit of lasting peace and stability in the region, these crises are becoming further entrenched and increasingly complex, to the great regret of the international community.

Political instability and changing security threats in Syria, Yemen, Palestine, the Sudan and Somalia, with their devastating humanitarian consequences, have over the years considerably weakened the legitimate aspiration for a lasting peace nurtured by the populations concerned.

In that regional context, marked by a lack of space for viable political compromises among the parties to the conflicts, United Nations support for the mediation efforts and good offices of regional organizations, in the context of preventive diplomacy, is extremely relevant. My delegation believes that the regional approach to the settlement of ongoing disputes, based on Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to greater ownership of peace processes.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States therefore seems to be an approach that should be fostered. It promotes joint analysis of the root causes of conflicts and joint visits to crisis areas, as well as the development of coordinated responses, in

the context of a strategic partnership, which also helps to strengthen regional capacities for conflict prevention and management.

My delegation therefore shares the view that, in the light of the complexity of the current political, security and humanitarian challenges, cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States should be further strengthened. That is the essence of the draft presidential statement on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States that will be adopted at the end of the meeting and which we clearly support.

United Nations support is crucial. My country is pleased that the presidential statement to be adopted reaffirms the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and urges the League of Arab States to contribute to conflict resolution efforts in the region.

Côte d'Ivoire also welcomes the clearly expressed resolve of the Security Council and the Council of the League of Arab States to work together to establish peace and stability in the region voiced at their consultative meeting in Cairo in 2016.

In that context, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/592) issued in August 2018, which highlights the readiness of the United Nations and other regional organizations to support the Arab League in building its capacity for conflict prevention and management. Moreover, Côte d'Ivoire believes the announcement by the Secretary-General of the opening of a United Nations liaison office to the League of Arab States, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/267, adopted in December 2018, to be entirely appropriate. As representatives know, that announcement was made at the thirtieth ordinary session of the Arab League summit, held in Tunis in March.

United Nations support should also focus on the economic and social development efforts of the States of the region within the League of Arab States in order to robustly address the underlying causes of the crises in the region. That support will also ensure coordinated responses to the humanitarian challenges.

In that regard, my country therefore encourages United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies to provide assistance to the League of Arab States in order to jointly implement development

projects for the benefit of the people of the region. Côte d'Ivoire has faith in the capacity of the Arab people, who are rich in their cultural diversity and enormous economic potential, to meet the current challenge and achieve peace and stability. Very close cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States is therefore absolutely essential.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its support for the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States and encourages their readiness to act in a concerted way to resolve the current conflicts in the Arab world and internationally.

**Mr. Sipaco Ribala** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Mr. President, our delegation welcomes your presence here in New York this week to moderate and enhance the work being done by the Kuwaiti presidency. We congratulate you and the team you represent for this excellent work.

We also extend our thanks to Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations; Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; and Mr. Jacek Czaputowicz, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, for their valuable briefings, which contribute to a better understanding of the topic we are considering today.

Like other delegations before us, we condemn the attack on ships in the Gulf of Oman and believe that meetings of this nature present a unique opportunity to reflect on possible ways to strengthen cooperation in areas where the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations share a common interest as it relates to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Our delegation is from a country and a region that greatly value the efforts and mechanisms of the United Nations to respond to threats to international peace and security. So far this year, this is the third time we have had a meeting of this sort, which demonstrates the willingness of the Council to make more effective the implementation of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which establishes the fundamental basis for the participation of regional and subregional organizations in this arduous task, which is the primary responsibility of the Security Council. This dynamic confirms the recognition of the United Nations of the need to work with these international partners, who benefit from their geographical proximity to the

places threatened by international peace and security challenges.

Since the last decade, many parts of the world have been especially affected by increasing political turbulence, wars and terrorist attacks — a situation that affects, in particular, various parts of the Arabian peninsula, northern Africa and the Horn of Africa. We believe that the League of Arab States, of which the majority of States from those regions are members, possesses special knowledge that enables it to deal judiciously with the cultural issues that have often been a factor in the conflicts of its member States. That cultural and linguistic expertise is invaluable when it comes to knowledge-based mediation, which gives the League of Arab States an advantage with respect to conflicts in its geographical region.

There have been important references confirming the League of Arab States as a necessary partner of the United Nations in addressing international conflicts. To cite just one, I would point to the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted for the first time at the Beirut Summit in 2002. Although it has not resolved the dispute, it continues to be cited to this day in most of the statements made and to be made, making it one of the best-known contributions to peace in relation to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Furthermore, bearing in mind the fact that most of the States members of the League of Arab States are also members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and that another significant proportion belongs to the African Union, my delegation calls on the League of Arab States to partner with other regional organizations with a view to promoting joint coordination and economizing effort.

Finally, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea notes the prevailing need for the Security Council, as the highest guarantor of international peace and security, to preserve the trend of integration of regional and subregional organizations into the collective system of global security as the best way to face the challenges that threaten the peace and security of our planet.

**Mrs. Van Vlierberge** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Aboul Gheit, for their informative briefings. I also extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Regional cooperation is one of the pillars of Belgium's foreign policy. We therefore welcome this opportunity to discuss within the Council the cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. In the same spirit, the European Union met with the League of Arab States in February.

The Arab world is currently facing many challenges, ranging from conflicts in some of its countries to thematic challenges, such as the preservation and management of water resources. The conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Libya, as well as the stalemate in the Middle East peace process, have considerably destabilized the region and strongly exacerbated tensions among its States and putting its security at serious risk, as evidenced today by the serious incidents in the Gulf of Oman. The internationalization of these conflicts also jeopardizes international peace and security, of which the Council is the guarantor.

The region is stronger when it speaks with one voice. The widespread support of the region for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East is a good example, as is the support of the Arab world for maintaining the two-State solution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Given the gravity and the complex and multidimensional nature of the challenges faced, strengthened dialogue and collaboration within the League of Arab States, as well as between the League of Arab States and the Security Council, are of critical importance. We therefore support the request to convene the Security Council and the League of Arab States at regular intervals, as is the case with other regional organizations, such as the European Union and the African Union.

Belgium has made conflict prevention one of its priorities. As the Secretary-General points out in his report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations (S/2018/592), the latter have a key role to play in conflict prevention, which is also the case for the League of Arab States. Belgium supports efforts to strengthen that dimension. A joint analysis and common early warning mechanisms are essential instruments in that regard. In that context, we welcome the announcement of the opening of a United Nations liaison office to the League of Arab States in Cairo.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States must also be guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The root

causes, as well as socioeconomic inequalities, must be addressed without delay. In addition, respect for human rights, inclusive governance and the rule of law must be the thread of that cooperation. It is also essential to ensure the meaningful participation of women and young people.

Belgium will continue to give its full support to strengthening and deepening the existing synergies between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, with the common objective of contributing to stability and the search for peace, as well as the promotion of multilateralism and a global order based on the rule of law.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

“The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

“The Security Council recalls all its previous resolutions and statements of its President which underscore the importance of developing effective partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant statutes of regional and subregional organizations.

“The Security Council expresses its appreciation for the briefings of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, on 13 June 2019 and reiterates that cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security, and consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter, can improve collective security.

“The Security Council encourages the holding of an annual briefing by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and expresses its intention to consider further steps to promote closer cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in the fields of conflict early warning, prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and to promote the coherence and effectiveness of their efforts. In this regard, it welcomes the already

existing strong cooperation initiatives between the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

“The Security Council takes note of the outcome of general meetings on the cooperation between the Secretariats of the United Nations and the League of Arab States and their specialized agencies, the last of which was held in Geneva in July 2018.

“The Security Council encourages the holding of an annual informal meeting between its members and the members of the Council of the League of Arab States, as well as the consideration of the proposal by the Council of Ministers of the League of Arab States to establish a consultative framework between the Arab League and the United Nations to enhance collaboration in maintaining peace and security in the Arab region.

“The Security Council emphasizes the importance of intensifying coordination between the League of Arab States and the United Nations special envoys, as appropriate, in addressing the current crises in the Arab region with a view to reaching a more comprehensive understanding of the crisis in the region, strengthening the capacity of the two organizations and developing effective solutions through joint action where appropriate. The Security Council also emphasizes the importance of trilateral cooperation and coordination between the United Nations, the African Union and the League of Arab States on cross-regional peace and security issues, as well as with other regional organizations on situations of common interest.

“The Security Council recognizes and further encourages efforts by the League of Arab States to contribute to collective endeavours to settle conflicts in the region peacefully, while reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of countries and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

“The Security Council commends members of the League of Arab States on their ongoing commitment to international peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including through the contribution of troops and police to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

“The Security Council welcomes the upcoming opening of the United Nations liaison office in the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo in June 2019, and encourages the United Nations Secretariat and the Secretariat General of the League of Arab States to maximize the utilization of this office towards strengthening cooperation between the two organizations.

“The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to report, as appropriate, on further ways of strengthening institutional relations and cooperation between the two organizations.”

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2019/5.

*The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.*