



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

9220th meeting

Wednesday, 14 December 2022, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Jaishankar/Mrs. Kamboj	(India)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania	Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
	China	Mr. Zhang Jun
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mr. Biang
	Ghana	Mr. Cleland
	Ireland	Mr. Mythen
	Kenya	Mr. Kimani
	Mexico	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
	Norway	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	United Arab Emirates	Ms. Al Kaabi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

New orientation for reformed multilateralism

Letter dated 25 November 2022 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2022/880)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

New orientation for reformed multilateralism

Letter dated 25 November 2022 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2022/880)

The President: I would like to warmly welcome the Secretary-General and the distinguished Ministers and other high-level representatives. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the General Assembly, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of Delegation of the European 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/2022/880, which contains the text of a letter dated 25 November 2022 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

The Secretary-General: Strengthening multilateralism to address today's global challenges has been my highest priority since assuming office as Secretary-General. My report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) and the process it has initiated are aimed above all at reinvigorating multilateralism to deal with today's interconnected threats.

Even during the darkest periods of the Cold War, collective decision-making and continuous dialogue in the Security Council maintained a functioning, if imperfect, system of collective security. The international system created after the Second World War succeeded in preventing a military conflict between the major Powers. States armed with nuclear weapons cooperated to cut their numbers, prevent proliferation and avert a nuclear catastrophe. Peacemaking and peacekeeping by the United Nations helped to end conflicts, saving millions of lives.

Notwithstanding that important progress, we are still grappling with many of the same challenges we have faced for 76 years: inter-State wars, limits to our peacekeeping ability, terrorism and a divided collective security system. And at the same time, conflict has evolved dramatically. We have seen fundamental changes in how it is fought, by whom and where. Lethal weapons are cheaper and more sophisticated than ever. Humankind has the capacity to annihilate itself entirely. The climate crisis is now contributing to conflict in a host of ways. The negative implications of digital technologies are proliferating. Misinformation and hate speech poison democratic debate and fuel social instability.

Many elements of modern life are weaponized: cyberspace, supply chains, migration, information, trade and financial services and investments. Frameworks for global cooperation have not kept pace with this evolution. Issues quickly become zero-sum and polarizing. Our toolbox, norms and approaches need upgrading.

The declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations asked me to make concrete recommendations on a broad range of threats — on land and at sea, in space and cyberspace. In response, as part of my report *Our Common Agenda*, I proposed a New Agenda for Peace, which I hope to submit to Member States in 2023. The New Agenda

for Peace will take a long view and a wide lens. It will speak to all Member States and address the full range of new and old security challenges that we face — local, national, regional and international. It will examine ways to update our existing tools for mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and counter-terrorism. It will also look at new and emerging threats in less traditional domains, including cyberspace and outer space.

The New Agenda for Peace will recognize the links between many forms of vulnerability, human rights, State fragility and the outbreak of conflict. It is our opportunity to take stock and to change course, because business as usual does not mean things will stay the same. In a world in which the only certainty is uncertainty, it means things will almost certainly get far worse. The New Agenda for Peace will aim to address a host of tough questions. It will articulate a vision for the United Nations work in peace and security for a world in transition and a new era of geopolitical competition.

It will set out a comprehensive approach to prevention, linking peace, sustainable development, climate action and food security. It will consider how the United Nations adapts its peace and security instruments to an era of cyberthreats, information warfare and other forms of conflict. It will look to Member States for new frameworks to reinforce multilateral solutions and manage intense geopolitical competition. It will call for new norms, regulations and accountability mechanisms to strengthen the multilateral system in areas in which gaps have emerged. And it will consider how we can further engage with non-State actors, including the private sector and civil society, to meet the challenges of our day.

The New Agenda for Peace will also consider how the existing United Nations toolbox can be enhanced. The Black Sea Grain Initiative shows that the United Nations still has a unique and important role in brokering solutions to global challenges. We must build on and expand such innovative approaches. Our existing tools and operations also have enormous value and have contributed to saving many lives. We must do everything we can to invest in them and adapt them to new realities. Where they fail, it is often because they are asked to do the impossible. I look forward to further discussions with Member States on this important process.

(spoke in French)

Preparing for the future is a challenge for the entire United Nations. Member States are working hard to evolve the organs of intergovernmental meetings

according to the needs and realities of today, and I welcome the negotiations that have been taking place in the General Assembly since 2008.

A majority of Member States are now aware that the Security Council should be reformed to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities. I hope that regional groups and Member States can work together to achieve greater consensus on the way forward and on the terms of the reform. The Organization and I stand ready to provide the necessary support. The Council is already taking advantage of the new working methods put in place, including public debates and informal mechanisms aimed at strengthening collaboration with all States Members of the United Nations.

The contribution of women's rights organizations to the Council has made it possible to advancing our prevention work and strengthening our actions in response to ongoing conflicts. Consultations open to a wider range of stakeholders, including women's rights organizations and people affected by conflict, displacement and human rights abuses, cannot but be beneficial to the work, influence and credibility of the Council.

I also note the calls of Member States for the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council in the framework of a reformed multilateralism. The General Assembly has shown that it plays a valuable role in bringing the Member States to consider the issues on its agenda. Just this year, it adopted many important resolutions, in particular on the war in Ukraine, the right to a healthy environment and the use of the veto by members of the Security Council.

With regard to any decision by Member States to streamline General Assembly practices — resolutions, the presentation of reports and the functioning of committees — or to reinforce the work of the Assembly's high-level week, the Secretariat stands ready to provide support.

With regard to the Economic and Social Council, the proposed biennial summit to be organized between it, the Heads of State and Government of the Group of 20, the Secretary-General and the international financial institutions would constitute an important step towards better coordination of global governance and the creation of a global financial system adapted to today's world.

The challenge ahead is clear. We have the opportunity and the obligation to remember the promise of the Charter of the United Nations: to safeguard future generations from the scourge of war. We must keep this promise with a revitalized, effective, representative and inclusive multilateralism.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the President of the General Assembly.

Mr. Kőrösi: I thank Minister Jaishankar and the Indian Mission for organizing this critically important debate. I also commend India and the four other outgoing Security Council members — Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway — for their important contributions to international peace and security over the past two years.

We are at a watershed moment for multilateralism — at a historic crossroads. The international rules, norms, instruments and institutions that have guided inter-State relations for over 75 years are facing deep — and some would say existential — questions of relevance at a time when the world needs them most.

But as we emerge from the coronavirus disease pandemic, grappling simultaneously with the climate crisis and protracted debt, food and energy emergencies, one thing is clear: these global challenges are far too great for any one nation to handle alone. Our best hope, our only hope, is always to find a multilateral solution, designed in line with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Let us recall that the actions taken here in the United Nations have an impact on the 8 billion people out there. We must improve the lives of the people who count on us, and we must do so at a time of profound global change and polarization. But just as our actions have profound effects across the globe, so too does our inaction — in the General Assembly or, more frequently, in the Security Council. Too often, sharp geopolitical divides have prevented responses and progress in the Council.

The question I have for the members of the Council is simple: will those rifts continue to upstage their collective ability to maintain international peace and security? A reminder of their mission hangs above

them daily — will they choose Per Krohg's phoenix rising from the ashes of war or the pain and destruction depicted in Picasso's Guernica just beyond these doors?

Multilateralism can work, but it must work better. The 193 Member States of the General Assembly have placed their trust in the 15 Security Council members. As members of the General Assembly and of the Security Council, they elected the majority of the States here represented and trusted the rest though the Charter. They expect each Council member to act for the good of all, to uphold the Charter. Council members have done so on countless occasions and, in doing so, they have saved countless lives.

Just last week, the Council decided to establish a humanitarian exemption across United Nations sanctions regimes. That will have a direct impact on so many people living under dire conditions — yet there are also examples of failed collective action. Let me mention just one. After nearly 10 months of war in Ukraine, not a single Council resolution has been adopted to mitigate the exact type of crisis the United Nations was created to prevent.

For the United Nations to reinforce its relevance — its *raison d'être* — and for the Organization to survive, it must deliver solutions for end-users, all 8 billion of them. The people we serve do not neatly organize their lives into boxes labelled "human rights", "development" and "peace". It is our responsibility, individually and collectively, to respond to that complexity.

It makes sense that we collaborate across bodies, organs and processes and build on efforts already under way. The so-called veto initiative has opened an important door for a new form of collaboration and accountability. The Assembly has been obliged to step up when decisions by the Council are blocked. Following the mandate given by the Member States, I will convene a formal debate during the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly on the use of veto. This will allow them to reflect on the initiative, and on how to bring our two organs to working more closely together in discharging their functions in support of both peace and prosperity.

Outside this Chamber, Member States are participating in 15 negotiating processes on a range of issues, from counter-terrorism and health to sustainable development and digital governance. Several of the facilitators are sitting at the Council table today. One of those processes is the intergovernmental negotiations

on Security Council reform, with the participation of all 193 States Members of the United Nations. It has been a mandated duty of the General Assembly for many years, but the outcome is still less than what was expected.

During the high-level week in September, more than a third of world leaders highlighted the need for Security Council reform. I fully support today's focus on tangible steps that Member States can take. I ask each Council member, as members of the General Assembly, to take up this challenge, to move from a position of "no" or "later" to a position of "yes" and "now".

As we embark on our discussion, I urge Council members to think about those who rely on them and their ability to come to agreement to ensure their safety and well-being; to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian aid that will save their lives; to support inclusive peace processes with full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups, which will end the fighting and suffering in their communities; to support the demobilization of former combatants and child soldiers that will reunite their families; and to ensure protection from conflict-related sexual violence that no one should ever have to endure.

As the adage goes, there is nothing more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. For us today, I would add that there is nothing more necessary. Deadlock translates to a dead end for the millions of children, women, men and families who are all suffering the consequences. They are putting their trust in us to step beyond power dynamics.

I am imploring the Security Council to respond by prioritizing dialogue and diplomacy, trade political differences for genuine political will to find solutions, go beyond the calculations of distrust and old rivalries and focus on what unites us all. Together with my Office, I stand ready to support Member States to that end in any way possible.

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

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for External Affairs of India.

I thank all participants for joining us at today's Security Council open debate on a topic of growing relevance. We particularly appreciate the presence of the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly. This is a reflection of the importance of the subject at hand.

We have come together in this Chamber today for an honest conversation about the effectiveness of multilateral institutions created more than 75 years ago. The question before us is how best these institutions can be reformed, particularly as the need to reform is less deniable with each passing year. This debate and its outcome will not only help determine what kind of United Nations we wish to see, but also what kind of global order best reflects contemporary realities.

The need for a new orientation for a reformed multilateral system flows from this widespread recognition. While the matter concerns the fullest constituency of States Members of the United Nations, the Security Council also has an important stake in the consideration of this crucial question, because, at the end of the day, it has direct implications for the maintenance of international peace and security, and it is in the fitness of things that such a discussion takes place as an open debate.

All of us are aware that the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council has been on the General Assembly agenda for well over three decades. While the debate on reforms has meandered aimlessly, the real world has changed dramatically. We see that in terms of economic prosperity, technology capabilities, political influence and developmental progress. The broad dispersal of capabilities and responsibilities has been expressed, for example, in the emergence of the Group of 20. That realization is now steadily percolating through the wider membership of the United Nations. At the high-level week of the seventy-session of the General Assembly, we were all witness to a growing sentiment in favour of reform. Our challenge is to translate that into concrete outcomes.

The call for change has been accelerated by growing stresses on the international system that we have experienced in recent years. On the one hand, they have brought out the inequities and the inadequacies of the way the world currently functions. On the other hand, they have also highlighted that a larger and deeper collaboration is necessary to find solutions.

Let me give a few examples. During the coronavirus disease pandemic, many vulnerable nations of the global South got their first vaccines from beyond their traditional sources. Indeed, the diversification of global production was itself a recognition of how much the old order had changed.

The knock-on effects of conflict situations have also underscored the necessity for more broad-based global governance. Recent concerns over food, fertilizer and fuel security were not adequately articulated in the highest councils of decision-making. Much of the world was therefore led to believe that their interests did not matter. We cannot let that happen again.

When it comes to climate action and climate justice, the state of affairs is no better. Instead of addressing the relevant issues in the appropriate forum, we have seen attempts at distraction and diversion.

On the challenge of terrorism, even as the world is coming together with a more collective response, multilateral platforms are being misused to justify and protect perpetrators.

Each one of the foregoing examples makes a strong case for why it should not be business as usual in the multilateral domain. We need not only to increase stakeholder participation but also to enhance the effectiveness and credibility of multilateralism in the eyes of the international community and in the eyes of global public opinion. That is the purpose of new orientation for a reformed multilateral system.

If this is to happen, Member States from Latin America, Africa and Asia as well as small island developing States should have credible and continuing representation in the Security Council. Decisions about the future can no longer be taken without their participation. It is equally important to make the working methods and processes of global institutions, including the Council, more accountable, objective and transparent. Failing to do so would only expose the Council to charges of politicization.

Let us recall that at every milestone in multilateral diplomacy, the desire for reform has been expressed at the highest levels. That ranges from the Millennium Declaration to the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations in 2020. This year, too, the General Assembly heard calls for reform from more than 70 leaders — more than double the number in 2021. Why, then, are we failing to deliver on such a strong desire for change?

The answer lies in the nature of the intergovernmental negotiations process itself. First, it is the only such process within the United Nations that is conducted without any time frame. Secondly, it is also singular in

being negotiated without any text. Thirdly, there is no record-keeping that enables progress to be recognized and carried forward. And that is not all. It has even been suggested that negotiations should start only when consensus has been achieved. Surely there can be no more extreme case of putting the cart before the horse. Three decades after the formation of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform, we have nothing to show for precisely those reasons. That is creating an intense sense of frustration among the wider membership. They will not accept attempts to propose piecemeal changes as an alternative.

The Secretary-General has rightly called for “transforming this moment of crisis into a moment of multilateralism”, but that moment must capture the sense of change and cannot remain a prisoner of the past — after all, *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) and the Summit of the Future will deliver results only if they respond to the growing calls for reform multilateralism. Reform is the need of the day, and I am confident that the Global South in particular shares India’s determination to persevere.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the Cabinet member and Minister of Culture and Youth of the United Arab Emirates.

Ms. Al Kaabi (United Arab Emirates): At the outset, I would like to thank India for organizing this open debate, and I am grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, for their briefings. I also want to congratulate you, Sir, and the Indian Mission on a very successful eighth term on the Security Council. Your voice in this Chamber is necessary and the United Arab Emirates reiterates its endorsement of India’s bid for permanent membership in a reformed Security Council.

Since 1945, the multilateral system, anchored in the United Nations and based on international law, has evolved into a large and complex architecture. To multilateralism’s great credit, our institutions and responses have adapted and expanded over time to address humankind’s emerging needs, yet any survey of the global landscape reveals the widening gap between the aspirations of multilateralism and contemporary reality. To begin addressing that disconnect, reform must adapt the multilateral system to three fundamental dynamics.

First, the Global South is severely disadvantaged in multilateral governance. That is particularly stark here, in the most consequential United Nations organ for maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council's structure does not reflect geopolitical reality or the international community's diversity. As a result, the Arab world and Africa — the regions with the most at stake on the Council's agenda — are still disenfranchised in both categories of membership. The same applies to the Bretton Woods institutions, where an outdated formula for determining voting shares preserves a deeply unrepresentative governance structure, creating a situation where the developing world's two largest economies are profoundly underrepresented.

Secondly, rising geopolitical tensions threaten cooperation on pressing global challenges. Inherent in the founding vision of the Council is a notion that pervades the entire multilateral system. Regular interaction — and, for the major Powers, a privileged position — would incentivize peaceful and sustained international cooperation. However, the escalating polarization is increasingly disrupting critical multilateral processes. Here in the Council, for example, it is becoming more difficult to arrive at a consensus on issues that usually produce unanimity, such as vital mandate renewals for peace operations. Likewise, coordination within international financial institutions is suffering, including with regard to multilateral action on the \$2.5 trillion debt crisis looming over the Global South.

Thirdly, middle Powers, developing countries and smaller States are increasingly stepping up to ensure continued multilateral dialogue and progress. That has been evident at the Group of 20 summit in Bali; in Türkiye's work with the Secretary-General on the Black Sea Grain Initiative; and at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Egypt, particularly with the historic inclusion of loss and damage as an agenda item. Similarly, in recent years elected members of the Council have assumed greater responsibility for drafting and negotiating outcome documents, which has helped to break deadlocks and produce more inclusive and responsive texts, including some landmark Council decisions. As the United Arab Emirates' Minister responsible for our efforts on the protection of cultural heritage in conflict, I am especially grateful to Italy for its partnership with France on resolution 2347 (2017).

The multilateral system is an extraordinary achievement. When the Nobel Committee awarded Kofi Annan and the United Nations the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001, it explained the delay by confessing that the United Nations could have won the award so often that in the end it never did. In many parts of the world, it has restored peace, rebuilt societies, eradicated disease and fought hunger. That is only part of what we lose by not committing to meaningful change. Invariably, the starting point for reform is equitable representation in decision-making and norm-setting — but it is just a starting point. Beyond that, multilateralism must adapt to a world where non-State actors influence global processes. Climate change, the pandemic, food insecurity and the debt crisis all underscore the need for more public-private partnerships. Likewise, civil-society organizations reinforce multilateral action around the world with vital work. In Mosul, for example, where the United Arab Emirates is partnering with UNESCO to restore cultural heritage, I witnessed first-hand just how dependent reconciliation and peacebuilding are on civil society.

Reforming multilateralism will not be easy. Achieving concrete outcomes will require us all to make concessions and agree to compromises, whether at the intergovernmental negotiations or the general review of quotas. But like all of us here, we have heard the increasing calls for reform and we recognize that resisting them means that we are living on borrowed time. We also know that the United Nations and, arguably, the entire multilateral system came out of one of the bleakest periods in human history. Today the world faces what the Secretary-General called our biggest shared test since the Second World War. We must heed his warning with the determined ingenuity that is humankind's hallmark and work collectively to ensure that multilateralism is fit for purpose in the twenty-first century.

The President: I call on the Permanent Representative of the United States and member of President Biden's Cabinet.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I thank you, Minister Jaishankar, for choosing to focus on the future of multilateralism and the importance of United Nations reform during India's presidency of the Security Council. I would like to welcome you to the Chamber, during India's last month on the Council, and congratulate India for a successful two-year tenure. I thank the Secretary-General for his

statement. I also thank the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Kőrösi, for his statement and his efforts to advance a United Nations that is flexible and fit for purpose.

What does it mean for a 77-year-old institution to be fit for purpose? What is the ultimate purpose of the United Nations? In 1945, when delegates from around the world met in San Francisco, President Truman outlined that purpose in his opening remarks. He said that the conference would devote its energies and labours exclusively to the single problem of setting up the essential organization to keep the peace — I repeat, to keep the peace. That was our original purpose. Of course, we have not always succeeded. Wars have still started, including one by a permanent member of the Security Council this past year. Deadlock has often prevented progress, and human suffering has persisted. But at the same time, we have also seen enormous success in realizing the original vision of the Charter of the United Nations. It is a vision that has expanded beyond maintaining peace and security to include human rights, the rule of law and development.

Together, we have curtailed nuclear proliferation. Together, we adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Together, we sent United Nations peacekeepers to stop mass atrocities and forged truces and permanent peace agreements through negotiations and mediation. Together, we have lifted more than 1 billion people out of poverty and provided humanitarian aid on a scale that no single country could contribute alone. Those are remarkable accomplishments, but they cannot leave us satisfied with the state of the world today. We have to contain climate change, eliminate the coronavirus disease pandemic and end the global hunger crisis. We have to defend human rights, improve humanitarian efforts, address a persistent pandemic, prevent the next pandemic and — most important of all — defend the United Nations Charter and hold accountable those who seek to undermine it.

To do that, the United States believes that we can and must advance an affirmative agenda for the future of the United Nations. Our hope is to build consensus around a future that we collectively seek. It is a future where we all uphold the United Nations Charter. It is a future where we solve the consequential global challenges of our time, such as food security, global health threats, extreme poverty, sustainable development and conflict mediation. It is a future where we safeguard our shared interconnected resources. It

is a future where we champion universal respect for human rights. To see that future, we need to strengthen the United Nations. The United States is therefore pursuing a United Nations modernization agenda that is consistent with that vision — one that includes Security Council reform. That is why, during a visit to the United Nations birthplace in San Francisco, I laid out our six clear principles of responsible behaviour for Security Council members, including our commitment to refraining from the use of the veto, except in rare and extraordinary circumstances. Those are the standards we are setting for ourselves and what we welcome all members to hold us to.

That is why we were proud to co-sponsor an initiative by a group of forward-leaning countries, spearheaded by Liechtenstein, which requires the General Assembly to convene a meeting after any veto has been cast. It is also why, at the current session of General Assembly, President Biden announced that the United States supports Security Council expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories, including permanent membership for Africa and for Latin America and the Caribbean (see A/77/PV.6). The Security Council should reflect our global realities today, not the global realities of 77 years ago. But given how difficult Security Council reform will be to reach, we must be flexible in our approach to change. As President Kőrösi said during last month's General Assembly debate on the topic (see A/77/PV.36), Security Council reform can be achieved only if major groups and Member States are willing to make compromises from their long-held positions.

As participants know, I have begun a series of wide-ranging consultations with Member States, regional blocs and reform groups to discuss expansion proposals and other ways to make the Council more effective, transparent and inclusive. We are open to creative ideas and credible, sensible and politically viable paths forward. This is a listening tour — to hear ideas from all members, as it is critical that they all see themselves in the process. I look forward to continuing that engagement, including through the intergovernmental negotiations process. I am thankful to the incoming co-Chairs of that process, Kuwait and Slovakia, for answering the collective United Nations membership's call for change, and I look forward to us working together in the months ahead.

Of course, the United Nations is not only the Security Council, far from it. Just as the Council needs to be updated for our modern era, so too must we reform and reinvigorate the United Nations system

more broadly. We need to develop a more robust and responsive global health security architecture to prevent and respond to future pandemics. We need to make the United Nations development system more coherent and accountable. We need to make the United Nations humanitarian system more responsive, effective and efficient to meet the extraordinary humanitarian needs brought on by conflict, displacement, migration and a rapidly changing climate. The Secretary-General's initiative, *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), is a welcome vehicle for that conversation. I thank the Secretary-General for that initiative. We believe that it can serve as the foundation for that important discussion and the work ahead. Next year, let us commit to doing that work. Let us build a new consensus — one that will propel us towards the Secretary-General's Summit for the Future, with both a renewed commitment to the Charter and a shared vision for a stronger United Nations system. Let us build the United Nations for our children and their children — one of which they can be proud and that fosters a more peaceful, open and prosperous world for us all.

Mr. Cleland (Ghana): I begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, as Minister of External Affairs of India, and the delegation of India on your country's presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. We welcome the focus of today's open debate and support its intention to reinforce discussions on the kind of orientation required to realize the much-anticipated reform of the multilateral system. We thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for the depth and clarity of his statement. We also thank Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the General Assembly, for his insightful remarks.

Seventy-seven years ago, the founding fathers of the United Nations bequeathed to us a multilateral system that was designed to ensure global peace and stability. That system was anchored on the absolute prohibition of the unjustified use of force and the quest to realize the aspirations of a more interdependent world. When we look at history, we see the coordinated efforts that have been made over the years to maintain international peace and security, promote the international rule of law and prevent a calamitous world war. We can conclude only that the founders were right in their ambitions and largely justified in their tireless efforts in San Francisco. However, we are also not oblivious to the fact that the nature and frequency of global crises in the post-1945 era have evolved. Today we are witnesses to complex, interacting and mutually reinforcing crises, including stark geopolitical differences, the escalating risks of

the use of nuclear weapons, increasing numbers of asymmetrical and transnational conflicts, widespread and systematic violations of human rights, debilitating pandemics and the adverse effects of climate change on food systems, livelihoods and the general management of societies. The challenges of the present era underpin the need for comprehensive and integrated reform of all the pillars of the multilateral system, especially the peace and security architecture and the development and financial systems. We would indeed be remiss if we lost sight of the fact that inadequacies in one pillar will certainly have consequences for the overall effective functioning of the multilateral system.

While reforms are not an end in themselves, they are often necessary catalysts for calibrating a better approach to collectively realizing the objectives we seek. It is therefore not surprising that over the three decades of frustrating discussions on Security Council reform, there have been several calls for global solidarity to ensure that this noble institution is reformed as soon as possible. The most notable recent call in that regard was made by our Heads of State and Government in the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations, asking us to instil new life into the process of Council reform under the aegis of the intergovernmental negotiation process. In recalling the convergence of that global aspiration, we also reiterate the call by President Akufo-Addo to the Council a few weeks ago on the need to

“revisit the vexed issue of reform of the United Nations system, particularly the Security Council, and to do so on the basis of the African Common Position on United Nations reform, as expressed in the Ezulwini Consensus, if the authority of the Council, which, in recent times, appears to have been devalued because of its anachronistic structure, is indeed to be restored.” (S/PV.9188, p.10)

Ghana believes that the conversations around reform of the Security Council must necessarily be underpinned by the imperatives of the arguments of Africa, the only continent without permanent membership on the Council. The historical injustice to the 54 Member States of Africa — a continent with a population of more than 1.3 billion people and a combined economy in excess of \$3.5 trillion — must be prioritized. Like all the permanent members of the Council, Africa, even while under colonial domination, played a major role in ensuring the successful end of the Second World War, in terms of both resources and lives sacrificed.

We were encouraged by the positive statements in that regard by several world leaders at the high-level week of the General Assembly, and we urge that the process of reform must produce real changes to the structure and practices of the Council across the five clusters of reform under discussion in the intergovernmental negotiation process in an effort to make it innovative in its approach. We also welcome the Secretary-General's report on *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), including on the New Agenda for Peace, and believe that a good-faith engagement by Member States on those proposals could help bring about a new orientation in the nature and focus of the peace architecture. It will be important for a reformed Security Council to aspire to operate differently. We must therefore refrain from putting old wine in new wineskins, and vice versa.

There were many assumptions underpinning the multilateral system that no longer hold today. In seeking new orientations for a reformed multilateralism, we should therefore be cognizant of the assumptions we establish as bases for reforms. In that regard, we need to acknowledge that the challenges of today are beyond the reach of a few powerful countries to resolve. Resolving those challenges requires a shared responsibility and a common understanding. We therefore believe that the General Assembly, which is the most representative organ of the United Nations, should be made to find new space in the reform agenda. We also believe that the regional arrangements envisaged under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the effective collaborators of the collective security mechanism should be worked with more closely than ever before. For instance, we cannot arrive at any legitimate solution to the problem of terrorism on the African continent without the collaboration of institutions such as the African Union and regional economic communities such as the Economic Community of West African States.

The emerging threats, and our clearer understanding of the impact of other crises on peace and security, also imply that a reformed multilateralism will have to embrace an integrated approach to peace and security that accommodates the nexus linking climate change, global public health emergencies and financial meltdowns. Furthermore, a renewed multilateral system should take into consideration a number of the international development institutions and processes outside the United Nations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, which are failing to

respond adequately to the pressing needs of the peoples of the world, especially the developing world. When there is a global financial and food crisis, as we are currently experiencing, we have to expect that further down the road there will be greater manifestations of sociopolitical instability, a diminished capacity for conflict management and further conflicts.

In conclusion, Ghana therefore believes that a holistic renewal of multilateralism characterized by the inclusion of new concepts across the pillars of the work of the United Nations is essential if we are to get far closer to seeing multilateralism work for all rather than just a few. Time is not on our side, and we need to act now.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): I would like to start by commending India for organizing today's very timely high-level open debate, as well as the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for their inspiring remarks. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mr. Carlos Franco França, has asked me to convey his deep regret about being unable to be present at today's debate, as he had intended, since Brazil attaches great importance to our subject matter today.

The post-war global governance structure was created in an entirely different international context to the one we are facing today — equally challenging and complex, but very distinct. The crises we have been facing and may yet face in the not-too-distant future, whether related to health, climate, economic and trade issues or peace and security, have clearly demonstrated that the world has changed at a much faster pace than our multilaterally agreed norms and rules, as well as the governance structures of the multilateral institutions responsible for negotiating solutions and setting those rules.

As a result, the international community remains unable to provide timely and effective coordinated solutions to the old and new challenges that affect us, so much so that we are beginning to lose the confidence of our peoples and the entire fabric of multilateralism indeed seems to be unravelling. There seems to be widespread agreement that we are facing crises on multiple fronts. Nevertheless, the consensus that none of those issues can be truly overcome by one nation, or even in small groups, exists in parallel with the slow but steady fragmentation of the multilateral order and growing lack of credibility of the post-war international regimes.

The development gap between nations should be at the centre stage of international governance if we want to address the root causes of many of the interconnected problems the world is facing today. Discussions in the Security Council clearly show that poverty and inequality, within and between nations, are intrinsically linked to conflicts. In that regard, we could devote more time to discussing the links between poverty, inequality and conflict on an equal footing with the other emerging challenges that have captured the Council's attention in recent years.

The conflict in Ukraine reignited old disputes and brought the world once again to the brink of disaster. The deadlock in the Security Council and the spillover effect of the conflict in other multilateral forums — some of them unrelated to the situation itself — had a destabilizing effect on the institutions we rely on to uphold the principles we share. More than that, the conflict in Ukraine exacerbated long-known shortcomings and unveiled the consequences of our inability to adapt old institutions to new realities. Since the Second World War, many new issues and threats have emerged, and the multilateral system has created new tools to address them. If the main international organizations in the economic domain, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, were able to initiate a reform process to update their composition and working methods, we would expect the same from the world's main political organization. It is shocking that entire regions are excluded from the Security Council's central decision-making processes, with the complete absence of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean among permanent members.

Although reform is needed on many fronts, peace and security is an area of particular concern. That is where reform talks are completely stalled, despite the blatant inadequacy of the current structure of the Security Council. While world governance has become increasingly more complex and the challenges more serious, the reform of the Security Council has become only more urgent and essential to make the body more representative, legitimate and effective. Sadly, we have already started to bear the consequences of our inaction. An instrument designed according to the interests of twentieth-century Powers to solve twentieth-century problems, the Security Council is no longer fit for purpose. It is proving unable to uphold international law and defend the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Above all, it no longer spurs

the peaceful resolution of conflicts, or diplomacy and dialogue. As a consequence, we are now regretfully confronted with a political crisis, without the tools in place to remediate it in a legitimate and effective manner. The world outside these halls is taking note of that. We are glad, however, that the vast majority of the membership agrees on the need to act swiftly. The urgency of reform was clearly acknowledged by many of our leaders at the general debate in September, including by those from both developing and developed countries and from all regions of the globe, as well as most of the permanent members of the Security Council.

Turning to the main elements of reform, there are two points I would like to stress.

First, the deadlock that emerged in the Council in the context of the conflict in Ukraine increased the support for initiatives aiming at curtailing and regulating the veto power. Brazil agrees with the general intention behind most of them, such as the French-Mexican initiative on veto restraint in the case of mass atrocities. The veto, however, is an expression of the great divide that stalls the Council rather than the main reason why the organ has become ineffective. A veto is cast only after diplomacy and dialogue have not prospered.

That brings me to my second point. The composition of the Security Council remains the central and most important issue of the reform. The Security Council cannot, and will not be, a legitimate and effective body as long as the global South remains sidelined and whole regions, such as Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa, are not represented in the permanent category. We need to pave the way for the inclusion in the Council of new members capable of taking on major responsibilities in the field of international peace and security, representing all regions of the world. For effective diplomacy, the Security Council needs to be fully attuned to today's reality. Furthermore, it is imperative that the lack of representativeness of the Council be addressed in the reform of both categories of membership. A half-hearted reform that does not address the fundamental problem of the lack of representation — and by consequence the lack of legitimacy — in the permanent category will be merely window dressing.

Besides the composition itself, it is imperative to make progress in the discussions of the Council's working methods with a view to bringing more transparency and

accountability to its activities. The Security Council must be more open in relation to non-member States, more efficient in its decision-making process and seek greater coordination with other United Nations bodies, especially the Peacebuilding Commission. The international system is at a critical juncture, facing a multifaceted crisis, while its central body in the field of peace and security seems unequipped to provide us with answers and solutions. The Council should be much more than a forum for mutual accusations or a stage to entertain a specific audience. Reform is needed so that the Council once again becomes a forum for constant dialogue and diplomacy, an organ where mutually agreed compromises are found and tensions subside.

We take this unique opportunity to express our great disappointment with the fact that the Security Council reform is not mentioned in the proposals concerning a new agenda for peace proposed in the report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982). Brazil firmly believes that any agenda for peace that does not include Security Council reform cannot be considered new. The formulation of a new agenda for peace must include a profound discussion of how to relaunch the discussions beyond the intergovernmental negotiations format, which has run its course. Let us finally go for the high-hanging fruit. After almost a decade in which some delegations effectively took the reform process hostage, we need to untangle ourselves, galvanize Member States to negotiate in good faith and act with a sense of urgency. Too much is at risk, and therefore we all need to rise to the occasion. In the current circumstances, more of the same has become irresponsible at best. If we fail to advance reform in a timely fashion, the entire multilateral architecture constructed at the end of the Second World War will be in peril.

Mr. Mythen (Ireland): I thank the Indian presidency for organizing this very important debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their briefings today and for their participation.

Just last week, we marked the hundredth anniversary of an independent Irish State. One of its first acts was to seek membership of the League of Nations. Ever since, Ireland has remained steadfast in its commitment to multilateralism. We believe it remains essential to address the global challenges of today. To sit at this table with the mandate of election by the General Assembly is both a great honour and a great privilege. Those of us lucky enough to do so should be frank enough,

honest enough, to admit that today multilateralism is struggling. In this Chamber, charged with the critical mandate to maintain international peace and security, too often we are unable to rise to that challenge. During the past two years of our term, we have seen Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, a vetoed climate and security draft resolution (S/2021/990), continued resistance to the women and peace and security agenda and no progress on realizing a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, despite monthly discussions on that issue. There is therefore much room for improvement.

I would like to make three points.

My first is that multilateral institutions and the rules and norms that underpin them must evolve to face the realities of today. Reform is never easy, but where there is political will we have seen that it is achievable. In April, we were pleased to be part of the core group of States, led by Liechtenstein, that brought the veto initiative to the General Assembly. The adoption of that resolution (General Assembly resolution 76/262) was a significant step towards increased scrutiny of the use of the veto, and indeed of the Council.

Last month in Dublin, the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas was adopted by 83 States. The Declaration is an important new instrument that will help to protect civilians from explosive weapons. And just last week, the Security Council adopted resolution 2664 (2022), which will help to ensure that humanitarians can continue their vital work without fear of inadvertently falling afoul of United Nations sanctions regimes. There are many other examples, but the lesson for the Council is clear — when we cooperate and act in good faith, progress and reform are possible and new norms can be established.

Secondly, Security Council reform is long overdue. The Council, as other speakers have said, simply does not reflect the world of today. Ireland has worked in close partnership with our African colleagues and partners on the Security Council. The historic and unjust underrepresentation of Africa on the Council must be addressed. Those that are most often the subject of Security Council discussions must have a meaningful, representative say at this table. But a more representative Council will not be enough. We must also change how the Council takes decisions.

Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine is an affront to the principles on which this Organization was built. It is a violation of international law and the United Nations Charter, the very foundations of multilateralism. But, as in so many other cases, the Security Council has been unable to respond to this outrage due to the use or threat of use of the veto. That cannot continue. The veto is an anachronism. It prevents the Security Council from implementing its mandate; it allows aggressors to evade accountability.

The urgent calls for Security Council reform grow ever louder. They must not go unanswered. History will not judge us kindly if we allow this moment to pass. At a very minimum, all members of the Council, elected and permanent, should agree to refrain from blocking any draft resolution intended to prevent or stop mass atrocities.

Finally, the Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) offers a path forward. Ireland will play an active role in its implementation. We look forward to working with partners on the New Agenda for Peace. We also look forward to supporting efforts to get back on track towards sustainable development, notably by co-facilitating negotiations for the outcome of the Sustainable Development Goal Summit in September.

Ultimately, however, reforms alone will not make multilateralism work. The responsibility rests with us, the Member States. Ireland will finish its term on the Security Council at the end of this month. Over the past two years, we have seen how an absence of trust has prevented the Council from effectively implementing its mandate. If Council members, particularly permanent Council members, deeply distrust each other, this organ cannot hope to meet the immense challenges it faces. Member States will continue to have differing perspectives on many of the issues on the Council's agenda, but all Council members, permanent and elected, must find a way to work in genuine partnership and in good faith so that the Council can act with the ambition and determination that are required of it today — and that the world demands of it today.

Too often, we have seen narrow self-interest take precedence in the Council. We have seen Council members block crucial decisions to protect themselves or their allies. Council members, whether permanent or elected, have reached this table in different ways. But once we are here in this Chamber, we have a shared and collective responsibility to defend international peace

and security. We must live up to that responsibility, not abdicate it.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I join others in thanking the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for opening our debate and for their leadership on this issue.

The United Kingdom has long supported multilateralism, and we remain deeply committed to it today. We take seriously our role in strengthening the multilateral system and supporting the rules-based international order. That is more important than ever, as we heard today during the debate. We face extraordinary, complex and interconnected challenges. That includes the global threat posed by climate change and violations of human rights, which have a disproportionate effect on women and girls.

With Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, we have also witnessed a permanent member of the Security Council violating the Charter of the United Nations and flouting the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. In the face of those challenges, the United Nations as a whole and the Security Council must continue to take decisive action. But the world today is very different to the one that gave birth to the United Nations in 1945, so it is right that we consider how the United Nations and the multilateral system should evolve.

The Security Council must, as others have said, become more representative of the world today, and the United Kingdom has long called for its expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. As the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary publicly reiterated this week, we support new permanent seats for Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, as well as permanent African representation.

We also look forward to the resumption of the General Assembly's intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform and hope to see those progress to a text in the new year. Beyond the Security Council, the United Kingdom welcomes the Secretary-General's efforts to advance wider United Nations reform. We strongly support his reform agenda and vision for a United Nations 2.0 that is better adapted to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), which seeking to turbocharge the delivery of the Sustainable

Development Goals. As we know, they have been set back by the pandemic and the global energy and food crises. The New Agenda for Peace in particular will set new ambitions for the Organization's response to international peace and security. And we welcome the further detail the Secretary-General set out today. Through better data use, analysis, innovation and strategic foresight, we can unlock the full potential of the United Nations. That must also be accompanied by a focus on results.

Beyond that, we support reform efforts with international financial institutions and admire the momentum built by the Prime Minister of Barbados, Her Excellency Ms. Mia Mottley. The United Kingdom is driving forward many of the objectives of the Bridgetown Agenda for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture, including on greater finance provision, climate change financing and the Capital Adequacy Framework review of the Group of 20.

In conclusion, I quote from the Foreign Secretary's speech this week:

"We all benefit from the wisdom and compassion of those leaders who created the laws and institutions that prevent a relapse to the old order where the strong prey on the weak".

We will continue working with our partners in order to ensure that the United Nations and the multilateral system as a whole is best positioned to respond to the complex challenges of today's world. I thank you, Madam President, for convening today's debate.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Madam President, for organizing this debate. I would like to welcome the participation of the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly.

The international multilateral order is currently being undermined by those who support the idea that might makes right. The idea that an international system based on rules is the best way to guarantee our security and our prosperity is no longer obvious to everyone. The challenges that the international system faces nevertheless require collective responses. That is true for economic, development and health issues, or indeed when it comes to the fight against climate change. France is deeply committed to a multilateralism that is based on international law in all its dimensions, including human rights law and humanitarian law. That is the best response to these common challenges.

The reform of multilateralism naturally requires a revitalization of the General Assembly, constant attention to multilingualism and vigilance in the face of the risks posed by disinformation and the attitude of certain States towards peacekeeping. In this context, the Security Council remains the cornerstone of the collective-security architecture.

I wish to strongly reaffirm that France is in favour of reforming the Security Council, as the President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron reiterated at the General Assembly this year (see A/77/PV.4). We support the enlargement of the Security Council to take into account the emergence of new Powers that are willing and able to assume the responsibility of a permanent presence in the Security Council. France therefore supports the candidacy of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan to seats as permanent members. France also wishes to see a stronger presence of African countries among the permanent members and among the non-permanent members. An enlarged Council could have up to 25 members, which would make it more representative of today's world, while preserving its executive and operational nature.

France calls for the new round of intergovernmental negotiations to produce concrete and substantial results. This implies that we now move forward based on a text.

While a permanent member of the Security Council is waging a war of annexation in violation of the United Nations Charter, many of us are calling for a framework for the veto to strengthen the Security Council's ability to fully assume its responsibilities. In this spirit, France, along with Mexico, proposed, as early as 2013, that the five permanent members of the Council voluntarily and collectively suspend the use of the veto in the case of mass atrocities. This voluntary approach does not require a revision of the Charter but just a political commitment by the permanent members. We call on all States Members of the United Nations to support this initiative, which has already received the support of 106 of them.

Let me conclude by quoting President Emmanuel Macron who, before the United Nations General Assembly, stated:

"[M]ultilateralism ... is about the rule of law, about interaction between peoples and about equality for us all. It is what will enable us to achieve peace and overcome our challenges" (A/72/PV.4, p. 8).

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The world today is undergoing major changes unseen in a century, and the world economy, international security, geopolitics, energy, environment and global governance are all facing daunting challenges. The international system, with the United Nations at its core, is both carrying higher expectations and facing unprecedented pressure. How can multilateral mechanisms better tackle threats and challenges? What direction should multilateralism take? These are questions on the minds of all those who care about the well-being and future of humankind.

The essence of multilateralism is that international affairs are jointly handled by all through consultation and that the future and destiny of the world is jointly held by all countries. First of all, we must recognize that the world is facing various challenges today, not because the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter have become obsolete, but precisely because they have not been effectively implemented, not because multilateralism itself has gone wrong, but precisely because the essence of multilateralism has not been truly practiced.

True multilateralism means the world is one family and that humankind has a shared destiny. All countries should strengthen their unity under the United Nations banner to achieve common development, safeguard common security and build a shared future. Seeking artificial decoupling is neither desirable nor feasible. Drawing lines based on ideology and forming camps and small exclusive circles targeting certain countries run counter to the spirit of multilateralism and will only push the world towards division and confrontation.

True multilateralism means maintaining the international system with the United Nations at its core, safeguarding the international order based on international law and defending the basic norms of international relations based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. International rules should be based on international law and formulated by all, rather than unilaterally developed by a few and imposed upon the international community, not to mention exceptionalism and double standards. The so-called rules-based international order is ambiguous and does not represent the common will of the international community.

True multilateralism means acting together to achieve win-win cooperation. The United Nations should proceed from common challenges and give priority to

the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, so as to ensure that all countries, in particular developing countries, benefit fairly from multilateral cooperation. The United Nations should be a platform for dialogue and cooperation, and no country should base its policy towards the United Nations on strategic gaming or unilaterally seek monopoly at the cost of other countries' interests.

China has always firmly upheld and practiced multilateralism. During its presidency of the Council in May 2021, China proposed convening a high-level Council meeting on safeguarding multilateralism and the international system with the United Nations at its core to promote the reaffirmation of all parties' commitment to multilateralism and to build consensus on its use to tackle pressing global problems and ensure a greater role for the United Nations and the Security Council in international affairs. Not long ago, when meeting with Secretary-General Guterres, President Xi Jinping highlighted that China would continue to uphold genuine multilateralism and firmly support the work of the United Nations.

The Security Council is at the core of the United Nations collective-security system and is an important platform for translating the ideas of multilateralism into actions. At present, it is the shared expectation of the general membership of the United Nations for the Council to better fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the United Nations Charter. In this regard, China would like to share a few observations.

First, in terms of improving the unity and cooperation of the Security Council, no matter how profound the differences are, Council members should respect each other, hold fast to dialogue and consultations, accommodate each other's concerns to the greatest extent possible, and avoid stoking division and confrontation. No matter how complicated the challenges are, it is always our greatest responsibility to stay united and work together to maintain international peace and security.

Secondly, we should always aim for the political settlement of disputes, since pushing the Council to invoke Chapter VII of the Charter or to resort to sanctions or other coercive measures is often not as effective as it should be. The Council should make greater efforts to make use of negotiation, good offices and mediation, and the role of regional organizations

in conflict prevention and resolution should be fully leveraged. Existing sanctions regimes should also be reviewed, updated or lifted in a timely manner in the light of developments on the ground.

Thirdly, in order to focus on resolving the root causes of problems, the Council cannot be satisfied merely with daily crisis management. It should also take comprehensive measures based on the causes of hotspot issues to help the countries concerned improve governance, achieve sustainable economic and social development and fundamentally eliminate any fertile ground for conflict by focusing on employment and improving livelihoods, thereby promoting peace through development.

Fourthly, we must continue to improve the working methods of the Council. The most pressing need in that regard is systematic changes to the penholder system and the unjust and unreasonable situation whereby for too long a select few permanent members of the Council or political blocs have served as penholders on a majority of agenda items. Through the creation of co-penholderships, jointly held and regularly rotated among permanent and non-permanent members, the voices of small and medium-sized countries, among others, could be enhanced with regard to the Council's agenda.

The problems in the Council epitomize the systematic flaws in our global governance. It will be imperative to comprehensively advance reforms of global political, security, economic, financial and trade governance; enhance the representation and voice of developing countries in global affairs; and promote the development of a more just and equitable global governance architecture. China supports reasonable and necessary reforms of the Council, with priority given to increasing the membership of developing and independent countries, including small and medium-sized countries, thereby correcting the imbalance of its composition. Africa's unique demand for redressing the historical injustice done to it should be fully respected and special arrangements made to comprehensively address its concerns and effectively enhance its representation and voice.

The General Assembly mandated the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiations mechanism on Security Council reform, which is the only legitimate channel for all Member States to engage in equal consultations and in-depth discussions on Council

reform. The Council should not encroach on the mandate of the Assembly or interfere with the work of the intergovernmental negotiations. Member States should continue to conduct in-depth discussions on various reform ideas and proposals in the intergovernmental negotiations in order to seek a package solution that accommodates the interests and concerns of all parties. We should aim to reach the broadest possible political consensus to ensure that reform brings about progress, rather than regression; upholds the interests of the broader membership, rather than of just a few countries; and strengthens the role of the Security Council rather than weakening it.

Mr. Kimani (Kenya): I thank Mr. Jaishankar for convening this important debate and congratulate India on ably steering this year's final presidency and on the sustained excellence of its delegation's diplomatic efforts over the past two years during which we have both been non-permanent members of the Council. I also thank the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their contributions to this debate.

As the concept note for this meeting makes clear (see S/2022/880), the need for reform of the United Nations, including the Security Council, has been repeatedly embraced by our leaders. In declaration after declaration, they have stated their commitment to changes that can enable multilateralism to be fit to meet the most urgent challenges. Regrettably, those changes have not been forthcoming. There are many different reasons for our lethargy and even resistance to change, but the most important one is the defence of the present global balance of power as reflected in our institutional arrangements. That balance — or rather imbalance — between States and peoples is often the very cause or an important driver of the very challenges that we need to solve. From climate change to the inequities and inequalities of the global financial and trading system and the abuse of military might contrary to international law, we are witness to the impunity of those with more power over those with a deficit of it.

We can also agree that there are serious deficits in the balance of responsibilities and the balance of consequences. In the case of the former, those charged with the most responsibility and given commensurate power in the multilateral system are failing to discharge their duty individually and collectively. In the case of the latter, as with the effects of climate change, those who do not cause the problem are often the ones who

suffer most from it. Those imbalances were built into the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions at the end of the Second World War, with those occupying the commanding heights given responsibility to the collective. Almost eight decades after the founding of the United Nations, they sometimes try to balance their worldwide interests and their responsibilities. But as the challenges grow, fed to no small extent by their pursuit of gain, they are unable to solve them and their appeals to collaboration ring hollow.

As a result of those imbalances, the world's confidence in our multilateral institutions is low and falling rapidly. In a visible manifestation of that unfortunate trend, we are witness to peacekeeping missions mandated by the Security Council facing heated popular protests about their perceived ineffectiveness in multiple countries. We cannot help but compare that to the worldwide enthusiasm for the football World Cup, which is under way as we debate today. There is little doubt that such passion is fed by the perceived fairness of the rules. All teams must submit to the will of the referee, who is neutral. Despite our agonies about referee decisions against the team we support, we ultimately respect the outcome of the match. The United Nations needs to become a referee whose stature is equal to that of the men and women serving that function in Qatar. The question now is what is to be done. To that end, I will make four proposals for consideration by the membership.

First, we need a stronger referee, as reflected in our regard for the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. For all who frequently praise a rules-based order, we urge commensurate praise for a stronger referee. In regard to that, I would like to point to Kenya's statement on 26 October this year during a discussion on the integrity of the Charter of the United Nations (see S/PV.9167). As we did then, we urge adherence to Article 100, which protects the Secretary-General and United Nations staff from external influence and instruction so that they can speak truth to power in defence of the letter and spirit of the Charter. The Secretary-General must be fully on the side of the Charter and should fully observe its Article 99 without regard for the approval or disapproval of any State or party.

Without overdoing the parallels with the World Cup, our second recommendation is that we should strengthen our referee by changing the way the senior ranks of United Nations funds, agencies and specialized agencies are chosen. We can no longer have

major institutions whose leadership is the exclusive preserve of a few Member States. Such practices sap confidence in those institutions by offending our sense of fair play, since many of their shortcomings — fairly or unfairly — are often laid at that door.

Thirdly, we must strengthen the links among the Security Council, other United Nations bodies and regional arrangements. Strong regional mechanisms have increasingly played a key role in preventing the escalation of conflicts and in their termination in the Security Council. We commend Africa's Peace and Security Architecture and its deployment of multilayered good offices — from the role of peers, the Chairpersons of the Union and the Commission to the Panel of the Wise and the regional economic communities. As Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, Kenya has facilitated productive meetings between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. Those meetings have produced important recommendations that now need to be implemented. Kenya's role for the past two years as the informal link between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission has strengthened our conviction in the immense potential good that can be realized by their cooperation. Change should start with the Council's openness to the Commission's recommendations and complementary role.

Fourthly, we must focus on the substantive and procedural reform of the Security Council. We welcome today's expressions of support for the expanded membership of the Council and look forward to progress in realizing the changes needed, which must take into account Africa's historical exclusion and the level of attention that the Council pays to its conflicts. One extra seat among permanent members for Africa will not do. We fully align ourselves with Africa's Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration of 2005 and want the membership to understand that Africa — and the other members that are in solidarity with it — will insist on its position being met if reform is to move forward. Africa will no longer accept a junior position in global affairs. We will not accept skewed numbers. We will not accept imbalances when our security is at stake. Listening to the many fine ideas that were shared today, we are in particular agreement with the observation shared by the representative of Brazil, who said that the New Agenda for Peace must include Security Council reform if it is truly to offer a new chapter for multilateralism.

For lack of time, I will end by emphasizing the need to change the existing practice of penholding in the Security Council. Existing penholders often do a commendable job. However, a strong perception that they use the pen to sustain the history of its use to pursue national interests is almost inevitable, even when that is not the case, not least because of our increasing ability to inject misinformation and disinformation into the popular discourse. The immediate reform to address that issue is to ensure that all penholders are sensitive to that reality. Existing penholders should be subjected to a review by members of the Council and changes should be made. In addition, we urge that all new files from Africa have one of the three African members of the Security Council, or the collective, as penholders during their terms. That will better enable members who are linked to the African Union's Peace and Security Architecture to draft mandates and statements that are more in keeping with the required solutions and to enjoy greater confidence among African members and our citizens, whose security is directly at stake. It also means that African States seeking membership will need to have the competencies and resources required to be an effective penholder.

I conclude by reaffirming Kenya's commitment to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, as applicable to all Members, in all situations.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the fact that India proposed to hold today's debate during its presidency in order to collectively seek new and better ways for the multilateral system to meet current demands and the challenges ahead. We thank the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their statements.

It is up to us, the States Members of the United Nations, to preserve and protect what has worked and reform everything that has not yet enabled us to achieve the legitimate aspirations outlined in the Charter of the United Nations and the vast legal and institutional framework of global governance. A superficial approach might suggest that we face an issue of institutional structure and that reform of the Security Council would be the answer — and even perhaps the solution — to the monumental challenges faced by the United Nations system. However, a more thorough analysis compels us to make a harsher and more accurate diagnosis.

First, we must recognize that the multifaceted crisis that afflicts us is the result above all of the loss of trust in multilateralism's ability to respond to the countless situa-

tions that affect us all and to create expectations of swift and effective solutions. That loss of global trust is reflected in the increasingly frequent use of unilateral decisions that in many cases seek to channel people's frustration and despair towards alleged solutions that, due to their simplicity, may be attractive but are not very effective. Reassured by societal support, some States have committed flagrant violations of their political and legal commitments and have withdrawn their support from the multilateral institutions to which they made those commitments. At such times, it is impossible to talk about reforming multilateral governance without highlighting the urgent need to address the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic, which disproportionately affected international economies and markets. Increasing inequalities among countries make it even more urgent to reform the international financial system and move towards a more inclusive, equitable and fair model if we truly want to leave no one behind.

A new debt crisis is upon us. At least 54 countries are extremely debt vulnerable and in need of a larger share of the International Monetary Fund's special drawing rights. Furthermore, the debt moratoriums and debt service suspension initiatives launched by the Group of 20 and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have failed to provide genuine support to the most affected countries. As a result, fewer resources are allocated to economic and social development, and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals is already being rolled back. The picture has been made even more bleak by hate speech and unilateral sanctions, whose adverse effects often impact the most vulnerable. On the other hand, we must not forget that some of the situations that we inherited from colonial times, such as regional conflicts, religious-based wars and ethnic rivalries, were able to find avenues for their solution in an unprecedented context of institutional cooperation — the multilateral system.

It must also be acknowledged that current overall public opinion makes no distinction among the various entities of the multilateral system or what actually prevents the Security Council from better fulfilling its responsibility. The United Nations and the institutional architecture as a whole are perceived by many as sclerotic and condemned to irrelevance. That perception, legitimate or not, is worrisome. Against that backdrop, it is naive to think that merely adding more Member States to the Council, and consequently more permanent members, would magically generate the consensuses that the Council needs to fully discharge its mandate.

As we stated in an open debate under our Council presidency in November 2021 (see S/PV.8906), although the Security Council is the organ tasked with dealing with threats to international peace and security, the United Nations system as a whole has a direct and indirect impact on the maintenance of peace. The relationship between sustainable development and the rule of law is undeniable. It is clear that the success of the Security Council in discharging its responsibilities in accordance with its mandate therefore depends largely not only on non-abuse of the veto by its members, but also on the success of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice in fulfilling their own mandates, in conjunction with the work of the Secretary-General. It is therefore necessary to create the social and economic conditions conducive to a truly sustainable peace.

If the Security Council were to remain similar to what it is today but with more members and perhaps more vetoes, it would not be capable of truly acting on behalf of all the Member States of the United Nations, as stipulated in paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. A reform focused on increasing the number of permanent members is contrary to the principle of the legal equality of States. What is required is a reform that allows more countries, not fewer, to participate in the Council. Can we ignore the fact that nearly 70 States have never been members of the Security Council?

Mexico supports and will support proposals that consider an increase in the number of seats for elected members, through periodic elections — with term limits — and under new modalities. For example, mandate terms could last for longer periods and immediate re-elections could be considered. As in any democracy, those who serve on the Security Council must submit to periodic elections in the General Assembly in order to ensure genuine accountability. Undergoing periodic elections is the true test of accountability. And in any case, the Assembly remains the only organ for debating and analysing that reform.

Mexico believes that we can move forward as long as we consider our collective interest and not just the interests of a few. The best way to do that is by conducting good-faith negotiations aimed at drafting a text that reflects in a balanced manner the agreements reached and takes into account every aspect of reform, as outlined in the resolutions of the General Assembly. That approach — and no other — has been the method

that has enabled the United Nations to establish landmark treaties and agreements that have transformed the world.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Let me thank you, Madam President, as well as your team, for organizing today's important debate. I also thank Secretary-General Guterres and President of the General Assembly Kőrösi for their thoughtful remarks.

Multilateralism brings together collaboration, inclusion and solidarity, which, together with diplomacy, are central and essential to our collective efforts for peace and security in the world. At a time when key principles of the rules-based international order and essential instruments of international cooperation are being challenged, we believe that strong and effective multilateralism, based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and justice, is indispensable for securing peace, stability and prosperity. Over decades of efforts and dedication, we have together agreed to build a global security system based on key principles, such as the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States, the peaceful resolution of disputes, the protection of human rights, sustainable development and solidarity. A genuine commitment to multilateralism and joint efforts have contributed to holding that remarkable system together. Our biggest challenge today concerns our ability to maintain, reform and adapt the system to changing times and keep it effective. As we know very well, that is not a given and requires continued dedication and sustained efforts.

Unfortunately, as we have witnessed several times, multilateralism is not always synonymous with success. We can see that when the rise of nationalism and authoritarianism undermines effective decision-making. And we can see it when self-centred, narrow interests prevent this very organ from acting and discharging its responsibilities. As a result, many conflicts remain unresolved — in Syria, Yemen and Myanmar to name only a few places — with thousands of civilians and entire communities suffering. That only highlights the limitations and the grave consequences we see when States act only in their own interests.

In particular, the aggression in Ukraine has transgressed all our principles and rules. It has disregarded the Charter, breached international law and broken the promise of the peaceful settlement of disputes. It has challenged multilateralism to its core

and shattered the desire of nations to work together in peace and for shared benefits. That is why it has been crucial that in the face of a Security Council paralysed by a blatant conflict of interest, the General Assembly has responded decisively by confirming the sound moral ground of a world that is not ready to condone aggression or accept the annexation of territory by force. That response, together with the veto initiative, has confirmed the necessity for strengthened cooperation among the main organs of the Organization and has contributed to revitalizing and empowering the General Assembly, the main deliberative body of the United Nations. That has clearly shown the imperative of improving the functioning of the Council and its ability to take action, remain credible and act on behalf of the entire United Nations membership.

Albania supports comprehensive reform of the Security Council in order to make it more effective, transparent, democratic, representative and accountable. As we all know, one of the key issues affecting the work and efficiency of the Council remains the use — or, better, the misuse — of the veto. In that respect, Albania supports the efforts to restrain the use of the veto, such as the French-Mexican initiative regarding cases of mass atrocities, as well as the proposals contained in the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct regarding Security Council action on genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Owing to their nature and global scope, the serious and manifold challenges of our time cannot be addressed by countries separately. The traditional challenges and risks to peace and security, amplified by new threats posed by climate change, pandemics, cyber attacks, new types of weapons, non-State actors and terrorist groups or mercenaries, do not affect one country alone. They transcend borders. In order to prevent the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as to properly address threats linked to cyber warfare, biotechnology and artificial intelligence, we must therefore join hands to act together and find common solutions. We therefore need to rethink the future of United Nations operations so that they are fit for addressing the challenges, old and new. In that regard, we support the Secretary-General's call for a new agenda for peace while recalling that regional organizations can also play a key role in preventing and addressing crises.

For Albania, preserving the values of multilateralism and international cooperation that underpin the United Nations Charter and the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development is fundamental. We cannot contemplate the erosion of the values enshrined in the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We cannot undo what all of us together have meticulously built in our common interest to create a more stable, fair and peaceful world for today and tomorrow. We must not allow the United Nations system to lose its power and capacity to save lives and help those in need and to become ineffective, corroded by institutional sclerosis or ideological infighting. We must not let multilateralism become a stumbling hot-air balloon.

We need and want a more responsive, effective and accountable United Nations that can deliver better and adapt to global challenges, an Organization that strives for the full enjoyment of human rights everywhere, especially by all women and girls, empowered and in all their diversity. In our view it is the only way to respond to our current and future challenges and invest in a better future for all.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I thank the Indian presidency for convening this meeting. We also thank the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their briefings. They have both deftly illustrated the changing nature of our multilateral system, one that has served us well for more than 75 years.

Many of the problems that we face today can be solved only through multilateral cooperation. Yet multilateralism and multilateral institutions are under pressure. As a small State, Norway feels that acutely. In these turbulent times, we need a well-functioning and well-regulated international community where small and large States cooperate to find common solutions. Defending and strengthening the international rule of law and multilateral cooperation is a core priority for Norway, and we have had the privilege of doing that from our seat on the Security Council for the past two years. While some may look at the Council and see only challenges, Norway sees a Council with a vital role in upholding international peace and security and a significant, if often underutilized, capacity for preventive diplomacy and early action. It is from that perspective that Norway will continue to support the ongoing General Assembly discussions on comprehensive reform of the Security Council. Yet to make the Council more effective, transparent and accountable there are steps we can and must take now that do not require amendments to the Charter of the United Nations. Let me outline three musts for Norway.

First, the Security Council must hear from more, and more diverse, voices. We need to create a more inclusive multilateralism with a Council that is more representative. We have already seen the vital role that the three African members of the Security Council (A3) play, and we commend them for voicing strong African positions in the Council. In a comprehensive reform, Norway staunchly supports increasing the number of permanent and non-permanent seats for Africa, but we must also work now to ensure broader ownership of Council decisions and products. We therefore support the A3's request to be penholders or co-penholders on African dossiers. We encourage the A3 and indeed all 10 elected members to approach relevant permanent members for a more active role on files that concern them, and we encourage the permanent members to welcome that constructively.

Secondly, the Council must be more in touch with the direct impact of its decisions on the lives of people on the ground. The Council should involve more diverse civil-society briefers, including women human rights defenders. That should be done in a systematically inclusive, safe and meaningful way. The shared commitments on women and peace and security have paved the way for that work. The Council should also draw more regularly on the expertise of human rights institutions and capacities within the United Nations system to detect situations that can develop into major security crises. Similarly, the Council would benefit from more informal situational-awareness briefings from the Secretariat and more visiting missions by the Council. In that regard, we see great potential for impact through joint visiting missions, including with the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council.

Thirdly, the Council must be more connected to the rest of the multilateral system. The Council cannot resolve all challenges alone. We welcome the vital role the General Assembly has played this year through Uniting for Peace, adopting and successfully implementing the veto initiative, and continuing work on the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct. There must be greater accountability and transparency around the use of the veto. The Council should better align its work with that of other parts of the United Nations such as the Peacebuilding Commission and with vital regional bodies such as the AU. It should also be more vocal in its support for the good offices of the Secretary-General. The very hallmark of multilateralism is to commit beyond one's own self-interest. Let us all use this occasion to recommit today.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I congratulate India on its initiative in convening this important debate, which has given us an excellent opportunity to mobilize our ideas with a view to reaching a critical mass that will enable us to shape our common future within the multilateral system. I thank the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their enlightening guidance for our debate.

The United Nations is a great idea, a fantastic experiment. I would not dare to imagine the world without the United Nations. It would undoubtedly resemble a vast hunting ground where nations are either the hunters or the hunted. One might wonder whether in some respects we are not approaching that bleak image. But regardless of that, thanks to the current United Nations system, we have an international order founded on rules. We have a broad architecture of peace and collective security. We have the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other road maps. The fact is that we have tools that are far from deficient. The question is how to make them more relevant, efficient and appropriate. How do we reform our Organization to make it more effective in providing security and dignity to the peoples of the world?

We should always remember that the United Nations was created with the clear purpose of saving future generations from the scourge of war, as is stated at the beginning of the Charter of the United Nations. This was the brilliant idea of the victors of the Second World War, who were joined by some 50 other States in San Francisco in adopting the Charter, which today forms the bond that holds our coexistence together. More than 75 years later, the world has completely changed. The international context has completely changed. The geopolitical landscape has completely changed. The nature of warfare has literally been transformed. Technology has completely changed our daily lives. Yet the structure of our institutions remains essentially unchanged, especially with respect to our collective security.

The democratic values demanded and promoted by most States at the national level have not yet been translated to the global level in the composition and functioning of the main centres and epicentres of the current international order. It is as if democracy were good for States and unsuitable for international organizations with a universal vocation.

To meet the challenges of the future, our security architecture should reflect current and future realities. We need to update our international institutions, our

mindsets, our perceptions of sustainable peace, shared prosperity and living together. We need to reinvent solutions to contemporary threats, including climate change and the insecurity of cyberspace. We must address the crisis of international solidarity that fuels the underlying economic, humanitarian, health, climate and food crises. We cannot meet these challenges of the present century with the tools of another century.

A continent like Africa, the second-most populous continent, which is estimated to account for at least a quarter of the world's population by 2050 and which today accounts for about 70 per cent of the Security Council's agenda, has no permanent seat where its important issues are decided. Similarly, other nations have legitimate claims to a permanent seat at the main and decisive table of the Security Council. Let us put aside this distressing fact. We are convinced of the urgency to act in order implement three fundamental concepts that we believe will make the multilateral system for credible and inclusive.

First, we must reform the Security Council without delay. It must be representative of today's reality and of current and future challenges. As an African, I hope that this reform will give priority to the African common position and its legitimate claim, as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

Africa will not wait indefinitely for the convulsions of an intergovernmental reform process that to our peoples appears to be an insurmountable stumbling block. As President Ali Bongo Ondimba recently recalled at the General Assembly rostrum (see A/77/PV.6), Africa will wait no longer. At the time of reckoning, we will remember every instance of support, but also every show of indifference and every manoeuvre to keep Africa as a mere power play.

Secondly, we need to redefine our rules and mechanisms to adequately deal with the evolution of insecurity and terrorism. As far as rules are concerned, we must ensure inclusiveness and solidarity and leave no room for double standards, including the policy of solidarity with variable geography. Furthermore, we must deliberately tackle the root causes of conflicts and crises. In terms of our mechanisms for action, our response must be robust, when needed, and proportionate to the challenges on the ground.

Thirdly, we must build a new social contract, a new global compact between generations, between the rulers and the ruled, between the global and regional

spheres, with a special focus on youth, women, civil society and the private sector. In that new social contract for the future, bridges must replace walls everywhere. Education must push back the shackles of ignorance and intolerance everywhere. Multilateralism must prevail over unilateral postures. And the logic of dialogue must always prevail over antagonism.

It is an illusion to think that humankind will survive with bubbles of security and prosperity surrounded by an ocean of insecurity and poverty. The inevitable alternative to peace and prosperity for all will inevitably be the endangerment of all and collective decay. We must make it our priority to build a shield of actions and initiatives to guard against and prevent, within and between the nations of the world, any predation of resources, any predation of dignity and humanity, in order to restore to the peoples of the world their aspirations for security, prosperity and greater freedom.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize our need to respond to present and future generations. We owe them a response that is commensurate with their fears, their needs and their legitimate aspirations to live in peace with enriched prospects. That response cannot wait any longer.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank India for the choice of topic for today's debate.

The world is going through difficult times. Crises are on the rise and international security is deteriorating. The stance of a group of Western States to preserve their monopoly and privilege in the world is undermining trust in international institutions as organs for determining collective interests, as well as trust in international law, as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, and in the United Nations-centric model of the world as such. That did not start in February 2022.

It is obvious that the future world order is being decided today. The alternatives are clear: it is going to be either a world order with a single hegemon that establishes rules that only it finds beneficial or a democratic, equitable, multipolar and United Nations-centric world free of blackmail, dominance, intimidation of the unwanted and neocolonialism. It is clear that the main beneficiaries of this obsolete system are not happy with the latter option. In trying to resurrect the unipolar model under the slogan of the "rules-based

order”, the West is drawing dividing lines everywhere and is seeking to expand its influence into more regions of the globe.

The Ukrainian crisis, which the collective West is desperately trying to blame on our special military operation, which began on 24 February, is only one of the elements of this multidimensional crisis that the world had been heading towards for a long time. It is a systemic crisis, the preconditions of which formed gradually over the course of two or three decades. Having built up NATO’s absolute right to expand to the detriment of the principle of indivisible security, Western States have brought the European continent to the brink of a confrontation that could set the entire world ablaze. Moreover, NATO today has a global ambition. In the run-up to the crisis, the West was unwilling to engage in sensible dialogue, and that continues to be its position.

The West is being unscrupulous when choosing its methods and means to achieve its goals. Today they have bet on the exhaustion and strategic defeat of Russia. Anyone who believes that is a stance adopted only since February is wrong. I invite them to read the report by the RAND Corporation entitled *Extending Russia: Competing from Advantageous Ground*. Although the report was issued in 2019, it gives a full account of the tools that the West is putting into practice against Russia today. And that applies not only to Russia. Pressure and unilateral sanctions have become the trademark and, indeed, the only tool of Western policy in recent years, and they serve as an instrument for coercion of the unfortunate or those who dissent.

Today we see crises not only in global security, but also in the system of international economic trade and financial relations. One need only look at what is happening in the World Trade Organization. Only the laziest person would say that there is no need to reform international financial institutions today.

We have long been saying that confrontational concepts and the rules-based order, about which we have heard much today, are being preserved as integral parts of the foreign policy strategy of the collective West. In practical terms, they are being advanced as a framework for countering key trends in global development, the democratization of international relations, and the formation of a multipolar world order. In trying to restore its dominating position and its single-handed management of global processes, the

United States of America, together with its satellites, is betting on creating a broad coalition with the aim of targeting the new main alternative centres of power.

The conceptual rules-based order is drafted based on a map of the world boiled down from complex international processes to primitive forms of the confrontation between democracies and authoritarian regimes. In the West, it is a crusade against autocracy, and its leaders are trying to involve as many States as possible in their efforts. This rules-based order, which has nothing to do with international law, circumvents universal structures and convention mechanisms, while it creates exclusive Western controls, partnerships, alliances, and summits on democracies that are intended, inter alia, to discuss key issues on the global agenda in formats that do not include countries that they disfavour, and within these closed formats — behind closed doors — they formulate their famous rules on various aspects of international life.

All of these negative trends are found in a concentrated form within the United Nations. This has been the case in today’s discussion of reform of the Security Council and how the Council is allegedly not effective. These ideas are something that we could have heard at the dawn of the United Nations, and they are something that we have discussed throughout the years of the Organization’s existence. Of course, in general, the Council and the United Nations do need to be adapted to modern realities. Without that, it is hard to imagine genuine representation, multipolarity and equality in the relations among Member States.

We see prospects for the democratization of the Security Council exclusively — and I underscore exclusively — through the expansion of representation of countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Now more than ever, the United Nations needs to be protected by responsible Member States. There is a need to rid the Organization of everything that is confrontational to restore its full membership as the platform for frank discussions where mutually acceptable and respectful solutions are found, so as to achieve an unambiguous confirmation of commitment of everyone to all of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

It was with that aim in mind that, in July 2021, the Group of Friends in Defence of the United Nations Charter was created, with Russia as a founding member, and which now includes approximately two dozen countries in its membership. The Group’s aim

is to ensure strict compliance with universal norms of international law as a counterweight to harmful unilateral approaches. We call upon everyone that agrees with this position to join it.

The task of building a genuinely multipolar world has no alternative. However, getting to that world could hardly be possible given the division between nations and States, the crisis of confidence and the build-up of the potential for confrontation in international relations. Humankind needs to learn from its mistakes. It is unacceptable for “the worst students of history”, in *Indira Gandhi’s* phrase, to shamelessly try to impose solutions that only suit them on everyone else.

We must all be aware of our shared responsibility in creating the conditions for the safe and harmonious development of future generations. We must clearly understand that the emergence of a genuinely inclusive multilateralism, the establishment of a polycentric world order and the reform of the United Nations are interrelated processes. It is necessary simply to do away with phobias, stereotypes and all geopolitical games to listen to and respect the one another’s interests and red lines — and not just when things have already gotten to the point of conflict, but when the warning bells are ringing. Russia was and remains ready to do that, and we expect others to do the same.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after four minutes.

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

Mr. Zardari (Pakistan): I would like to start by congratulating you, Madam President, on India’s assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month.

We are at the United Nations in our capacity as Chair of the Group of 77 and China to continue to pursue an extensive agenda for the developing world based on multilateralism. I am proud to say that with Pakistan as Chair of the Group of 77 and China and Egypt as President at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27), we saw a victory for multilateralism, for the developing

world and for climate justice, with the addition of “loss and damage” to the COP 27 agenda and the commitment to establishing a loss and damages funding facility.

There are indeed many benefits of multilateralism, and they are quite evident. Today’s open debate gives me the opportunity to comment on and respond to the concept note (S/2022/880, annex) and the related questions circulated by the Indian presidency of the Security Council.

In our complex world, which is confronted by multiple threats and challenges, inclusive multilateral processes within the framework of the United Nations offer the most promising prospects for promoting peace and security, economic and social development, and effective responses to the several interlocking global challenges we face. It is therefore of vital importance to empower and efficiently utilize all the main organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretary General and the Secretariat of the United Nations. We must also induce equality and democracy into the structures of global financial and economic governance, especially the Bretton Woods institutions.

The General Assembly, which is the most universal global forum, must play a central role in reinforcing multilateralism and enhancing equity and justice in international relations. The world must also turn its attention away from pursuing narrow national ambitions and, first and foremost, confront, collectively and multilaterally, the existential threats that the human race faces, whether it is in the shape of the coronavirus disease pandemic, climate catastrophe and climate change, the nuclear threat, terrorism and extremism or the increasing propensity for narrow-minded populism, authoritarianism and religious intolerance. We must confront the rise in the ideologies of hate, xenophobia, Islamophobia, populist extremism and racial and religious intolerance, which inflict discrimination, violence and even threats of genocide on vulnerable minorities in certain countries.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Multilateral solutions under the umbrella of the Security Council offer the most effective approach to promoting peace and resolving conflicts. Parties to a dispute cannot advocate multilateral processes and reform one

day and insist on bilateral avenues the next — nor, ultimately, impose unilateral solutions. Pakistan firmly believes that the major security problems, including those in our region, Madam President, can be effectively and peacefully resolved through the active involvement of the Security Council and the Secretary-General. Multilateralism must be based on universal and consistent adherence to the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations — the self-determination of peoples; refraining from the use or threat of use of force; refraining from the acquisition of territory by force; respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

Strict adherence to the principles of the Charter has become all the more essential in the context of recent and ongoing conflicts. The Council must seek to resolve conflicts and disputes, not merely manage them. It should address the underlying causes of conflicts, such as foreign occupation and suppression of the recognition of a people's right to self-determination. In accordance with their obligation under Article 25 of the Charter, Member States must implement the decisions of the Council. The Security Council must act not only after a conflict has erupted, but pre-emptively, to prevent and avert conflicts before they occur. The Council should be enabled to meet automatically, without a procedural decision, on any item that is already on its agenda if a Council member or concerned State requests. The Secretary-General should be more insistent in exercising his authority under Article 99 of the Charter to draw the Council's attention to impending threats to peace and security, and no party to a conflict or dispute should be able to refuse the Secretary-General's good offices when they are offered or reject recourse to the modalities for the pacific settlement of disputes prescribed under Article 8 of the Charter.

The Security Council should unquestionably reflect contemporary global realities. The most significant changes in those realities include the emergence of a United Nations membership now composed of 193 mostly small and medium-size States and the need for their equitable representation through expansion of the Security Council. Adding new permanent members would numerically reduce the opportunities for the vast majority of Member States to be represented on the Council. We must adhere to the principle of the sovereign equality of all, not the superiority of some. Surely we all believe that a further democratization

of the United Nations, including the Security Council and the General Assembly, is what would empower this institution and provide it with the moral authority to act. It would not serve the purposes of the United Nations to add more members to this elitist club and expand the power of the tyrannical veto. It would serve this institution to further democratize it and, as I said, to allow for the principle of the sovereign equality of all, not the superiority of some. In the past, the Security Council has been unable to act due to differences among its permanent members. Adding new permanent members would multiply the possibility of paralysis in the Security Council. The problem cannot be the solution. And surely, States with a record of not implementing Council resolutions cannot be considered worthy of consideration for any form of Council membership.

The proposal of the Uniting for Consensus (UFC) group to create 11 additional non-permanent elected seats on the Council offers the most realistic option for equitable and speedy reform. The UFC model would provide equitable representation for all Member States and regions, including Africa. Periodic elections would enhance the accountability of Council members. It would numerically and politically expand the influence and role of elected members in relation to the existing five permanent members and preserve the principle of sovereign equality.

All our endeavours to promote world order, peace and stability will come to naught unless we can realize the Charter's second objective — universal socioeconomic development. As a result of the coronavirus disease pandemic, raging conflicts and the more frequent and ferocious impacts of climate change, nearly 100 developing countries are in extreme economic distress. Pakistan has convened a ministerial conference with the Group of 77 and China for tomorrow and the day after to adopt a plan for emergency action and systematic reform of the international financial, trade and technology architectures in order to ease the suffering of a billion people in the Global South and realize the Sustainable Development Goals and environmental objectives.

Finally, in your concept note (see S/2022/880), Madam President, you call on us to advise and suggest ways and means to move the multilateralism reform agenda forward. There is an item on the Security Council's agenda left unaddressed that we believe to be a multilateral matter. If we want to see multilateralism and multilateral institutions, including the Security

Council, succeed, then surely you can aid in that process and enable the implementation of Security Council resolutions when it comes to the question of Kashmir. You, Madam, can prove that multilateralism can succeed and that under your worthy presidency, the Security Council can succeed and deliver peace in our region.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia.

Mr. Mirzoyan (Armenia): It is a great pleasure to take part in today's discussion in the Security Council and I thank my colleague, India's Minister for External Affairs, for the invitation. The Indian presidency has chosen a very timely and important topic for this open debate.

International relations, as we have known them, appear to be in transition. The global security crisis that we are all living through heavily affects the functioning of the system of multilateralism. Of course, one opinion to the contrary is that the malfunctioning of the multilateral system resulted in the situation we are facing today. The issue is like the story of the chicken and the egg. I therefore believe it is more helpful to concentrate on the question of how multilateralism should be reformed, based on the lessons that we should learn. If I were to try to define multilateralism in very simplistic terms, I would call it the ability to reach and follow commitments based on compromise and mutual agreement. If we are to find common ground, we must adhere to the universal red lines regarding what cannot be tolerated in a multi-sided approach. And those red lines are reflected above all in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations. Today's important open debate will hopefully serve as food for thought in our shared struggle to maintain and improve the multilateral system for the sake of future generations.

Armenia is firmly committed to the multilateralism anchored in the purposes and principles of the Charter, including the non-use or threat of use force and the peaceful resolution of disputes. In a world where conflicts regrettably continue to persist, a prohibition of the use of force and strict adherence to the peaceful settlement of conflicts are indispensable to the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations must remain resilient in the face of the damaging practices of imposing unilateral solutions and prioritizing violence over peaceful settlements.

Attempts to normalize the use of force in inter-State relations or to unleash wars and commit atrocities are incompatible with the core values and objectives of the United Nations and should be unequivocally condemned and rejected at all times. Strengthening the capacities of the United Nations and the Security Council to prevent and respond to such disturbing challenges is crucial to delivering on the objective of upholding international peace and security. Armenia supports efforts, including the efforts of India, to reform the institutions of multilateralism and make the Security Council more inclusive and effective in responding to the current and emerging challenges and threats to international peace and security.

Armenia has witnessed first-hand the effects of multilateralism's decline. The international community proved unable to prevent Azerbaijan's unjustified use of force against the people of Nagorno Karabakh, which resulted in thousands of dead and wounded and a new wave of displacement. The issue of the rights and security of the people of Nagorno Karabakh still remains to be addressed. The people of Nagorno Karabakh should be able to live in dignity and peace in their own homeland. The decline of multilateralism has also been manifested in the inability of the co-Chairship of the Security Council-mandated Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to fulfil its duties. One of the parties to the conflict has essentially blocked the platform's activities and has unilaterally declared that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict has been resolved by use of force, thereby preventing a potential resolution of the conflict through international mediation.

In the face of limited interest on the part of the international community, the security challenges in our region have only grown. Armenian sovereign territories have been continually under attack. The last major incident occurred in September, and we requested an emergency meeting of the Council (see S/PV.9132) to assess the situation in full and remain seized of the matter. I regret to say that the security situation has not really seen any significant improvements. Despite the calls of the international community, Azerbaijan continues to keep sovereign territories of Armenia under occupation. We continue to face Azerbaijan's growing military rhetoric, which is openly threatening our sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Two years after military hostilities ceased in Nagorno Karabakh, the issue of the return and repatriation of the Armenian prisoners of war remains unresolved. The

Azerbaijani side has continued its manipulations in order to artificially counterbalance the humanitarian issues and turn the return of Armenian prisoners of war into a bargaining chip, which is totally unacceptable and should not be tolerated by the international community. Moreover, the international humanitarian bodies, including those of the United Nations, are still unable to provide much-needed aid to the people of Nagorno Karabakh, essentially abandoning them, in stark contrast with the global pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.

Ironically, access is being denied not just to international humanitarian organizations but to people living in Nagorno Karabakh. For three days now, Azerbaijan, in gross violation of its international obligations, has been blocking movement through the Lachin corridor — the sole lifeline of Nagorno Karabakh — which is now essentially cut off from Armenia and the outside world. As we speak, the people of Nagorno Karabakh have been deprived of the right to free movement, mothers have been separated from their children and terminally ill people cannot get medical supplies and help. Even worse, in freezing winter conditions, Azerbaijan has severed the gas supply to Nagorno Karabakh. Nagorno Karabakh is facing an imminent threat of a food, energy and overall humanitarian crisis, which, if not addressed urgently, will lead to a catastrophe. In these conditions, the leadership of Azerbaijan is claiming that it is ready to provide rights and security guarantees for Armenians and that no international mechanism or presence is required. But what is happening right now shows how they actually view those guarantees. Along with Azerbaijan's refusal to hold a dialogue with Stepanakert on the rights and security of Armenians, Baku's actions testify to the fact that it is continuing to pursue a genocidal policy towards the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh.

At the beginning of my statement, I highlighted the importance of fulfilling commitments. With regard both to the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization process and the issue of Nagorno Karabakh, Azerbaijan has refused to meet its own commitments, commitments that were reached in multilateral formats. The actions, war-mongering rhetoric and maximalist approach of Azerbaijan's leaders have seriously jeopardized the chances of reaching peace and stability in the South Caucasus.

Based on our own experience, we can argue that without effective multilateralism, our world will be devoid of peace and security. We must therefore all strive

to devise better, more efficient ways of working in order to be able to prevent conflicts, genocides and other mass atrocities and focus on peaceful, sustainable development.

The President: I now give the floor to the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Mr. Yamada (Japan): Mr. President, I would like to begin by commending your initiative in leading our discussion today on this timely and forward-looking topic. I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and President of the General Assembly Csaba Kőrösi for their insightful contributions.

The credibility of the United Nations is in jeopardy owing to the aggression of Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, against one of its neighbours. The drafters of the Charter of the United Nations could never have envisaged such a situation. But that is the harsh reality, and the Council has not yet been able to stop it. It is that sense of urgency that has brought me here from Tokyo. We have to restore confidence in the United Nations. We have to strengthen the entire Organization. And reform of the Security Council is an integral part of the whole picture.

Let me focus on Security Council reform. My message is simple. Reform is possible and achievable. First, we need to take action. I am sure that most Member States believe that reform of the Council is necessary and important, but when it comes to actually starting negotiations, some say it is too early. Considering that we have been debating this issue for almost 30 years, I cannot help asking myself when we will be ready. I believe the time is now ripe. What is truly needed is not discussion for the sake of discussion, but action aimed at reform. We can immediately launch talks, with a text on the table, in the intergovernmental negotiations, so that Member States can narrow the differences in their positions. There can be no reform without negotiations. We cannot have compromise or convergence among the various positions without negotiations. We can do it, so let us begin.

Secondly, the Member States have already reformed the Security Council once and I believe we can do it again. In 1963, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1991 (XVIII), proposing an expansion of the non-permanent membership of the Council. Even though two permanent members voted against it and two abstained, all five ultimately agreed to it in order to respect the will of the General Assembly. What matters in the Assembly is each individual Member State, who collectively represent the will of the General Assembly.

The world has changed dramatically since the founding of the United Nations. The membership has quadrupled since 1945 and the issues facing the Security Council have become more complex and diverse. We need to correct the historical injustice that has meant that there are no permanent seats for African countries, even as African issues account for about half of the Council's regional agenda. We should not hesitate to update the Charter to reflect the reality of today, not of 77 years ago. The calls for reform have grown stronger this year. Some 70 Member States, far more than in previous years, brought up Security Council reform in their addresses in the general debate in September. A majority of the permanent members now support reform. I am aware that an increasing number of African leaders are now calling for Security Council reform in an ever more passionate tone. Next year will mark the sixtieth anniversary of the previous reform. The Summit of the Future will be held in 2024, and in 2025 we will see the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Those milestones remind us that the windows of opportunity are wide open.

While the General Assembly is working to reform the Security Council, the Council can do more than just wait. Council members can and should improve its transparency and efficiency by improving its working methods. Japan supports all the initiatives aimed at limiting the use of the veto, including those of France and Mexico, the United States and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. Japan also welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 76/262, initiated by Liechtenstein, which requires permanent members to face more accountability for their exercise of the veto. Japan is willing to explore further measures with Member States.

I would like to conclude by expressing Japan's determination to further contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security as a member of the Security Council, starting next month.

The President: I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Mr. Gerwel (Poland): Poland commends India for convening this vital and timely meeting. I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your statement. I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres, as well as President of the General Assembly Csaba Kőrösi, for their insightful remarks.

Poland aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

In his report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), published last year, the Secretary-General stated that "humanity faces a stark and urgent choice: a breakdown or a breakthrough." I hope that today's debate will move us closer to a positive development as we try to answer two crucial questions. How can we inject new life into reformed multilateralism? And how can we ensure that the Council reflects contemporary global realities so that it can effectively safeguard international peace and security? To provide an adequate answer, we must reach back to the core values of the Charter of the United Nations that have galvanized our actions for more than 77 years — peace and security, development, human rights and the rule of law. They are equally important and interdependent, and we cannot achieve one without achieving all of them.

Our international order has been built on those values, and all members of the United Nations have pledged to defend and respect them. We must not forsake them as we strive for progress and global solutions. We need to base our cooperation on the values of freedom, democracy and justice, in line with the Charter and driven by partnership and solidarity among nations. That is the only way to address global fragilities, foster dialogue, manage security threats and achieve our common ambition of stability and prosperity for all.

We definitely need an efficient United Nations system, especially these days. Poland fully supports efforts to reform the United Nations with a more representative, efficient and inclusive Security Council. We are open to discussions aimed at ensuring that the shape of the Council better reflects current geographic realities. However, before we proceed on the path of that ambitious reform, the members of the Council and the whole international community need to fully recognize that the current Security Council has been paralysed with regard to one of its core obligations — securing global peace — owing to the abuse of the right of the veto by one of its permanent members with regard to its own actions.

Just as the world was beginning a very complicated recovery after the coronavirus disease pandemic, Russia launched its unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal attack on Ukraine. With that act and many others that have followed, Russia has breached universally agreed and legally binding fundamental principles. It turned to force in an attempt to change today's multilateral

architecture and its rules. Russia's war on Ukraine constitutes the most serious challenge to international security since the end of the Second World War, owing to its global consequences and the challenges it presents to multilateralism. We can see clearly how its impact is spreading far beyond Ukraine and Europe, especially in the areas of food and energy security. Earlier this year, Poland welcomed the General Assembly's veto initiative resolution 76/262, which mandates the Assembly to meet automatically whenever a veto is cast in the Security Council. As the Kremlin is continually assaulting the Charter of the United Nations and abusing its veto power, we need transparency and accountability whenever such a veto is used.

We are at a crossroads of history. As the world is facing deepening twin crises in the areas of security and the environment, the need for collective solutions is particularly urgent. But our carefully crafted multilateral system is under pressure these days. The continuing geopolitical polarization may bring us back to a system of competitive bilateral alliances and political gridlock. Speaking to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, in September 2018, President Andrzej Duda clearly defined the positive multilateralism that Poland subscribes to. He said then that the world needs

“the multilateralism of equal States and free nations, not the multilateralism of usurpation and hierarchy.... States that have an advantage in terms of potential and power should not deprive others of their equal right to independence and sovereignty. Only when that equality is ensured can we fully use the potential of States for the common good and according to the rules of fair play.” (A/73/PV.9, p.22)

The principles of the United Nations are simple. We all must respect the sovereign equality of all its Members. We all must act in good faith. We all must settle our disputes by peaceful means and refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. As long as we observe those principles, the United Nations system will work. It will be able to deliver on its commitments and consequently peace, development, respect of human rights and opportunities for all will be possible.

Our obligation is to make the United Nations better prepared to meet the expectations of this and future generations, and Poland remains resolute in its support for every initiative that will make that commitment a reality.

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

Mr. AlJarallah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my country's delegation is pleased to express its utmost appreciation to the delegation of the Republic of India for its efforts in organizing today's meeting and preparing the concept note on the theme “New orientation for reformed multilateralism” (S/2022/880, annex). I also commend the presidency of your friendly country, Mr. President, of the Council's work for this month. I hope that this debate will help enhance multilateralism so that we are able to overcome the complex and multifaceted challenges that the international community is facing today.

Over the past two years, the world has seen political, humanitarian, health, food and energy crises, in addition to various challenges, all of which made the situations more complex and worse. That strongly requires us to reconsider priorities.

Those unprecedented challenges have been a difficult test for the global multilateral system. They have proven to the whole world that the need for a strong, reinvigorated multilateral system is more urgent than ever. The crises have also proven the importance of global partnership and solidarity and of upholding the fundamental values and principles of multilateralism. We must therefore re-evaluate multilateralism in order to ensure that it keeps abreast of those changes.

At the latest Group of 20 meeting of ministers for foreign affairs, Secretary-General António Guterres stated that “the international system is facing the danger of collapse” and that “multilateralism is not an option, but rather a necessity.” That prompts us to reflect on the measures that we must take in order to enable the world to emerge from the current state of confusion and to think ambitiously about a better future through multilateralism. In that context, we look forward to the Summit of the Future, to be held in 2024, as an important opportunity to reach consensus on the desired course of multilateralism.

Since the establishment of the United Nations more than seven decades ago, our work has been accompanied by a mixture of achievements and stumbling blocks. The Organization has been criticized. Member States have made proposals and remarks in order to improve the United Nations and its working methods. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the United Nations remains the most accepted, credible and legitimate multilateral

mechanism in joint international action. The Charter of the United Nations and its principles and purposes remain a solid foundation for regulating and developing relations among States.

Against that background, we must enhance all the means to develop our joint action. Reforming the United Nations must be one of our priorities. We must put forward innovative, creative ideas in order to generate the necessary momentum for the desired reform process.

Reforming multilateralism is no longer a luxury that we can do without. It is an urgent need and a historical responsibility towards our peoples. The current global challenges and crises cannot be addressed by a country or a group of countries alone. They also cannot be tackled without an effective international system based on joint cooperation, respect for the rule of law and the goal of achieving justice. Reforming the Security Council is a main pillar of comprehensive United Nations reform.

The State of Kuwait affirms its sincere desire to support genuine and comprehensive reform of the Security Council, the organ tasked with maintaining international peace and security under the Charter of the United Nations. The Council must become more capable and effective in facing challenges. It must be more representative, transparent, impartial and credible.

Today we are facing interconnected challenges. In its current form, the Security Council cannot address those challenges. We need a Security Council that is more flexible and capable of dealing with those crises. In that context, we stress the importance of effectively engaging with all Member States in intergovernmental negotiations. They must be open to consulting with all negotiation groups in a transparent and constructive manner, as the intergovernmental negotiations are the only forum concerned with that issue. We emphasize that it is important to take into account the concerns of all regional groups.

In conclusion, the delegation of the State of Kuwait looks forward to today's debate as a valuable opportunity to renew the commitment of Member States to the frameworks that govern our common action, as enshrined in the Charter. We are committed to promoting the role of the United Nations as the cornerstone for multilateral action.

The President: I will now say a few words in my national capacity.

We are obviously focused today on the urgency of reforming multilateralism. Naturally, we will each have our own views, but at least there is ongoing convergence that this cannot be delayed any further. The credibility of the United Nations depends on its effective response to the key challenges of our times — pandemics, climate change and the conflicts of terrorism.

As we search for the best solutions, what our discourse must never accept is the normalization of such threats. The question of justifying what the world regards as unacceptable should not even arise. That certainly applies to State sponsorship of cross-border terrorism. Nor can hosting Osama bin Laden and attacking a neighbouring Parliament serve as credentials to sermonize before the Council.

I thank all Council members for their contributions.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Rzayev (Azerbaijan): The United Nations is a crucial pillar of multilateralism. The purposes and principles of the Organization constitute the foundational normative framework in international relations. Since the establishment of the United Nations, a lot has been accomplished to settle international disputes, develop legal standards and obligations and restore hope in those affected by war, violence and instability.

However, as the world is becoming more divided, uncompromising and intolerant, peoples around the planet continue to suffer from conflicts, forced displacements, terrorism, violent extremism, inequality and insecurity. Policies aimed at sowing dissent on religious and racial grounds, building monoethnic societies and advocating ethnic incompatibility and supremacy fuel intolerance, destabilize societies and undermine peaceful existence.

The lack of accountability for violations of international law is among the conditions for the protraction, expansion or resurgence of conflicts.

Strengthened global solidarity, multilateralism and common efforts, with the United Nations at the core, grounded in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, are the most effective ways to achieve the goals of peace, inclusive sustainable development and human rights for all. It is imperative that all States abide by their international obligations, particularly

those relating to respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference. The international community must commit to providing support to States affected by conflict and engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The effective functioning of the multilateral system necessitates the implementation of decisions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations. Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations is clear about the obligations of States to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. The Council's lack of proper attention to the apparent disregard and misinterpretation of its resolutions containing binding demands is not a positive practice.

The case of Azerbaijan is clear in this regard. For 27 years, resolutions adopted by the Security Council demanding an immediate, complete and unconditional end to the occupation of the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan (resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993)) remained unimplemented. They were simply ignored, with complete impunity, while, for almost three decades, hundreds of thousands of people were uprooted and prevented from returning to their homes and properties.

The occupying forces of the neighbouring Republic of Armenia continued to resort to multiple armed provocations throughout the period of occupation. As a result of a large-scale armed provocation in September 2020, the Republic of Azerbaijan was obliged to launch a counter-offensive operation fully in line with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and the four

mentioned resolutions adopted in 1993. As a result, the territories of Azerbaijan were liberated from the long-term unlawful foreign military occupation.

The Republic of Azerbaijan launched a large-scale campaign aimed at rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of the conflict-affected territories. We extend the hand of post-conflict normalization to Armenia, and we call upon the Armenian side to abide by its international obligations, put an end to its illegal activities, cease territorial claims, completely withdraw its armed forces and illegal armed formations from the territory of Azerbaijan, redress the harm caused to Azerbaijan and its people, and concentrate on direct negotiations with a view to finding diplomatic solutions pertaining to inter-State relations as soon as possible.

We believe that our region has experienced enough devastation and suffering. We believe that we must use this unique window of opportunity to finally join in turning the tragic page of history and build a common positive future together, for the sake of the next generations.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on the list for this meeting.

Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.