



Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

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Wednesday, 18 December 2013, 10.15 a.m.

New York

President: Mr. Araud (France)

Members:

Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
Australia	Ms. King
Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
Guatemala	Mr. Carrera
Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
Russian Federation	Mr. Zagaynov
Rwanda	Mr. Nduhugirehe
Togo	Mr. Menan
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Combating drug trafficking in the Sahel and in West Africa

Letter dated 5 December 2013 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/728)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

Combating drug trafficking in the Sahel and in West Africa

Letter dated 5 December 2013 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/728)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Tété António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, 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/2013/728, which contains the text of a letter dated 5 December 2013 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, containing a concept note on the item under consideration.

I recognize the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: I welcome this initiative to focus on drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel. Around the world, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime threaten security, undermine respect for the rule of law and jeopardize peace and stability.

In a growing number of countries, organized criminal networks also fuel the activities of terrorist and extremist groups. Corruption, porous borders and the lack of resources and cooperation only compound the problem.

Given the reach of drug-trafficking networks and their rapidly evolving methods, we must constantly refine our understanding to formulate the most effective response.

We face a particular challenge in West Africa and the Sahel. Our latest estimates have identified \$1.25 billion of cocaine transiting through West Africa each year. A rising portion of the drugs reaching West African coasts use the Sahel route on the way to the Mediterranean. In a particularly disturbing development, West Africa is no longer just a transit route for drug traffickers, but a growing destination, with more than 1 million users of illicit drugs. Rising consumption aggravates an already-challenging public health environment and threatens socioeconomic development.

Our work is guided by the Conventions against organized crime, drug trafficking and corruption, as well as the international instruments on terrorism, which must be implemented in full compliance with human rights standards and norms. I urge all Member States to ratify and fully implement those conventions and instruments without delay.

We also need to generate partnerships to support victims. Engagement with civil society and community groups is critical. There is also a need for a strong transatlantic approach that combines efforts from Latin America, West Africa and Europe. In too many places, however, weak intergovernmental cooperation stands in marked contrast to the closely networked structure of transnational criminal groups. We must help countries of the region strengthen their capacities to ensure public safety and security. At the same time, we must act against money-laundering and the use of illicit wealth to commit additional crimes such as human trafficking and arms smuggling.

The United Nations is taking action in all these areas and supporting projects that offer technical advice and build national capacities. These include initiatives to analyse containers in ports, as well as the movement of goods at airports. We are working with Member States to stop the movement of precursor chemicals used to make illegal drugs, while also boosting efforts to dismantle criminal networks. We are also helping with drug

treatment, prevention and rehabilitation programmes. Above all, we need a coordinated approach, and action in this area is an important part of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. In the same vein, our law enforcement and health efforts should fully support the Economic Community of West African States Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime, and Drug Abuse in West Africa.

Drug trafficking presents an enormous challenge to peace, stability and economic and social development in West Africa and the Sahel. We must promote a coherent, integrated and pragmatic international response, rooted in sustainable development and full respect for human rights. I encourage Member States to actively engage in a broad and open discussion leading up to the September 2016 General Assembly special session on the world drug problem.

As we work to advance the post-2015 development agenda, the challenges of organized crime must be a fundamental part of the discussion. Our aim must be not only to relieve citizens of the burden of crime, but also to lift them out of the conditions that enable crime to grow. That means addressing corruption, poverty and the lack of essential services. It means providing better education, promoting the rule of law and expanding opportunities for women, young people and marginalized groups.

Solutions are not easy and will take time. Let us commit ourselves to working together for dignity and a better sustainable future for all of the people of West Africa and the Sahel.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Fedotov.

Mr. Fedotov (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank the French presidency of the Security Council for organizing this important meeting on drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa. I also wish to thank the Security Council for integrating the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime into the mandates of special political missions and peacekeeping operations in West Africa. I further congratulate the countries of West Africa and Sahel that have demonstrated their firm resolve to meeting the challenges posed by drugs and crime in the region, as well as the international community for its important contribution in this regard.

Today, illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime threaten peace, security, the rule of law and development in many parts of the world. West Africa and the Sahel are particularly vulnerable because of complex and interrelated problems relating in particular to political instability, porous borders and the vastness of the region. An assessment of threats posed by transnational organized crime in West Africa was presented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) at the forty-second ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) early this year.

The assessment confirmed the ongoing threat posed by cocaine trafficking from Latin America to European markets. Nearly 33 tons of cocaine transited through West Africa in 2010, including 18 tons transited to Europe with a market value of approximately \$1.25 billion. This profit has provided criminals with revenue far exceeding the national security budgets of many countries of the region. Traffickers have been able to defeat law enforcement detection and suppression measures by adapting their operational procedures, including by using including shipping and containers, as well as commercial flights and private aircraft.

The UNODC *World Drug Report 2013* confirms that the global phenomenon of drugs is a source of concern in West Africa. Heroin also passes through the area en route to lucrative markets. It has also been found that some of the methamphetamine seized in East Asia comes from West Africa. It is further noted that the prevalence in the region of fraudulent medicine, which poses a serious threat to public health and safety, remains a concern. Other scourges involved include the smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons, the smuggling of firearms, cigarettes and gasoline, and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

These threats and the enormous profits generated have a detrimental impact on efforts to achieve security and development in the region. They compromise good governance, undermine legitimate economies and fuel corruption. The funds generated allow criminal organizations to support their operations and to support terrorist activities in the region. Local drug use and the resulting health problems are intensified, as evidenced by the growing number of HIV infections attributable to injecting drug use.

The countries of the region are fully aware of the threats posed by these scourges, especially to national

security and stability and the credibility of institutions. The international community has acknowledged the urgency of the situation, particularly because of the proliferation of arms in the Sahel and the ever-more evident links between criminal organizations and extremist and terrorist groups in the region.

The Secretary-General has called on several occasions for greater support to West Africa so as to meet the threats to its security. The Security Council has also expressed its concern at the growing impact of drug trafficking and organized crime on humanitarian aid and peacebuilding efforts in the region, and has repeatedly recalled the need for greater international cooperation.

These concerns are presented in the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel region (S/2013/359). As noted in the report, a number of initiative to fight drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse in West Africa — such as the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention 2007-2012, the ECOWAS Political Declaration and the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa — have been launched in recent years to address these threats in all their forms. It is on that basis that UNODC developed its Regional Programme Regional Programme for West Africa 2012-2014, which constitutes the main part of our technical assistance to the countries of the region.

UNODC provides this support through a wide range of regional, subregional and national projects, including the West Africa Coast Initiative, the Airport Communication Project, the Global Container Control Programme, the Judicial Regional Platform of the Sahel, the network of central authorities and prosecutors in West Africa, and the initiative to strengthen criminal justice systems in the Sahel. All our initiatives are implemented in close consultation with the Governments of the region and in cooperation with our regional and international partners, including the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL.

Together with ECOWAS and the United Nations Office for West Africa, UNODC organized a regional

donors conference, held in Abidjan in October. The conference made an urgent appeal for strengthening regional cooperation and national capacities for controlling land, sea and air borders, and for strengthening criminal justice systems and promoting judicial cooperation. Those who fund and commit acts related to drug trafficking and other serious crimes must be brought to justice in accordance with international rules and standards. First and foremost, that requires greater commitment and more resources, given the size of the challenges facing the region and the difficulty of intervening in unstable and post-conflict environments. I would like to thank our partners and donors for their support for UNODC activities, including our Regional Programme for West Africa and the West Africa Coast Initiative. Nonetheless, it is clear that additional funding is needed to address those pressing threats.

As the Secretary-General's report emphasizes, the fight against drug trafficking and crime in West Africa and the Sahel should be integrated with larger-scale efforts to address challenges such as governance and the rule of law, poverty and youth unemployment. Today's meeting is an excellent opportunity to assess priorities and challenges, enhance synergies and decide on the best strategies for responding to the situation. Even considering the budgetary discipline prevailing in the majority of countries around the world, I would like to urge everyone here to reflect on our common and shared responsibility to tackle the challenges posed by drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, corruption, money-laundering and terrorism in the region. For its part, UNODC is ready to give its continued support to the States of West Africa and the Sahel.

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

Mr. Djinnit (*spoke in French*): I would like to join the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in welcoming the initiative of the French presidency to hold this meeting devoted to the fight against drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa.

West Africa, which has made remarkable progress on the road to stabilization since the fratricidal conflicts of the 1990s and the crises that followed, is now dealing with a combination of growing security threats. The various types of transnational organized crime, particularly drug trafficking, maritime piracy and terrorism, are scourges that reinforce one another

in an environment of fragile State institutions and splintered societies. In the Sahel, and Mali in particular, the consequences have already been felt. For several years now, thanks to its technical expertise, UNODC has tabulated the continued gains that drug trafficking has made in West Africa and the Sahel.

When I started my job, in 2008, I discovered the extent of the problem and at the same time realized how poor the level of awareness of it was at the levels both of Government and civil society. At the time, we were concerned about the fact that West Africa was one of the principal transit routes for cocaine travelling from Latin America to Europe. But UNODC was already worried about the risk of increased drug consumption in West Africa. That prediction has unfortunately come true, since, as the Secretary-General just emphasized, drug consumption is now a genuine threat in West Africa.

(spoke in English)

Against that background, I am pleased to note that in recent years, mobilization against the threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime has increased, thanks to the combined efforts of all stakeholders. The United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), together with UNODC, has supported the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) leading to the adoption by ECOWAS in 2008 of a regional plan of action on organized crime and illicit drug trafficking and abuse, recently extended to the end of 2014. In 2009, in order to support the plan of action's swift implementation, and jointly with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and INTERPOL, we also launched the West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI), which so far is responsible for establishing three transnational crime units in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau, with concrete results at various levels. The most recent meeting of the WACI policy committee, which I co-chaired with ECOWAS in Abidjan on 29 October, with the participation of Under-Secretary-General Fedotov, showed renewed resolve on the part of Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea to establish their own transnational crime units.

In addition, and in line with its mandate, UNOWA has worked closely with other United Nations entities to provide support to the development of subregional strategies to combat cross-border security threats, including illicit drug trafficking. One example is the mobilization of the Gulf of Guinea countries to work

towards a regional strategy on piracy and crime at sea, leading in June to the Yaoundé Summit of Central and West African Heads of State and Government.

Drug trafficking, as was stressed earlier today, is also the focus of the second goal, that of security, of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. In that regard, I would like to commend the ECOWAS leadership, especially President Alassane Ouattara and Ambassador Kadré Ouédraogo, President of the ECOWAS Commission, for their commitment to enhancing the regional organization's contribution to efforts aimed at preventing and fighting drug trafficking and organized crime, including through the activation of the ECOWAS plan of action on organized crime and illicit drug trafficking and abuse. I also want to commend the European Union and other bilateral donor partners for their support for the implementation process of the plan of action.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage West African civil society to take an active part in efforts aimed at preventing and combating drug trafficking and organized crime, taking a cue from the West African Drugs Commission, established by the Kofi Annan Foundation in January. UNOWA will continue to work closely with UNODC and ECOWAS to advocate for effective regional initiatives and focus the attention of West African leaders and civil society on the threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime. In that regard, I want to encourage efforts aimed at promoting effective cooperation among the countries of West Africa and the Sahel and between them and international partners, as well as at improving coordination among donors supporting those efforts, and I would like to acknowledge the work of the Group of Eight Plus Group of Experts in that area.

(spoke in French)

I would like to reiterate the commitment of the United Nations Office for West Africa to contributing to the collective efforts to prevent and combat organized crime and drug trafficking.

The President *(spoke in French)*: The Council has before it a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2013/22.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Carrera (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to be participating once again in a meeting of the Security Council when Guatemala is 12 days from concluding its tenure as an elected member for the biennium 2011-2012.

Let me begin by thanking Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Executive Director Yury Fedotov of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa Said Djinnit for their respective briefings. We also thank Ambassador Gérard Araud of France, President of the Security Council for the month of December, for his lucid concept note (S/2013/728, annex).

The concept note draws attention to the important similarities shared by West Africa and Central America as regions that are gravely affected as countries of transit between the main markets of production and consumption of illicit drugs. In the case of the Mesoamerican territory, that involves 90 per cent of the drugs that move from the South to the North of the American continent. That situation of transit countries has led to the proliferation of narco-trafficking organizations, accompanied by much criminal violence and especially violent homicides in our territory. Fortunately, however, in the past three years Guatemala has achieved a significant reduction in homicides, thanks to the strengthening of our security and justice institutions.

Undoubtedly, the engine that drives the drug trade is the same one at the global level, whether in producing, consuming or transit countries, that is, the immense profits generated by the trafficking in narcotics. It must be said that the corrosive power of major financial flows originates mainly in consuming countries. Equally important is the flow of weapons from consuming countries that pours into transit and producing countries. That is why it is no exaggeration to say that arms trafficking and the illegal financial flows from the North to the South are undermining the foundations of democratic institutions, not only in West Africa and the Sahel but, with to varying degrees, also in our region.

To date, the response framework at the global level has been based on a prohibitionist approach in regard to the market for drugs. The principal strategy of that framework entails repression and interdiction

through the criminal justice system. From Guatemala's perspective, with the support of other countries in the Latin American region and the rest of the world that share the same view, we are seeking a new model to address the global drug problem, one that is centred on regulation, public health, reducing harm and seeking the well-being of citizens, all based on respect for human rights.

We need to move from partial and inefficient responses towards an integrated response that provides us with better results. To that end, we need to have a broad discussion at the global level that aims to find alternatives to the existing framework, which unfortunately has failed to provide more and better results. It was with that goal in mind that, in our western hemisphere, the Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala, of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, signed in June 2013, marked a milestone that has served to officially establish an intergovernmental debate on the drug problem in the Americas. That effort continues to take root in regional forums such as the Inter-American Drug Abuse Commission (CICAD) and the Pan American Health Organization.

It is clear that cooperation is necessary to confront the world drug problem — just as today's concept note suggests and as stated in the presidential statement issued by the Council on 21 February 2012 under the presidency of Togo (S/PRST/2013/2). We note that there is broad interregional cooperation in West Africa and the Sahel region, promoted especially by the Economic Community of West African States. In the Americas as well, we have numerous mechanisms of intraregional cooperation under the aegis CICAD and the Organization of American States. However, in spite of the enormous commonalities between the two regions in that matter, there is little or no cooperation among different regions of the world. In our view, that situation should be addressed because, for example, West Africa and the Americas have much to learn from each others' accumulated experiences through an open dialogue. I should point out that such South-South cooperation should be complemented by a healthy dose of cooperation from the principal consuming countries.

In order to advance the interregional dialogue, Guatemala has already expressed its readiness to support the establishment of forums for dialogue between the Americas and the countries of West Africa, with a view to jointly identifying and developing new policies and strategies to address the global drug problem.

We all agree that combating illicit drug trafficking is a major challenge for all of humankind and one that we must decisively address. The special session of the General Assembly on the global drug problem, mandated by the Assembly to be held in 2016, will provide us an exceptional opportunity to hold such a broad and open debate at the global level.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, Guatemala will conclude its term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in a few days. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to members and to say that it has been a privilege to be able to contribute to the noble and irreplaceable work of the Council to maintain international peace and security.

The Council has been criticized for its obvious shortcomings, its inequitable composition and its insufficiently transparent working methods. Many of those criticisms are merited, and there is little doubt that this organ needs to adapt to the new global realities. We ourselves have formulated specific ideas on the matter and expressed them in other instances. For now, however, the Security Council is the only thing we have in the multilateral setting to maintain international order that. With all its imperfections, the Council has succeeded in avoiding major global conflagrations and, at the same time, has managed to mitigate and often overcome conflicts of limited geographical scope.

It has been a source of profound satisfaction for my country to be part of this organ for the very first time. We trust that, in the not too distant future, we shall return. We believe in all due modesty that we have made a contribution to the collective work of the Council. We leave enriched for the experience we have gained.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the President for convening this important discussion. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his personal engagement and his presence at today's debate. I also thank Executive Director Fedotov and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Djinnit for their statements this morning. Today's briefings highlight one of the core challenges facing the Sahel and are relevant to the wider discussion on the region held earlier this month (see S/PV.7081).

We welcome the adoption of today's presidential statement (S/PRST/2013/22).

Permit me to take the opportunity of what might be the last formal meeting of the Security Council

in 2013 to recognize the presence of the Foreign Minister of Guatemala and to warmly acknowledge the very valuable contribution that his country, as well as the other four outgoing members of the Security Council — Azerbaijan, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo — have made to maintaining international peace and security over the past two years.

Organized crime across the Sahel and West Africa is a multimillion dollar business that damages the social fabric, not just in the Sahel and West Africa as a region of transit but also in the destination countries — in Europe, the Middle East and North America. Drug trafficking is one of the most serious aspects of that organized crime activity in the region. In February, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimated that some 18 tons of cocaine transited West Africa every year. While down from its peak of 47 tons in 2007, evidence shows that the trend is again upwards.

The United Kingdom's National Crime Agency estimates that between 13 and 15 per cent of Europe-bound cocaine, worth over \$1 billion on arrival in the European Union, transits West Africa. But it is no longer just cocaine; we are also seeing an increase in heroin transiting through West Africa, mainly by couriers from South-West Asia, including Iran and Turkey. Much of it is destined for Europe and some for North America. Meanwhile, cannabis smuggling through the Sahel remains a serious concern, with its destination markets as far afield as Egypt, Israel and even further east.

In addition to revenue raised from drug trafficking, cigarette smuggling and kidnapping for ransom provide terrorists with funding to continue their activities. Yesterday, the United Kingdom became the fortieth country to sign the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, and we encourage all Member States to sign that important Protocol. The United Kingdom has also proposed a Security Council resolution reminding Member States of their obligation not to pay ransoms to kidnappers that could be used for terrorist purposes. We hope that the Council will agree on that draft resolution shortly.

To tackle the scourge of organized crime, we must take a regional and holistic approach. We must disrupt crime by all available means, not just through law enforcement and prosecution, but by addressing the enablers of crime. Of course, we face important challenges. Widespread corruption continues to hinder

effective State action and attracts organized criminals who exploit the distinctions between jurisdictions and corruption within them. Organized crime groups exploit instability and weak governance. Their activity further undermines fragile States and Governments. Lack of capacity and funding in law enforcement agencies and limited intelligence-gathering capability across the region create gaps that organized criminals can exploit.

Tackling the aforementioned challenges head on will give regional Governments a better chance at dealing with organized crime. Strengthening State institutions will enable them to deliver basic services, reducing the attraction of crime. That activity must be matched by deeper regional cooperation to sustainably disrupt transnational criminal networks. We need to focus our actions, first, on building good governance to set the preconditions for a successful response. Secondly, the regional ability to share information and conduct investigations needs to be strengthened. Thirdly, criminal justice capacity needs to be built. Fourthly, joint action on borders and cross-border traffic needs to be improved.

During 2013, the United Kingdom's presidency of the Group of Eight (G8) has built on the work of previous presidencies by coordinating the action of the Group of Eight Plus Friends of the Gulf of Guinea on organized crime in West Africa. We have established a network of criminal justice advisers that will help to strengthen the rule of law and improve prosecutions by local authorities. We have also proposed a donor coordination mechanism that will improve strategic coordination, particular with the Economic Community of West African States. Let us commit today to redoubling our efforts to combat organized crime to enable the region to rid itself of the scourge.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by congratulating the French presidency on having scheduled today's debate on drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa, an issue that intersects with several crises besetting the region.

We welcome the sustained attention that the Security Council has given to the problem in our part of the continent throughout this year. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General for his personal participation in our debate today and for his commitment to bringing stability, peace and development to our continent. I would also like to thank Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, for their briefings.

Since 2004, the reports of several institutions, in particular the UNODC, confirm that the Sahel and West Africa regions have become crossroads and hubs for trafficking in various drugs. February's report of the UNODC, "Transnational organized crime in West Africa: A threat assessment", states that cocaine traffickers have found in West Africa and the Sahel a springboard for transferring their illegal activities to the other side of the Atlantic. The statistics provided by Mr. Fedotov this morning on the quantities in transit in that region of Africa are alarming and leave no doubt as to the entrenched position of drug cartels in that part of the continent. One explanation for that is that the region is less risky than traditional routes leading to the main consumer markets of the world due to the vast size of the territory and the lack of resources made available by countries in the region to combat trafficking.

While they are hubs for this type of trafficking, the Sahel and West Africa have in recent years become places of destination, with illicit amphetamine laboratories being set up and negative psychological, social and economic consequences affecting the local population. It is now undeniable that drug trafficking feeds and is fed by other illicit trafficking, such as trafficking in arms and human beings, illegal immigration, piracy, transnational crime, terrorism, rebellion and separatism, and is therefore a factor for destabilization and insecurity in West Africa.

The extent of its effects of the phenomenon go beyond West Africa, the Sahel and the Maghreb to other parts of our continent. In order to tackle the cross-border threat, several initiatives have emerged, including the Regional Response Action Plan of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West Africa Coast Initiative. My country, aware of the challenge caused by transatlantic drug trafficking and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, took the initiative in 2009, to implement a framework of cooperation amongst the 22 African States on the Atlantic shore in order to respond to the challenges arising from the Atlantic Ocean.

In November, my country hosted the Second Regional Ministerial Conference on border security between Sahel, West African and Maghreb States. The

outcome of the Conference (S/2013/707, annex) was a significant contribution to a coordinated and unified response to the scourge of drug trafficking, terrorism and organized crime in the region. We expect that the forthcoming summit of the States of the Sahel and the Sahara in Rabat will further contribute to the fight we share.

It is not possible to combat drug trafficking and its by-products — organized crime and terrorism — without addressing its underlying causes, namely, poverty, illiteracy and a lack of future prospects, particularly for young people. The States of the Sahel region and West Africa have fully understood that the fight cannot prove successful without cooperation and unlimited, inclusive regional cooperation. The establishment of the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre - Narcotics by the European Union and the United States has made it possible to stop the transfer of enormous quantities of cocaine to Africa. Similarly, initiatives such as the adoption of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, the West Africa Coast Initiative, the Container Control Programme launched by UNODC and the World Customs Organization (WCO) in Ghana and Senegal, and the Airport Communication Programme organized by the UNODC, INTERPOL and the WCO have largely stanching the scourge of drugs. The effort must be pursued and intensified, and the UNODC, as the leader in the fight, is called upon to play a central role.

Combating drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa is part and parcel of the strategy established by the United Nations to meet the challenges the States in the region are facing. To implement the strategy, the States in the region have displayed their commitment and determination to meet the challenges, individually by taking an ownership stake in the aims of the strategy, and collectively by means of subregional and regional organizations to which they belong. We trust that the international community will provide full support to bringing about the success of the strategy in the interests of peace, stability, enhanced democracy and the rule of law in Africa. I assure the Council of Morocco's commitment to making its contribution to the effort at all levels and every step of the way.

I am pleased to be able almost to end Morocco's term on the Security Council with a debate on Africa. Africa, our continent, needs the United Nations to support its efforts to bring about peace, stability and development. Every day, Africa shows its ability to

make progress in all areas, be it the peaceful settlement of disputes, development, strengthening democracy or national reconciliation. Africa must continue to enjoy the support and assistance of the international community in order to address those challenges and to fully play its international role.

Mr. Zagaynov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the French presidency for having convened this Council meeting on the relevant topic of combating illegal drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel. We are grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Fedotov, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Said Djinnit, for participating in this meeting and for their thorough briefings.

We were interested to read the report of the Secretary-General on transnational organized crime and illegal drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel (S/2013/359). We welcome its inclusion of a wide range of proposals of the Russian delegation made at the Council's open debate in February 2012 on the impact of transnational organized crime on peace, security and stability in West Africa and the Sahel region (see S/PV.6717). We support the recommendations of the report on the importance of universalizing the three main anti-narcotics agreements on strengthening the current international narcotics control system and on providing assistance in that area to the International Narcotics Control Board. We would also like to note the key role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in combating narcotics.

We see that the report notes an improving trend in the narcotics situation in the region given the decrease in the volume of drug trafficking from Latin America to Europe through the countries of Africa. However, in our opinion, the overall situation of illegal drug trafficking on the African continent is far from satisfactory. That is an area for the transit of heroin and cocaine, which has become a new route for drug trafficking. The region is increasingly becoming a centre for the production of synthetic narcotics. Drug trafficking in the region is becoming actively linked to terrorism and transnational organized crime being fuelled by the spread of weapons in the region from Libya. The threat of drugs in the region of West Africa and the Sahel can be effectively countered only through the coordinated actions of the entire international community, led by the United Nations.

In that regard, we support the regime of targeted sanctions established on the basis of resolutions 1735 (2006), 1822 (2008) and 1904 (2009), against Al-Qaida individuals and entities financed by extremist groups in the region through funds received from the illegal narcotics trade. We understand, however, that limited measures alone will not solve the problem. We are therefore placing our hopes in the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, which is expected to be a significant factor in stabilizing the situation in the region through comprehensive technical assistance to its States.

In providing such assistance, we must duly consider the national priorities of State recipients. Our pursuit of alternative ways to combat such criminal activities is a priority in fighting drug trafficking. We need realistic and effective programmes to create jobs in the region that will narrow the social basis for trafficking. In that regard, effective assistance could be provided by the business community. A significant role in developing a comprehensive socioeconomic strategy for the States of the Sahel could also be played by making use of the capabilities of agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Increased attention should of course be paid to the marginalization and radicalization of the young. The focus of working with the youth in West Africa and the Sahel must be not only on resolving the employment issue but also on education, including the implementation of relevant projects under the aegis of the United Nations and UNESCO.

The capacities of the security and law-enforcement forces of the States of West Africa and the Sahel must be significantly strengthened. In that regard, it is important to improve border security, step up information exchange and train law-enforcement personnel. We support the United Nations and UNODC in their work with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, as well as other African regional agencies, in the joint effort to fight crime. For our part, we are also undertaking efforts to provide assistance to African States to prepare professional staff for careers in health care and law enforcement. We are interested in further developing such cooperation.

We support the presidential statement adopted today on the issue of combating illegal drug trafficking

in West Africa and the Sahel (S/PRST/2013/22). We are ready to continue constructive dialogue and effective cooperation on countering narcotics with all United Nations Member States. In particular, we are planning important events on the issues of anti-drug cooperation as part of the upcoming Russian presidency of the Group of Eight.

Mr. Menan (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting on the issue of drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel, a topic to which my country attaches great importance. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa for their statements.

Drug trafficking, like all transnational criminal organization, is a thorny issue, whose effect on the sociopolitical situation and the economies of States is halting their ability to develop, grow and prosper. In addition to institutional destabilization, drug trafficking also brings with it devastating consequences for the health and cohesion of local communities.

For more than two decades, West Africa and the Sahel region have been known to be a preferred area for drug traffickers. Given their geographical location near the sea and with Atlantic air connections, those two regions attract international groups and networks involved in transnational crime, drug trafficking and other criminal activities. The particular situations of a number of countries in the region have even shown that no trade activity can generate as much income as drug trafficking. The money made from that trafficking often and unfortunately becomes part of the financing of armed activism and terrorism in the Sahel region and West Africa. The violence and political crises that some countries in the region are facing, at times fuelled by the desire of some drug traffickers to control the State, demonstrate the potential destabilizing effect of that scourge on countries.

The renewed interest of drug traffickers in West Africa and the Sahel following a change in the strategic orientation of Latin American drug cartels is explained by clear evidence of vulnerability linked to the lack of the rule of law, corruption and insufficient resources to deal with it, as well as poverty, all of which hamper the successful fight against drug traffickers. Drug trafficking networks in the two regions, apart from the

experience of practices gained in other countries, have acquired the ability to modify their modus operandi to circumvent the actions of States to track those networks. They are also prone to vary the transit and distribution routes on account of changes taking place on the ground.

Moreover, the environments in West Africa and the Sahel region are characterized by a number of structural issues, such as porous borders and informal networks of activities that promote drug trafficking and thwart national development efforts. The combination of those factors has therefore encouraged the proliferation of local criminal groups and transnational criminal organizations. In the light of that situation, we welcome and encourage the priority that the States of both regions have given to the fight against drug trafficking, as reflected in their political commitment.

The extension of the regional action plan of the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) for the period 2013-2018 illustrates the commitment of States to respond in a comprehensive manner to the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking, organized crime and drug use in West Africa. We are pleased that that plan is supported by several projects of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for strengthening existing systems to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism and that it is receiving specialized technical assistance available to member States of ECOWAS as part of the criminal justice component of the fight against terrorism.

In addition, within the context for implementing the Bamako Declaration and Strategic Framework on Impunity, Justice and Human Rights of 2011, which details practical recommendations for the fight against organized crime, terrorism and piracy, we also welcome the development and implementation, with the support of UNODC and other international organizations, of the inter-institutional West Africa Coast Initiative, which provides equipment and specialized training for law enforcement agencies of the countries concerned. We likewise welcome the airport communication project and the Global Container Control Programme.

Moreover, there remains a continuing need for cooperation among the States of the subregion to ensure that, despite financial constraints, criminals are identified, investigated, tried and convicted, especially in view of the need to enhance the credibility of national

institutions and Governments with their populations and external actors.

Togo undertook early on to wage a determined struggle against organized crime in all its forms. Concerned about the negative impact of illicit trafficking and drug use on health, public safety and the national economy, the Government of Togo adopted numerous legislative and institutional measures to combat the scourge and to stem its financial consequences.

The adoption of those measures has led in particular to the establishment of a central anti-drug and anti-money laundering office and the creation of the national Financial Intelligence Unit. In 2010, Togo also established a comprehensive national plan to combat drugs and crime, whose development has benefited from the expertise of several partners, including France, the United States of America, the European Union and the ECOWAS Commission.

In addition, in recent years, increased monitoring by Togolese customs authorities enabled us to seize several kilograms of drugs at the borders, most of them arriving by air from South America, and to dismantle trafficking networks. Those results are partly due to the support and cooperation of partners, to whom we express our renewed gratitude.

Far from representing a challenge only to the States of the West African subregion and the Sahel, drug trafficking and organized crime easily travel from regions where they are repressed to areas with less strict controls. That is why today the most threatened areas need support from the entire international community to act decisively to eradicate the niches that continue to encourage insecurity and the emergence of trafficking.

The resolution of those problems therefore calls for stronger cooperation at the State level, both in the subregion and internationally. It also implies the demand for the full implementation by all States of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols.

Moreover, the international community must protect less equipped areas by providing technology, by strengthening the capacity of national services involved in the fight against the phenomenon of transnational organized crime and by promoting cooperation among States.

International support should not be limited, however, to the issue of security. It should play a part

in conflict prevention, governance and development in order to take into account the aspirations of local populations and to ensure that the affected populations are identified and that they support various interventions in the fight against trafficking drugs.

Finally, the fact that the Security Council has had to take into account the need to incorporate the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking into the mandates of the various United Nations missions in Africa also helps to curb the problem at its source; in other words, in the countries where drugs originate.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, this is Togo's last statement in an open meeting of the Security Council before the approaching end of its term of office. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our sincere thanks and deep gratitude to the Member States that placed their trust in my country, on the one hand, by supporting its candidacy, and on the other, by supporting us throughout our term.

I wish in particular to reiterate our deep gratitude to all the members of the Council, in particular to France, the United States and the United Kingdom, for their assistance to Togo at the start of its term. We also thank the staff of the Secretariat and the Security Council as well as the interpreters assigned to the various meetings of the Council.

Togo's election to the Security Council on 21 October 2011, as members will recall, was not an easy matter. While hailing from a region accustomed by tradition to clean-slate elections, my country was elected only after three separate ballots, with a tally of 131 votes. Perhaps there were some who underestimated Togo's ability to serve on the Council. However, looking back over the course of our mandate, now in its wane, we have the sense of a task well done.

According to a popular adage in Togo, the person who is dancing is incapable of appreciating himself; however, we can say without exaggeration that the Togolese delegation has dispelled the most pessimistic predictions about its ability to fulfil its responsibilities as a member of the Council.

Although the role of a non-permanent member of the Security Council remains generally more limited, at the initiative of Togo, the Council adopted 10 resolutions, presidential statements and press statements. We led the Council early in our term, beginning in February 2012, to consider the question of the impact of transnational

organized crime in West Africa and the Sahel region. That debate may have been prescient with respect to the adoption of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. My country also brought before the Council the issue of terrorism in Africa. Moreover, we await a report from the Secretary-General that should allow for more coordinated attention to that issue, which is of grave concern to the African continent.

With particular regard to the situation in Guinea-Bissau, our delegation was in the forefront of the pragmatic approach rightly pursued by Mr. José Ramos-Horta since he assumed his post as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country.

On matters related to international criminal justice, the views expressed by the Togolese delegation may well have resulted in some progress. However, we must not give way to self-congratulation when so many crises and bloody conflicts continue to demand the Council's attention, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. In spite of the Council's accomplishments over the past two years, we believe it could have risen higher to meet expectations. However commendable the progress made in 2012 and 2013, we must not lose sight of the failures, especially the paralysis that this body has often shown.

If that has been the case, it is largely because the Member States of the Council, in particular its permanent members, are often unable to agree on the appropriate decisions that the Council should take according to the Charter of the United Nations in order to end the suffering and humanitarian tragedies faced by populations in areas of conflict — for example, in Syria.

The propensity of certain members of the Council all too often to promote their own national interests, as well as the consequences of certain decisions previously taken, such as the intervention in Libya pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), whose implementation has not borne out the hopes of certain States, justify in large measure the harsh criticism that has rightly been directed towards the Council.

We deeply believe that the world can be liberated from the scourge of war, provided that more efforts are made in the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict.

We know, of course, that we can rely on the members that will sit on the Security Council beginning in 2014, especially those that have just been elected, namely, Chad, Chile, Lithuania, Jordan and Nigeria, to whom we send our renewed congratulations.

Ms. King (Australia): I wish to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Fedotov and Mr. Djinnit for their briefings and for their commitment to tackling this challenge.

Traditional trading routes across the Sahel and West Africa have been vital to livelihoods in the region for centuries. However, those same routes, now exploited by drug traffickers, are also a serious source of instability. The stakes are high. We heard the statistics this morning from the Secretary-General. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, Mr. Djinnit, told us clearly yesterday that transnational crime posed the gravest threat to that region. Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan said at the launch of the West Africa Commission on Drugs that

“left unchecked, illegal drug trafficking could compromise the encouraging progress West African nations have made in strengthening democracy and promoting human and economic development.”

Illegal drug trafficking is a transnational problem that impacts source, transit and destination countries. It is therefore our shared responsibility, and only truly regional solutions can work to address it. Solving the problem in one country might simply push it next door. I would like to focus very briefly on each of the four areas identified in the concept note (S/2013/728, annex).

First, on border management, Australia’s experience in the Asia-Pacific region has demonstrated the importance of regional cooperation and of managing threats before they actually reach the border. That has been achieved through reciprocal officer placements and regional capacity-building programmes. Australia also established a South-East Asia border security programme, which improved drug detection capability through shared technology, closer communication and specialized training programmes.

The second Regional Ministerial Meeting on Border Security in the Sahel and the Maghreb, held in Rabat, identified the need in many States for customs training, technology to track goods and people, and stronger networks to enable better coordination nationally and across borders. The international community should

support that framework. We welcome the recent decision to establish a joint border security training centre.

Secondly, with regard to strengthening law enforcement and judicial systems, the problem will not be contained until the costs and risks outweigh the potential gains. Actual prosecutions and convictions are one of the most important tools in that fight. The West Africa Coast Initiative is playing an important role in building regional and national capacities. The establishment of transnational crime units, for example in Sierra Leone and Liberia, has strengthened the ability of law enforcement agencies to share critical criminal intelligence, enabling coordinated and effective law enforcement operations. We know at first hand that such a model actually works: over the past decade, 18 such units have operated successfully in the framework of the Pacific Transnational Crime Network. To be effective in West Africa and the Sahel, we must learn from such lessons. Transnational crime units can succeed only with the necessary investigative skills, supported by appropriate technology and complemented by effective legislation and robust judicial systems. They must have the necessary political support.

Thirdly, on anti-money laundering and financial issues, we have learned that drug trafficking can help fund armed groups and destabilize Governments, and that it has increasingly been linked to financing terrorists in the Sahel and West Africa. We know terrorist groups and drug traffickers operate in the same areas and routes. But we do not know enough about the linkages. That needs closer analysis. The fact is, however, that a State that has developed a strong anti-money laundering framework is better placed to tackle the financing of both terrorism and drug trafficking. The Financial Action Task Force’s guidance on combating money laundering must be leveraged by the region, including through a revitalized West African intergovernmental action group.

Finally, with regard to improved United Nations synergies, a recent International Peace Institute report claimed that transnational organized crime was the elephant in the room for United Nations missions, impossible to overlook but too big to deal with. It has become a serious threat for almost every United Nations peace operation, in many cases hindering the development, security and justice that the United Nations is trying to build. It is vital to consider opportunities for improved United Nations synergies.

The United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel is an important step, providing an overarching framework for the United Nations, the region and international partners. The Council must consider whether United Nations missions have the necessary mandates, means and expertise to combat transnational crime.

In response to an increasingly complex criminal environment, the United Nations Police Division has developed serious-crime support units, where United Nations police collect and analyse criminal intelligence and mentor and advise host nations on developing investigative capabilities. That model is being used by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti with some success. We should consider whether such units could be effective elsewhere.

Many of the necessary tools used to tackle drug trafficking, border control, criminal justice cooperation, anti-money laundering and information exchange have the same capacities as are needed to manage arms trafficking and to enforce sanctions. The United Nations, Member States and regional organizations could be better coordinated in all of those fields. Given the stakes, it is in all of our interests to do so.

Finally, since this is the last official meeting of the year, I would like to say, on record, that Australia considers it a privilege to have had the opportunity, over the past year, to work so closely with the five outgoing members of the Security Council — Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo — and we would like to formally acknowledge their contribution to international peace and security.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank the French presidency for convening today's debate. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo, the five outgoing members. I thank them for their contributions to the Council over the past two years. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Executive Director for Drugs and Crime Yuri Fedotov and Special Representative Said Djinnit for their briefings.

At present, the international community is faced with the serious task of preventing and combating drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes. Drug production and trafficking, money laundering and other criminal activities have become increasingly rampant. They are interwoven and seriously jeopardize social stability and economic development. Given

the fragile security situation and the difficulties in controlling borders, West Africa and the Sahel have been key target areas for international drug trafficking activities. Drug trafficking activities using transit countries in West Africa and the Sahel region have severely affected the economic and social development of the countries of the region, threatening regional peace and stability. In that regard, China has expressed its deep concern.

In order to tackle the root cause of drug trafficking, China believes that the international community should work hard in the following areas: first, ensuring that the primary responsibility for combating drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes lies with Governments. China welcomes the unremitting efforts by countries in the region. Meanwhile, it must be noted that the countries in West Africa and the Sahel region, in their efforts to address drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes, are faced with bottlenecks in resources, technology and capacity, and urgently need the strong support of the international community. The international community, while fully respecting the ownership of countries in the region, should help them formulate strategies in that field, improve their law enforcement work and strengthen their capacity to counter money-laundering, so that those countries can address drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes more effectively. Meanwhile, under the principles of broad participation and responsibility-sharing, international cooperation must be strengthened, in particular efforts must be made to crack down on the drug consumption market, so as to reduce demand and suppress the root cause of drug production and trafficking.

Secondly, China appreciates the efforts made by the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Mano River Union and other African regional and subregional organizations, as well as the efforts by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA). They have worked closely with one another and have coordinated and proposed many programmes and initiatives regarding West Africa's land border security, maritime security, criminal justice and law enforcement. Thus, UNODC and UNOWA have played a positive role in helping countries in the region to combat drug trafficking. We hope that the United Nations will continue to play a coordinating role and promote resource consolidation and allocation so as to

provide strong support to the efforts of countries and organizations in the region.

Thirdly, the fight against drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes is linked to social and development issues and requires the joint efforts of all Governments, regional and subregional organizations, and/or United Nations agencies, which should work within their own mandate and make use of their own advantages and expertise in ensuring effective international cooperation. The Security Council can proceed from the perspective of maintaining international peace and security, preventing conflict and promoting post-conflict peacebuilding. The Council should remain seized of the issue of combating drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes in order to promote the international community's greater attention to that issue.

Fourthly, in the long run poverty and underdevelopment constitute the root causes and catalyst of drug trafficking and other organized transnational crimes in West Africa and the Sahel region. We hope that United Nations agencies in the Sahel will work together closely and strengthen the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel region. Meanwhile, we call upon the international community to honour, as soon as possible, its commitments in assistance and investment, and to make special efforts to assist the countries of the region in capacity- and infrastructure -building so as to improve their capacity for autonomous development and eliminate the potential causes of conflicts.

Mr. Nduhugirehe (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Sir, for convening this important debate on peace and security in Africa, and in particular on drug trafficking in the Sahel region and West Africa. As your presidency comes to an end, Rwanda thanks France for the attention it has paid this month, in Paris and New York, to the issue of peace and security on our continent.

We welcome the statement made by Mr. Fernando Carrera, Minister for Foreign Affairs Minister of Guatemala, including on the Council's working methods. We take the opportunity of this last official meeting of the Council for December to congratulate Guatemala, Azerbaijan, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo for their dedication and achievements over the past two years in support of peace and security in Africa and throughout the world. Rwanda has been privileged to cooperate with them during the past year.

I would like to thank Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his introductory statement, as well as Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), and Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, for their respective briefings. Our delegation endorses the statement to be delivered by Mr. Tête António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

As previous speakers have noted, drug trafficking and consumption pose an ongoing threat to peace and security in Africa. The 33 tons of cocaine that transited through West Africa in 2010, with a market value of about \$1.25 billion, represent a terrifying quantity. That disturbing growth in drug trafficking on the continent has created new challenges for a security situation that is already fragile, especially in West Africa and the Sahel region. In that regard, the link between drug cartels and corrupt politicians and military personnel, as well as terrorist organizations, is in and of itself an explosive cocktail for the continent. Although today's discussion is focused on the Sahel region and West Africa, it has been emphasized that the countries of those region serve principally as transit points for drugs coming from South America and Asia on their way to Europe or even North America, where they are mainly consumed. Some of these transiting drugs remain on the continent as payments to mediators or for local consumption, with a primary impact on unemployed youth.

Combating drug trafficking should therefore be a global war involving all continents — unfortunately, with Africa as the axis. Moreover, at present a number of West African and Sahel countries are encountering problems with governance and security that create an ideal situation for drug traffickers and all types of criminals. Indeed, a vulnerable political environment involving civil wars, insurrections and military coups has destabilized an entire region and led to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, armed groups, smugglers, crime syndicates and terrorist organizations, all operating in a geographical region that hampers the effective fight against drug trafficking.

With regard to drug trafficking, Guinea-Bissau is the example that comes immediately to mind and may be deemed symptomatic of what could happen in many countries of the subregion — namely, a power grab by those criminal networks — if nothing is done to eradicate that plague. Sustained efforts must be undertaken, especially by addressing the root

causes of instability in the region, first and foremost governance, security sector reform, development and youth unemployment. The countries of the region, together with their international partners, must come up with specific development solutions, especially quick-impact projects, while laying solid foundations for long-term development.

Rwanda acknowledges the considerable efforts of the subregional organizations in combating drug trafficking. We welcome the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) strategy to comply with international drug control norms, especially the 2008 Political Declaration on drug trafficking and other organized crimes, as well as the Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa. We also welcome the work of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, which is involved in actions to fight money-laundering through training and capacity-building programmes. In that regard, we call on the international community to support ECOWAS in reinvigorating the activities of the Group.

Mindful of the challenges linked to drug trafficking on the continent, especially in West Africa and the Sahel, the African Union also adopted a Plan of Action on Drug Control 2013-2017. The Plan takes a comprehensive approach to drugs by linking them to organized crime, political corruption and terrorism, which are all obstacles to development. Synergy and the strengthening of continental and international cooperation are the key to fighting drug trafficking.

All of those regional and subregional initiatives demonstrate that the African Union, ECOWAS, other subregional organizations and their Member States are aware of the scope of drug trafficking in West Africa and in the Sahel. Therefore they deserve the international community's sustained support because the transnational and even transcontinental nature of the threat indicates that no country and no region can deal with the problem alone.

To conclude, we emphasize the need to combat impunity and to launch operations against drug cartels and corrupt politicians and soldiers, especially in Guinea-Bissau. We are convinced that such operations can send a strong message to drug traffickers and politicians who use the region as a transit zone for drugs. The international community cannot accept

that the Sahel and West Africa, or even Africa as a whole, should remain an international platform for drug trafficking.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting. As this is the last official Council meeting for December, I should like to pay tribute to your leadership and congratulate you and your delegation on the way you have carried out your tasks this month. I should like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa for their statements. I should also like to acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala at this important debate.

Just a few days ago, we met to address the situation in the Sahel (see S/PV.7081). On that occasion I underscored — and it is good to recall it again as we address the issue today — how important it was to maintain our full attention on the regional issue of the Sahel while emphasizing the need and urgency to implement the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, which covers security, good governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues.

Regrettably, the Sahel and West Africa share difficult challenges. Much of what was said last week could be repeated today, as the two subregions have among the lowest indices of human development in the world, suffer from major shortages and have to address the many illegal networks and various terrorist and extremist groups operating in the countries in the area. As we know, and as set out in the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/354), the two subregions must address the threat and scourge of drug trafficking and associated crimes, which in certain instances are clearly responsible for the destabilization of some countries by preventing effective State control of borders and territories and by striking at the very heart of States through corruption. We also know that, in specific contexts and places, it has been possible to establish a causal link between transnational organized crime and the funding of terrorist groups and non-State armed groups.

Taking all of that into account, I wish to emphasize the fact that, although drug trafficking can be linked with other threats, such as those posed by international terrorism, that relationship is not always a linear one. It is also not always possible to establish connections

between transnational organized crime and international peace and security in all contexts and circumstances.

I would also like to put on record the fact that Argentina supports the principle of joint and shared responsibility among producer, consumer and transit countries. We give pride of place to a balanced focus between combating drug trafficking and its connected crimes and the adoption of measures to prevent drug consumption and ensure assistance to drug-dependant persons.

With that said, I first want to emphasize the primary responsibility of States with regard to relevant actions when it comes to combating drug trafficking. We also acknowledge the value of, and the need for, regional and international cooperation to effectively address the phenomenon. With regard to the various areas where cooperation is important, capacity-building in the implementation of laws is of particular importance, especially in the judicial and security sectors. Robust State bodies and properly trained staff are essential in combating drug trafficking. We must cooperate with States to help them to develop their own capacities so that they can rebuild and strengthen their institutions, mete out justice, ensure the rule of law and provide security. In that regard, I would like to commend the important work carried out by United Nations police, as well as the participation of officers from Argentina in the missions in place in various countries of the region.

Secondly, I would like to say once again that many of the problems that arise are the result of deep-rooted causes and must be addressed through substantive changes, not palliative measures. I therefore want to point out that combating drug trafficking has to take into account the need for development, for there can be no doubt that, under certain conditions, a low level of overall development provides a breeding ground for criminal activities. As a result, any satisfactory plan to combat drug trafficking must include measures aimed at providing alternative means of subsistence — legal ones — especially for young people, as well as decent work for young men and women. We emphasize that we must concentrate our efforts on achieving sustainable human development based on the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities, with a focus on human rights and on economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Thirdly, I wish to underscore and commend the many advances achieved by a large number of the

countries of the region with the assistance of the regional and subregional organizations represented at this debate.

Fourthly, I would like to underscore that it is important for the Council to respect the purviews and responsibilities of other bodies of the system, such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and various agencies.

Lastly, I think it is important to emphasize that a comprehensive approach to the problem must respect the particularity of local and regional situations where drug trafficking exists, since the problems caused by drugs are different from place to place, on account of the specific local, subregional and regional characteristics.

In conclusion, Argentina supports presidential statement S/PRST/2013/22 and thanks the French delegation for its work. Only by working together can the international community prevail in the fight against drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime, such as human trafficking, arms trafficking, migrant servitude and slavery, and money laundering.

Argentina extends its thanks to Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo. We assure them that we will continue to work together on the priorities and challenges facing the Organization. Our countries share the same principles and are working towards the same ideals.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): Let me, first of all, welcome the presence of Foreign Minister Carrera at the Council's meeting this morning. We thank the Secretary-General, Executive Director Fedotov and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Djinnit for their instructive and helpful presentations this morning. The statistics and patterns they highlighted demonstrate the urgency of the issue. The Sahel and West Africa region is emerging as a hub and corridor for trafficking in hard drugs, as well as a transit and production point for synthetic drugs. We join the international community in expressing alarm over this troubling development.

Drug trafficking in the region has tended to target countries with porous borders, fragile institutions, weak justice and security apparatuses and limited resources. It has, in turn, contributed to the violent unrest and instability the region has seen over the past year. When left unchecked, drug traffickers may link up with other illicit networks and, in the most extreme cases, share

trade routes, and possibly profits, with rebel groups and violent extremists.

Not only do drug trafficking networks undermine development and security, they also erode confidence in justice and Government institutions. When corrupt leaders profit and traffickers act with impunity, populations lose confidence in the rule of law, illicit economies flourish and accountable and responsive governance is further eroded. We have seen that in Guinea-Bissau, where drug trafficking has been both a cause and consequence of poor governance.

The destabilizing effects of illicit flows are compounded as Governments must now also grapple with the social and policy challenges presented by increased domestic drug use. Illicit trafficking is correlated with higher school dropout rates, increased violence and criminal behaviour, lost workforce productivity and diminished human capital.

In spite of those growing challenges, we strongly encourage regional institutions to face those issues head-on and we welcome the extension of the Economic Community of West African States in 2013 of its regional action plan to support the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office for West Africa and committed Governments. We join the international community in emphasizing the importance of regional solutions, which, like the problems themselves, must cross borders, cultures, languages and economic systems.

Over the past year, we have seen an increase in regional conferences, commissions, agreements and policies aimed at tackling narcotics trafficking and consumption. Now is the time to translate the agreements and policies into action. The United Nations has a crucial role to play, particularly on border security, as the international community partners with regional Governments to develop the tools to combat drug trafficking and its negative impacts in the Sahel and West Africa.

The United States has committed significant resources to address drug trafficking and its effects in the region, and will launch new programmes in Mali and in Chad in the coming year. Our programmes support current efforts to counter drug trafficking, respond to drug use, increase public awareness and strengthen the rule of law. For example, the United States has helped to develop the training curriculum and the investigative capacity of the Nigerian national

drug and law enforcement agency. In October, the agency burned over 7,249 kilogrammes of illicit drugs that it had seized.

The United States has also been working with the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Nigeria to develop a professional substance-abuse system that includes a certification board and licensing process and implements evidence-based treatment programmes that respect human rights. In Benin, the United States will soon launch programmes to address corruption, strengthen the rule of law and raise awareness of issues related to transnational organized crime. We have also provided approximately \$2.5 million to UNODC in support of the West Africa Coast Initiative, which addresses border and corruption issues throughout the region.

Since the Security Council first considered the threat that drug trafficking poses to international peace and security, in 2009 (see S/PV.6233), much progress has been made in the global fight against drugs. We look forward to continuing and extending that global work in the Council and to continuing our focus on the Sahel and West Africa regions to bolster the capacity of Governments and institutions to disrupt transit corridors and deny traffickers the space to operate.

Finally, as this is the last scheduled formal Council meeting in 2013, let me say, on behalf of the United States, that it has been an honour and privilege to work with the delegations of the five departing members of the Council, over the past two years.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): I would like to thank the French presidency of the Security Council for having convened this meeting to reiterate the Council's commitment to addressing the destabilizing effect of drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his briefing and for presenting his report on transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel region (S/2013/359). I also thank Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, for their contributions to the discussion.

Azerbaijan welcomes presidential statement S/PRST/2013/22, adopted earlier today, in which the Council expresses growing concern about the serious threats posed by drug trafficking and related

transnational organized crime to peace, stability, governance, social and economic development and the rule of law in the countries of West Africa and the Sahel region.

Over the past years, there has been significant international mobilization against the growing impact of illicit drug trafficking and related criminal activity in West Africa and the Sahel. The report of the Secretary-General provides both a detailed update on the progress made thus far in the region and important recommendations for further actions. Indeed, more should be done at the national, regional and international levels to effectively address drug trafficking and organized crime. The need for an urgent response is compounded by growing political, security and humanitarian vulnerabilities affecting the region, including political instability, weapons proliferation and increasing linkages between criminal networks and terrorist and armed groups.

It is commendable that the States and leaders of West Africa and the Sahel region have adopted a number of important initiatives and measures at national, regional and subregional levels, to tackle the threats of organized crime and drug trafficking, enhance national capacities and strengthen border and maritime security. However, it is clear that most of the countries of West Africa and the Sahel cannot overcome existing and emerging transnational threats in isolation. Even successful national and regional initiatives cannot ensure a comprehensive solution if they are not supported by the United Nations system and the broader international community. It is critical that bilateral and multilateral actors continue to contribute to the ongoing regional and national efforts aimed at combating drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel.

It is important to ensure effective coordination and mutual accountability for results, which can be provided through integrated and multidisciplinary responses and the enhanced collaboration of all relevant actors, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility. Obviously, the centre of all assistance efforts must be a beneficiary State, which identifies its vulnerabilities and national security concerns, considers ways to tackle them and sets priorities. Therefore, it is an absolute necessity for international and regional actors to tailor their initiatives to address the individual needs of States, taking full account of their national security concerns and international obligations.

Serious attention should be given to the appeals of the respective countries and regional and subregional organizations for capacity-building assistance and funds to counter the threats and address the challenges affecting the region. We agree with the Secretary-General that additional resources are needed to sustain the fight against drugs and crime in West Africa and in the Sahel.

Since this the last scheduled meeting of the Security Council which Azerbaijan is addressing as a member of the Council, I would like to take the opportunity to once again thank the States Members of the United Nations for having given my country an opportunity to contribute to promoting international peace and security through our presence in the Council. We thank all Council members and other delegations and partners for their excellent cooperation and support over the past two years. I also wish to thank the Secretariat for its assistance and the interpreters for their professionalism. It has been two years' unique experience of handling peace and security issues and of great collective work. We wish the incoming members all the best during their terms.

I would also like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to your delegation for your excellent leadership of the Council's work in December. We also wish the delegation of Jordan a successful presidency in January.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I thank the French presidency of the Security Council for convening this meeting on the fight against drug trafficking and its consequences for peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel — a topic that clearly deserves the full attention of the Council. I also thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa.

I will not dwell on an analysis. The scourge of drug trafficking includes such a high level of violence, so many types of transnational organized crime and such weak rule-of-law structures — often due to corruption — that it truly represents a threat to international peace and security. The enormous profits generated by drug trafficking enable traffickers not only to weaken States, but also to manipulate the institutions of the weakened States to their own benefit. Attempting to combat the scourge through a strategy of repression

alone is doomed to fail. It will require a global approach that addresses the root causes, especially the fragility of States.

We welcome and support the efforts of the States of West Africa and the Sahel to fight drug trafficking, particularly within the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union, whose members adopted a border security strategy on 25 October, with the support of the United Nations Office for West Africa. African civil society is also mobilizing, as demonstrated by the meeting of 30 and 31 October in Accra, Ghana, at the initiative of the West Africa Commission on Drugs. It is our hope that the Commission, established at the initiative of Kofi Annan and comprised of eminent persons and experts, will contribute to finding durable solutions to the growing problems of drug trafficking and drug use in the region.

The countries of West Africa and the Sahel and the regional organizations of which they are members must be able to count on the steadfast support of the international community. The European Union and its member States are working alongside their African partners, in particular from West Africa, within the framework of the Union's anti-drug strategy and the action plan for the period 2013 to 2020 and 2013 to 2016, respectively.

With regard to the United Nations system, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) clearly has a central role to play. It is a welcome fact that the UNODC cooperates intensively with other players across the United Nations system. A good example is the Task Force on Transnational Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking, which is co-chaired by UNODC and the Department of Political Affairs and which brings together United Nations agencies and relevant organizations. We support the recommendation in presidential statement S/PRST/2013/22, which we have just adopted, that the Security Council be informed on a more regular basis about the activities of the Task Force. In general terms, it is important that there be determined follow-up to today's debate.

To better respond to the threat, we encourage the United Nations Office for West Africa and the missions authorized by the Council in the countries of the region to strengthen their cooperation and coordination, as well as their analytical capacities concerning the political, economic and social impact of drug trafficking.

The Peacebuilding Commission also has a role to play in advocating for the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the four countries it supports in West Africa — Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone — and in supporting the coordination of international efforts.

Only increased coordination involving the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, as well as UNODC, the United Nations Development Programme and Interpol, will it be possible to appropriately support the ongoing efforts in West Africa and Sahel to strengthen regional cooperation. The West Africa Coast Initiative is a good example of what can be done. The Initiative has produced encouraging initial results in Sierra Leone. We should now strengthen units to combat transnational crime, all the while strengthening judicial and penal systems, in order to combat impunity. The best police measures are doomed to failure if the penal system breaks down at the level of justice or prisons. Where capacity is insufficient or where the cross-border nature of the crimes committed gives rise to difficulties, legal solutions could be explored at the regional level, notably with the Economic Community of West African States.

The fight against drug trafficking must be a collective effort involving countries of origin, transit and destination, for we know that those categories overlap more and more, including in West Africa and Sahel. As a partner of many countries of the region, Luxembourg is committed to assist in this struggle, in the interest of peace and security, development and respect for human rights and the rule of law in West Africa and the Sahel.

Lastly, as my colleagues have done, I too would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the five outgoing members of the Security Council — Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo. It has been a privilege to serve with them in the Council.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate on combating drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa. We appreciate Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's personal engagement on this issue. We also thank Executive Director Fedotov and Special

Representative of the Secretary-General Djinnit for their briefings today.

Drug trafficking continues to be a threat to international peace and stability. The illicit drug trade undermines the authority and effectiveness of State institutions, hampers socioeconomic development and erodes the rule of law. The region most seriously affected by this scourge today is West Africa, which is fast emerging as a major transit point and as an area of consumption and production. We are particularly concerned about the potential threat to peacebuilding efforts and the hard-won advances in the economic development of the region.

Drug trafficking cannot be tackled by any one country alone. That is all the more true when the States faced with such challenges lack the capacity to respond effectively to them, as we see in the Sahel and West Africa. A comprehensive and integrated response is urgently required. Cooperation and coordination among the affected countries, as well as among international and regional organizations, are vital. In that context, I would like to make a few observations.

First, the effective implementation of the relevant regional and international strategies depends upon the capacities of Governments. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on strengthening legal and institutional capacities, especially in the area of border and customs control. Establishing national criminal justice systems that are accessible and aligned with international norms is also important. We commend the role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in providing valuable support to that end, especially through the West Africa Coast Initiative. Continued assistance by international donors remains crucial.

Secondly, given the nature of the challenges, the central role of regional organizations should be fully brought into play. We support the efforts made by regional Governments to better coordinate their actions to combat drug trafficking. The Economic Community of West African States regional plan of action and the African Union plan of action are instrumental frameworks to that end. The international community should continue to support such regional initiatives.

Thirdly, it is important to address the underlying structural causes of vulnerability. The United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel rightly recognizes the mutually reinforcing linkage between development and security in the Sahel. It also places strong emphasis

on strengthening national and regional capacities for development. In our efforts to tackle drug trafficking and organized crime, it is important that the integrated strategy be fully implemented.

Fourthly, establishing early-warning and prevention mechanisms should be a matter of priority for the Council. We need to take drug trafficking issues into account in conflict-prevention strategies and in the mandates of peacekeeping missions. The Council should also explore ways to further strengthen intermission cooperation among the relevant United Nations missions. The Republic of Korea welcomes today's adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2013/22 and will remain committed to helping West Africa in its fight against drug trafficking and organized crime.

Lastly, as this is probably the last meeting of the Security Council this year, I would like to thank the outgoing members of the Council — Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo — for their valuable contributions and cooperation with us in the Council.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): We thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative to hold a public briefing on combating drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa. We also thank the Secretary-General, Executive Director Yury Fedotov of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Said Djinnit for their very comprehensive and insightful briefings.

We are all acutely aware of the enormity and gravity of the problem of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime in West Africa and their impact on regional and international security and stability. What is more, illicit narcotics ruin the lives and security of millions of people across the globe. The drug industry is strong, and its estimated worth is hundreds of billions of dollars. Countries and regions of origin, transit and consumption are all suffering from the harmful consequences of the cultivation, manufacturing, distribution and sale of drugs.

Facing numerous capacity and governance challenges, the West African and Sahel regions are particularly vulnerable to the destabilizing impact of the entire cycle of drug production, trafficking and consumption. For instance, as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) told us today, in 2010 alone 18 tons of cocaine, amounting to \$1.25 billion, transited through

West Africa. This is staggering. The region is a transit route for drugs headed to the Mediterranean coasts, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and East Asia. In addition to being a major transit hub, the region, which is also a major producer of synthetic drugs, has seen an increase in drug consumption.

Drug trafficking breeds corruption and undermines State institutions and authority. In some instances, it has undermined the constitutional order. The strong nexus of drug trafficking with terrorism fuels and finances conflicts and asymmetric warfare. It also undermines or reverses the tentative gains made in ongoing peacebuilding efforts in several countries. In short, drug trafficking poses a direct threat to peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel.

Against that backdrop, the enhanced focus of the Council on this issue is important and timely. Discussions of this problem, however, should continue to move forward from the normative aspects to practical and tangible initiatives to address both the problem and its root causes. The frameworks to respond to this threat must be based on a comprehensive and integrated approach that gives due weight to development, governance and capacity-building. Measures to respond to drug trafficking should be integrated into the national, regional and United Nations development agendas.

Dealing with the fallout of the drug problem in the Sahel and West Africa is a shared responsibility. National actions should be buttressed by increased cooperation, coordination support and resource mobilization at the regional and international levels. To combat illicit drug trafficking, the countries of the region need to especially focus on institution-building in order to strengthen judicial systems, security sectors and police institutions. Steps must also be taken to fight impunity and corruption and promote respect for human rights and the rule of law.

That all boils down to addressing capacity deficits, and they are huge. In this area, the international community's assistance is essential. Cooperation among regions and subregions, in line with the principle of common and shared responsibility for the simultaneous reduction of supply and demand will guarantee the success of strategies to root out the illicit drug trade. More effective and results-oriented coordination is therefore required amongst the countries in the Sahel and West Africa for effective border management and

harmonization of legal and judicial responses to drug trafficking and to the problems created by its illicit proceeds. Cooperation and coordination among all United Nations entities and peacekeeping missions in the Sahel and West Africa should also be further strengthened and streamlined.

Pakistan recognizes and welcomes the many steps taken by regional countries and organizations to fight drug trafficking. We also recognize the crucial role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in this regard. Thankfully, we are not starting from scratch. Strategic thinking and planning have already been done, culminating in the finalization of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. We support the strategy's objective of assisting the Sahelian countries and regional mechanisms to enhance national capacities for effective border management and economic governance. In that regard, the roles of the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Community of West African States, UNODC, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Commission are extremely important.

Pakistan has chaired the Committee established pursuant to resolution 985 (1995) concerning Liberia for the past two years. The United Nations Office for West Africa is developing a regional strategy, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and regional organizations, such as the Mano River Union, to curtail transnational organized crime, including arms and drug trafficking. In this context, I want to bring to the Council's attention the Panel of Experts' recommendation that Member States reinforce the capacity of UNODC in Liberia.

We express our full support for the presidential statement on this subject (S/PRST/2013/22).

Finally, I would like to say very briefly that the past two years have been very productive and rewarding for Pakistan as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. We thank other Council members, the general membership and the Secretariat for their cooperation and for their guidance.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Fedotov and Mr. Djinnit for their statements.

This meeting is being held just after the Elysée Summit for Peace and Security in Africa, organized by France, and enables us to send a strong message to the States in the region. Drug trafficking in the Sahel and West Africa is a threat to peace and stability. The Security Council has taken stock of this issue. The initiatives taken by the States of the region must therefore be supported by the United Nations.

I would emphasize three points: the threat, France's commitments and the role of the Security Council.

First, let us assess the situation. Without repeating the statistics provided to us this morning, it is clear that drug trafficking is a threat to the Sahel and West African countries and their security, stability and development and, beyond that, to international peace and stability. West Africa and the Sahel, as we have heard, have become hubs for the transit of cocaine, while cannabis is perennial and heroin and synthetic drugs are emerging. The drug trade's links with various criminal groups and, on occasion, the funding of terrorist activities fuel rebellions and destabilize existing Governments, as we have seen in several countries in the region, in particular Mali and Guinea-Bissau. As a zone for the transit — and now for production and consumption — of drugs, the States of the region face disastrous consequences in terms of corruption, illicit economic activity and public health. Faced with this emerging threat, the States of West Africa and the Sahel have alerted the international community and seek support for their initiatives. The Secretary-General, in several of his reports, has relayed those concerns.

Secondly, France has committed itself to responding to that request. At the Elysée Summit, held in Paris on 6 and 7 September, Heads of States and Government expressed their shared determination to curb the production, processing, consumption and trafficking of drugs on the two continents, combat illegal financial flows, and enhance legal and security cooperation. France will continue to lend its support to the security and safety of African maritime waters and border areas, following the Yaoundé summit and Rabat conference. France has also committed itself to bringing these issues to the heart of the European Union, in particular by calling for the adoption of a European Union maritime safety strategy in the Gulf of Guinea to deal with the cross-cutting challenges affecting those waters.

Finally, on the role of the Security Council, Council members have shown, through this debate,

their commitment to fighting drug trafficking and transnational crime. In the presidential statement adopted today (S/PRST/2013/22), the members of the Council support the initiatives undertaken by the States of the region and ask the United Nations to help with their implementation, particularly within the framework of the Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, in cooperation with other relevant organizations, such as the European Union. They call in particular for concrete measures to be taken to facilitate maritime interception operations, surveillance of border areas, prosecutions, trials and sentencing of traffickers, fighting corruption and money-laundering, and, lastly, for the adoption of health-related measures aimed at combating the demand for drugs.

Beyond that, the Security Council should have a better understanding of the impact of drug trafficking and organized crime on the situations on its agenda. That is why in the presidential statement the Council asks that it be kept better informed about such threats by UNODC, particularly when it is considering the mandates of peacekeeping operations and political missions. It also urges UNODC and the Department of Political Affairs to include, in their regular briefings to the Council, information on the work of the United Nations system task force on transnational organized crime and drug trafficking as threats to security and stability. France will continue to provide support, in its national capacity, within the European framework and through the Security Council, to the initiatives of its friends in the countries of West Africa aimed at combating the scourge of drug trafficking.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mr. António.

Mr. António: I would first like to thank the Secretary-General, Ambassador Said Djinnit and Mr. Yuri Fedotov for their briefings, and to welcome the presence here today of Ambassador Bamba, representing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The African Union (AU) fully shares the concerns raised by most of the speakers today about the challenges facing West Africa and the Sahel region, especially taking into account the fact that those challenges have been shown to have much bearing on the issues of terrorism, human trafficking, mercenarism, armed rebellion and unconstitutional changes of Government.

The problem of the scourge of drug trafficking and drug use in West Africa and the Sahel, as well as the attempts to find adequate solutions to it, should be viewed against the background of the current general economic, political and social context of the region. As is well known, many of the States in the region are dealing with factors such as poverty, political instability, unconstitutional changes of Government, sporadic or frequent acts of extremist violence and, in a number of countries, drug trafficking, as well as an increasing threat of spreading terrorist activities, especially in the vast Sahel and Sahara desert.

Such threats to regional peace and security are partly born of and sustained by conditions that, as credible sources have noted, produce an average life expectancy for the region of 48 and an adult literacy rate of 25 per cent, with 40 per cent, or 65 million, of its young and adult population unable to read or write. Again, West Africa has a scholarization deficit, with 14 million children between the ages of seven and 12 currently not in school. These groups represent uninformed and generally unskilled populations vulnerable to the schemes of peddlers of terrorism, drug traffickers and political, social and religious agitators.

It is, however, important to underline that those conditions are partly caused by external factors as well as internal ones, including unjust international trade practices and structures that help to stifle African economic profitability through the dumping of subsidized foreign products and the imposition on Africa of high export taxes and forced economic liberalization. Their effects have been to institutionalize disguised unemployment, provoke reckless attempts to travel to Europe for greener pastures, foster hunger and destroy local production — which leads to rising prices for food and other items — and limit African goods' access to external markets for foreign exchange earnings. Primary individual productive activity is therefore frequently unprofitable and hunger, in its various forms, endemic.

In view of the interconnected nature of the causes and effects of the problem of drug trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel, the AU has always advocated that the best way to address the problem is by devising and implementing holistic ways of coordinating efforts to deal with challenges such as drug addiction and corruption in agencies entrusted with control at ports and entry points, and the resulting instability and armed conflict. While we fully appreciate the fact

that today's presidential statement (S/PRST/2013/22) addresses the issue of coordination, one of the main reasons why a concerted effort is needed to address the issues of drug trafficking at the local, national, regional and continental levels is that drug traffickers and their agents constantly develop their trade networks by infiltrating law-enforcement agencies and relevant State security authorities at transit and entry points in the target countries. In order to do that, they count on factors cited by many of today's speakers, such as poverty, endemic unemployment, corrupt practices and porous borders.

As the representative of Rwanda mentioned, the AU is in the process of developing measures aimed at supporting the efforts of its member States to address drug trafficking and its associated challenges in various regions, including West Africa and the Sahel. The Commission has accordingly developed a framework, the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control (2013-2017), which provides a strategy for targeting the sources and destinations of illicit drugs. It also addresses the health and socioeconomic consequences of drug trafficking through measures that include strengthening the law-enforcement capacity of relevant actors at local, national, regional and international levels. The Plan of Action is holistic and includes capacity-building for information-gathering, research, analysis and the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of a results-based matrix. It also emphasizes the importance of strengthening collaboration with regional and international stakeholders and, above all, of a collective approach to addressing the scourge of drug trafficking and its attendant threats to regional stability, peace and security on the continent.

It is in the spirit of strengthening the international dimensions of the fight to prevent drug trafficking and its attendant stability and security risks that the AU would like to propose strengthening a coordinated continental strategy with entities that include ECOWAS and the United Nations Office for West Africa. The strategy should involve mainstreaming measures for combating drug trafficking into activities aimed at preventing conflict in the West African and the Sahel region, in a range of areas that would include efforts to combat piracy, terrorism, mercenarism and other challenges that the AU has developed instruments to address. It is also our opinion that holding a summit for the various stakeholders to explore ways of addressing the issues could contribute to the ongoing coordinated efforts to address these challenges.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the delegations of outgoing members of the Council, namely, Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo.

(spoke in French)

We would like to say to the representative of our brother country Togo that we heartily agree with his assertion that he feels he has done a good job. That is not vain triumphalism, as it might seem. Togo has fully carried out its duty as a member of the Security Council.

At the same time, we commend the second African delegation leaving the Security Council, that of Morocco. We are convinced that they will successfully pass the baton to the delegations of Nigeria and Chad, who are joining the Security Council, and that they will work together in the Council for the defence and joint development of our continent, with the undoubted support of all Council members. We thank them today, at what is hopefully the last official meeting for the month.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) *(spoke in French)*: As I am speaking for the first time during the French presidency of the Security Council this month, it is my pleasant duty to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on assuming the prestigious responsibility assigned to you. I also wish to extend our thanks for allowing us to discuss the multidimensional aspects of peace and security in Africa, in particular the issue of drug trafficking and organized crime, the importance of which is clear to all. That has been shown by the weighty statements been made today, including by the Secretary-General; Mr. Fedotov, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala; and all the members of the Security Council, including your very important statement, Sir.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of 15 States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which associates itself with the statement made by Ambassador Tête António on behalf of the African Union.

ECOWAS also welcomes the presidential statement adopted earlier (S/PRST/2013/22).

The representatives who have spoken before me, as well as the reports of the UNODC and the International Narcotics Control Board, all agree on three points with respect to West Africa. The first is that West Africa has become a favoured transit zone for drug trafficking. Secondly, the drug problem has been internalized in West Africa, in particular via the spread of local drug use through the consumption of cocaine and other stimulants such as amphetamines. The third and most alarming point is the exploitation of the West African region as a transit zone by drug cartels, which benefit from its chronic instability, weak rule of law and porous borders to undertake their illegal activities in its vast spaces in all impunity.

The most glaring manifestations of this state of affairs are clearly the coups d'état in Guinea-Bissau and in Mali in early 2012. Those two countries were targeted by international drug traffickers for specific reasons. Guinea-Bissau has become a hub for the traffic in cocaine, and Mali has become a transit country for cocaine and cannabis resin, as reflected in the report of the International Narcotics Control Board. That is why ECOWAS, with the backing of the African Union and its international partners, including France, has launched parallel initiatives that have made a significant contribution to restoring some degree of stability in those countries. They deserve to be supported.

In that situation, West Africa had established an action plan to combat drugs for the period 2008-2012. The ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, at their forty-first ordinary session, held in Yamoussoukro, reiterated their political commitment to the fight against drugs and instructed the ECOWAS Commission to reactivate the action plan on an urgent basis. I also note the firm resolve of our Heads of State, as reaffirmed at the regional maritime security conference held in Yaoundé on 24 and 25 June, to do their utmost to eliminate that scourge. With respect to the action plan, I note that in February the ECOWAS Heads of State endorsed the Commission memorandum to extend the plan by two years so as to finalize the drafting and official adoption of the documents for the tenth European Development Fund Regional Indicative Programme.

I will conclude by indicating that for January 2014, the ECOWAS Commission has organized in Cotonou the tenth meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating

Committee of ECOWAS member States concerning the issue of drugs. Given the persistent and emerging problems of trafficking in cocaine, methamphetamines, firearms and fraudulent medications and clandestine migration in our subregion, the objective of this meeting will be to identify new challenges and to propose ways and means of accelerating the implementation of the Regional Action Plan. We will try to identify, without complacency, existing limitations and emerging challenges with a view to laying the foundations for formulating an action plan for 2015-2020 to combat drugs in West Africa.

In conclusion, like previous speakers, I would like to express our congratulations to Togo and Morocco, from Africa, and all other departing members of the Security Council. We have appreciated their contributions to strengthening multilateralism, and we particularly appreciate the way in which they dealt with the questions of peace and security for our country.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

In what is probably the final public meeting for December 2013, I would like to express the sincere thanks of my delegation to members of the Council, as well as to the Council's secretariat for its help. I would like to thank the interpreters, the translators, the conference officers and the sound engineers. I

also know that all Council members would join with me in wishing good luck to Jordan, which will become President of the Council in January.

Further, on behalf of the Council, I would like to express the sincere appreciation of the Council to the five outgoing members, namely, Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo. I commend their hard work during their 2012-2013 term and the contributions they brought to the Council's work.

What I just said is official. What I would like to add on a more personal note is the expression of my deepest gratitude. For two years, we have had friendly relations, which will continue after 1 January 2014. We have appreciated their competence, their dedication and their contributions. We will continue to work together. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for having been with us, alongside us, in the activities of the Security Council. As the Permanent Representative of Togo has rightly said, those actions, while not perfect, seek to defend peace, security and the values of the United Nations.

Finally, I wish one and all around the table and present in the Chamber my best wishes for the upcoming year-end holidays.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.