Security Council

Provisional

Seventy-eighth year

9315th meeting

Wednesday, 3 May 2023, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Cassis		(Switzerland)
Members:	Albania		Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil.		Mr. Costa Filho
	China.		Mr. Zhang Jun
	Ecuador		Mr. Pérez Loose
	France		Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
	Gabon		Mr. Biang
	Ghana		Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
	Japan		Mr. Akimoto
	Malta		Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique		Mr. Afonso
	Russian Federation.		Mr. Nebenzia
	United Arab Emirates		Mr. Al Olama
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .		Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America.		Mr. Mills

Agenda

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

   Futureproofing trust for sustaining peace

   Letter dated 18 April 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Switzerland
   to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/283)

Accessible document   Please recycle

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

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Council, to recognize the work accomplished by the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April and to thank His Excellency Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia and his team.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Futureproofing trust for sustaining peace

Letter dated 18 April 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/283)

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to warmly welcome the Prime Minister, 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 Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Ukraine, Uruguay and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Ms. Cynthia Chigwenya, Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa; and Ms. 'Funmi Olonisakin, Vice-President and Professor of Security, Leadership and Development at King's College London.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite the following to participate in this meeting: Her Excellency Ms. Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations; and His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

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/2023/283, which contains the text of a letter dated 18 April 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Mr. Türk.

Mr. Türk: My thanks go to Switzerland for organizing today's important open debate. I am speaking from Nairobi, where I am attending the Chief Executives Board, after a visit to Addis Ababa and important discussions with the African Union there.

History offers us a warning, but also a way forward. The Charter of the United Nations was designed to futureproof the world against a repetition of the devastating wars, global recession and imperialism that preceded the Organization's foundation. Shortly thereafter, States adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, underpinning the Charter and recognizing that the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family are the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Full compliance with human rights is the best antidote to the inequalities, unaddressed grievances and exclusion that are often at the root of instability and conflict. An unwavering human rights lens and strong human rights action, based on tried and tested norms, lead us away from chaos and conflict, advance development and build trust.

Trust is the core of peaceful relations among human beings. It thrives on mutual respect and dependability, truth, justice and fair and equal treatment. Trust is also at the core of the social contract between people and the institutions of the State. People trust the authorities when they can be relied on to advance their economic, social, civil, political and cultural freedoms, as well as their right to development, and to deliver justice. Trust, no doubt, is the foundation of conflict prevention

and sustainable peace. It is indeed the comprehensive advancement of all human rights that builds trust. I have experienced that time and time again when engaging with victims, human rights defenders and refugees. It is their voices that human rights seek to amplify and bring to the table. It is therefore no surprise that human rights are essential at every stage of the peace continuum.

First, as the Security Council has acknowledged, the human rights lens provides early warning and it points to targeted preventive action. Clear indicators are crucial for detecting the drivers of conflict and addressing them. My Office is strengthening its work on human rights indicators and data in relation to peace and security, developing solid indicators on killings of and violence against human rights defenders, civil society and media personnel, as well as conflict-related deaths. That work also draws on accessing and analysing open-source information — for example, to track Internet shutdowns and other issues of relevance to early warning.

Let me take the crisis in Haiti as an example, where early-warning signals pointed persistently to the profoundly destructive impact of inequalities, corruption and exclusion on both trust and stability. The Council acted last year in relation to Haiti by adopting an arms embargo and targeted sanctions, among other responses. But more action is urgently needed now. I visited the country in February. It is dangling over an abyss. The State's lack of capacity to fulfil human rights has completely eroded people's confidence. The social contract has collapsed. The current lawlessness is a human rights emergency that calls for a robust response. There is an immediate need to support Haiti's institutions by deploying a time-bound, specialized and human rights-compliant support force, with a comprehensive action plan. The longer-term challenge is, of course, the building of robust institutions that deliver on human rights.

Secondly, when conflicts break out, the human rights perspective brings focus to their effects on people. Human rights monitoring based on reliable, objective information and analysis also helps to establish the facts. It serves to counter misinformation and narratives that foster hostility and fear. The value of human rights monitoring and reporting during and after conflicts is well recognized by the Council, including through the 11 human rights components in peace operations that it has mandated.

The latest country to move towards full-blown conflict is the Sudan. The human rights impact of the current fighting has been catastrophic. It is heartbreaking. On Monday, an air strike by the Sudanese military reportedly hit the vicinity of a hospital in the East Nile area of Khartoum. The Rapid Support Forces have taken over numerous residential buildings in Khartoum to use as operational bases, launching attacks from densely inhabited urban areas. Civilians continue to be placed at acute risk and are prevented from accessing critical supplies and assistance. In short, the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution have been trampled by both of the parties, which I strongly condemn. Trust has been obliterated. We know that the Sudan's future depends on building trust between the Sudanese people and the institutions that are supposed to serve them. Ensuring human rights, an end to impunity and participation by the population — particularly women and young people — must be the driving forces out of the current crisis, so that the Sudan can stabilize at last. Let us not forget that in 2019, the people of the Sudan rose up to claim their human rights and overthrow dictatorship, only to be frustrated again by the October 2021 military coup. Even then, the people's hope was not crushed. When I visited the Sudan in November of last year, I was moved by their courage as they worked yet again to ensure a transition to civilian governance. There was no question about human rights being a foreign or elite concept. The universality and power of the call to freedom, equality and justice was palpable, which makes the current situation all the more tragic.

Thirdly, the full range of human rights standards are equally crucial in bringing conflicts to a close and establishing sustainable peace. In particular, the human rights principles of accountability, non-discrimination and meaningful participation are essential for building and maintaining trust among people and the State — in short, to sustain peace. Accountability addresses grievances, both by establishing justice and the fight against impunity and by promoting responsive and accountable governance that serves people's real needs. Equality and non-discrimination tackle persistent inequalities, ensuring that no one is left behind. The Council has witnessed how addressing discrimination against minorities and the disenfranchised can help heal and build more resilient societies. Participation in an open civic space — importantly, by women and girls, minority groups and young people — builds deeper, broader trust in institutions. The Council has heard

many powerful testimonials of the contributions that women bring to ending violence and building peace. Their diverse voices, freely raised, bring important perspectives into a peace process on the key issues of economic recovery, security and resources — issues that extend far beyond the tendency of parties to focus on maximizing their grasp on power. Women must also participate in the implementation of peace agreements.

Let me make a particular case, on World Press Freedom Day, for the importance of press freedom and the protection of journalists in nourishing accountable governance. More broadly, any restrictions of civic space exacerbate exclusion, thereby hampering efforts to build sustainable peace and again laying the seeds for instability and unrest. By way of example, in Colombia, participation and other core human rights principles have been crucial to building trust. The Havana process included strong elements of dialogue and inclusion, which ensured that the 2016 agreements were not simply terms for a ceasefire among armed actors but also a comprehensive blueprint for a lasting peace. In January of this year, I observed the continuing efforts to make that a reality, including by addressing deep-rooted structural issues around land reform, discrimination and inequality in order to advance social and economic progress. Countries that have undergone conflict or oppression have an enormous trust deficit stemming from the often-atrocious violations that have been committed. Those harmful ruptures need to be repaired in a process that is often long and challenging. Transitional justice aims at increasing people's confidence in each other and in State institutions. In Colombia, as elsewhere, human rights and justice will be the best guides on the longer road towards reconciliation and sustainable peace.

As the United Nations prepares for the Summit of the Future, including a New Agenda for Peace, I hope that the Council and all Member States will make effective use of the trust-building potential of human rights in addressing peace and security concerns.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Türk for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Chigwenya.

Ms. Chigwenya: A few years ago, I graduated as a top-performing student in development studies and immediately secured a scholarship and an internship at a foreign-affairs think tank in South Africa. After that, it did not take me too long to find employment

with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, a German political foundation, which meant that one of the key challenges of my time — unemployment — was no longer applicable to me, and I was content. I was content until a colleague who works for the African Union insisted that I extend my skills, knowledge and commitment to the efforts on our continent aimed at achieving Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, and the Sustainable Development Goals more broadly. Of course, I met that encouragement with some resistance, as I was comfortable where I was, despite the fact that I had begun to question the extent of my contentment. To cut the story short, I later applied for the position and went through a rigorous selection process. Today I am standing before the Council as the Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa, selected by the African Union to represent the continent's five geographic regions and engage with peacebuilders across Africa.

The question that is at the core of today's open debate is how we can sustain peace, strengthen trust and peace processes and foster inclusion and participation. Harking back to my anecdote, we cannot enhance peace processes without reviewing and strengthening the institutions that urge us to safeguard advances beyond our tenure. In the year that I have been a part of the African Union's Youth for Peace Africa Programme, we proposed conducting a study on immigration and peace and security in Africa, a recommendation that was accepted and incorporated by the African Union's Peace and Security Council verbatim. We have also advocated for developing and implementing national action plans on youth and peace and security, along with other progress that has been made in advancing that agenda.

Notwithstanding the progress made — especially the adoption of normative frameworks, instruments and policies, such as resolution 2250 (2015) of 2015, which globally recognizes young people as peacebuilders, the African Youth Charter of 2006 and the Continental Framework for Youth, Peace and Security — there are several factors impeding youth participation in formal peacebuilding. The Continental Framework highlights the limited financial resources available for youth initiatives, the lack of coordination among stakeholders, the weak organizational and technical capacities for youth-led organizations and the limited evidence-based approaches, which is one of the items we will explore today.

From personal experience, I know that stereotypes that represent young people as inexperienced also limit their inclusion in processes such as conflict mediation. Preconceived perceptions of youth as harbingers and instigators of violence hinder intergenerational collaboration. In the light of those existing challenges — and amid interrogation not just of the United Nations but also of the African Union and of both organizations' capacity to resolve and prevent conflict — how best can we ensure that inclusion and participation can be attained in order to enhance positive peace?

As we gather here today, the Security Council, particularly considering its new presidency and the New Agenda for Peace, has the power to set an agenda through which existing norms can be reviewed, amended and gradually shifted. Today's open debate, which sets the direction for deliberations, is one example of that.

Secondly, ensuring that our policies are agile and our practices flexible while not relinquishing our binding principles will be of the essence as we map out the newness of the New Agenda for Peace and our approach to sustaining peace on the continent. With the war in Ukraine and conflict in the Sudan between its military factions, the Council is indeed facing challenges, but it also has an opportunity to set a course for action. My first two points allude to the potential of our gathering here today, and I hope that will remain present as we go back to do the groundwork. The following points are more specific approaches to inclusivity.

The first is that we should review the operationalization of inclusion to make it a more active, meaningful and trust-based practice, one that is not only perceptible but evidence-based and measurable. We must be able to see it in our various contexts.

The second is that we should invest in the representation of young people and youth networks within decision-making processes and institutions, and I am testament to that today. Through our deliberate efforts, young people across the globe must understand that they are not just being included but are co-creators, essential to shaping the international agenda.

The third is that we should emphasize innovation and leverage technological advances such as digitalization to combat hate speech, misinformation and disinformation. One such example is Mission 55 — Conflict in Anaka, a game that is available on Google Play and that was developed to inform and educate with conflict scenarios that can be resolved using tools that are similar to the African governance and peace and security architecture, providing for the structures, principles and processes that are related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in post-conflict reconstruction and development scenarios.

My examples indicate that including young people in the peace and security agenda does not require us to reinvent the wheel. Efforts to mitigate violent conflicts require agile policies that are able, first, to absorb and mainstream the existing initiatives; secondly, to leverage young people's existing peacemaking potential and thirdly, to promote sustainability through financial and technological support and by encouraging young people to be stakeholders in development processes.

In conclusion, although it is possible for us to become invested in our institutions, trust in those institutions is dwindling, particularly among young people, the constituents whom I represent. Many no longer believe in institutions, and the onus is on us, those who are in those spaces, to reinvent them so that they not only become inviting to young people but bring them in, making them more encouraged to participate in processes such as those where they find that they have a stake in development and in conflict resolution.

To sum up, I would like to cite the words of Martin Luther King, who said that those who prioritize peace must be ready and even more determined to organize as effectively as those who love war. We are relying on the Council's efforts to ensure that young people across the globe believe in the credibility of institutions such as the United Nations and the African Union.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Chigwenya for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Olonisakin.

Ms. Olonisakin: The message thus far has been clear. Futureproofing trust for sustaining peace requires inclusive approaches, norms that are fit for purpose and trusted knowledge on how to think about future peace. Therefore, to be sure, first of all, norms matter. So do normative frameworks that drive collective accountability and predictability and that enhance trust because they are widely owned. At the end of the day, they should define the terms on which societies can live well together and in dignity.

Secondly, knowledge that is trusted, available to all and transparently governed is an essential ingredient in futureproofing trust. At the core of all of that, however,

is an important tension that must be addressed. It is the tension between understanding our world as it should be and how it really is empirically. There is therefore a case for aligning our engagement with three important realities of our time if we are to rebuild trust and futureproof the trust that is critical to sustaining peace. The first of those realities is uncertainty. The current period of uncertainty in the world carries inherent risks. The second, which is related to uncertainty, is distance — the distance between nations, the power distance between institutions and the majority of the people in the world and the distance between leaders and those whom they lead. The third is the seeming disconnect between science and the agency of institutions and people, particularly people of the future. The question that therefore confronts us is how we proactively engage with those tensions without retreating to business as usual — that is, the technical, transactional exercise of engagement that ultimately does not build trust or facilitate any peace, now or in the future.

I believe that three interrelated factors warrant deeper reflection on our part. The first has to do with norms, science and anticipation. To be sure, norms enable us to design tools for directing the world the way we think it ought to be. But the starting point has to be to understand the world as it really is and to collectively imagine a new future for sustaining peace. Of course, there are knowns and unknowns in that regard. We know, for example, that advances in science and technology are critical drivers of war and peace for the future and that the determinants of where power lies, who has agency and how that agency is exercised are underpinned by that. But we do not know enough about how the evolution of science and technology in the future will change power and agency. We also now know, for example, that progress in artificial intelligence is leading to advances in the capacity, or capability, of systems, and that there is less advancement in humans' ability to control them.

In that context, the sheer speed of breakthroughs in science and technology is matched only by the scale of our inability to anticipate the implications for politics, society, war and peace. We therefore urgently need to develop a sense of things to come and to imagine the future of peace and war in order to avoid being overwhelmed by the sheer pace of change. For if we are overwhelmed, our agency will be easily lost, and that is the crux of the matter. Three organizations, among others, are leading the way in developing methodologies for anticipating the future of war and peace — the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA), the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at Columbia University, here in New York City. That work is timely and requires the active engagement of policymakers.

The second set of factors to consider involves bringing science and future people together. Anticipatory methodologies for understanding peace and war in the future must also seek to bring science and people together, connecting scientific breakthroughs with future people, by which I mean those who will govern the world in 2050. That will be vital if we are to circumvent the tyranny of now and the temptation to simply fix power and agency in expectation of a sequential future that concurrently succeeds the present. The reality will be different. The 10-year research agenda that I co-lead at the African Leadership Centre of King's College London and in collaboration with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Nairobi in Kenya, asks one central question. How will perceptions of peace and the State change among those who will govern the world in 2050? The reason is simple — although not that simple. Studying future people longitudinally is important in order to understand how they organize, build community and problem-solve today, and crucially, how the present technological world and society will influence their longitudinal maturity. That will enable us to understand, or at least examine, the unfolding future consciously, progressively and piece by piece through the lens of those who inevitably will govern the world in 2050.

That concept holds much significance, we argue, for futureproofing trust for sustaining peace. To be clear, the future is not a singularity or a specific point, nor is it linear. But in recognizing that our chronological thinking limits our capabilities to comprehend the complexities of the intertwined time frames of events, it is important to see future peace and war not as isolated events but as part of a broader experiential continuum. The multidimensional nature of reality will likely generate multiple futures of peace and war. That will certainly require bringing into focus the empirical reality of people and places that are often peripheral to global policy decision-making on peace and war. I think we also heard the previous briefers speak about this.

For example, in cultures that form part of the majority world, the current, past and future leadership of opinions on security, war and peace is not readily under the influence of elites that we can predict. For example, religious leaders, cultural leaders and dynamic events determine so much more than scientists and social laboratories. That is partly why the African Leadership Centre's data laboratory, among others, has collected and analysed hundreds of millions of pieces of social media data, combined with ethnographies of communities that are usually excluded, in order to observe the complex and dynamic ways that peace, development and conflict are interpreted, reimagined and reinterpreted by different people across age, gender and social status. That range of reasons is why the network of institutions I mentioned earlier — GESDA, GCSP and SIPA — argue for complementing predictions made accessible through scientific means with the use of informed imagination to anticipate a variety of future scenarios, with a view to understanding how better to prepare for change, and of course for black-swan events too.

The third and last set of factors has to do with trust between people and institutions, and we have heard a lot about that already. But that raises the question as to what that all means for institutions that will be relevant to governing the future of peace and war. That is the importance of the institution at which we are speaking today. Trust between people and institutions is needed to undergird peacebuilding. The power hierarchies between institutions and society and within institutions, whether global or regional, pose grave risks because they reinforce inequalities and maintain a dangerous inequity between the real owners of peace and the distanced beholders of peace. Despite well-articulated norms and templated technical solutions, institutions invariably deny agency to the vast majority of future people.

Already, the report of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, *A Breakthrough for People and Planet: Effective and Inclusive Global Governance for Today and the Future*, which was developed at the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, which also served as the secretariat of the Advisory Board, includes 10 specific principles of effective multilateralism, all of which together provide a framework for rebuilding trust with global majorities. I am not about to rehash them here, but it is worth noting that the report underscores the importance of an anticipated reaction, while calling also for increased transparency on peace and security, including increased investment in peace.

Without a systematic and inclusive connection between science and people, particularly the future people I described earlier and without a collective imagining about the future of peace, there will be less certainty about the agency of global and regional institutions to shift the tide towards sustaining peace in future. In order to be relevant in a future of peace, institutions must today facilitate an approach that accommodates multiple futures and enables a seamless connection between science and future people across their diversities so that they can unleash their own agency in the pursuit of peace.

Including future people in norm-development, for example, is an important element in imagining the future of peace and war, thus connecting the world as it ought to be with how it really is, empirically. Beyond regulation, part of the norm-setting task of institutions will include the facilitation of investments and intervention to make technology, including artificial intelligence, safer and peace-leaning.

Returning to where I began, futureproofing trust for sustaining peace requires the reduction of uncertainty by anticipating the future of peace, better connecting science and future people and holding a space, as was said earlier, that builds an inclusive imagining of the future. The United Nations would do well to lead thinking and policymaking about this vitally important element of futureproofing trust.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Olonisakin for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation.

At the outset, I would like to thank the three briefers for their valuable insights.

Recently, I went back to my old school to talk about foreign policy. The students asked me only questions about the war and its consequences. That made a deep impression on me. I realized how different our questions were when I was a student at that school 45 years ago, in the late 1970s. My classmates and I were convinced then that there would never be another war in Europe. Our teachers and our parents had lived through the Second World War, and they swore to us that the international community had learned its lesson.

In 1992, Francis Fukuyama announced the end of history in his bestseller *The End of History and the Last Man*. Globalization was presented there as a factor for

peace, as if the end of the Cold War and the economic interdependence would usher in a new era of peace. Yet today there is still war. How did we get here? How can we avoid being the ones who failed to react to the current crises?

Seventy-seven years ago, nations united, cemented by trust and the will to rebuild, said: never again. And yet, today there is war. Perhaps we were guilty of arrogance? We have to admit that we have not sufficiently taken account the frustrations and changes taking place everywhere on our planet. Yes, the multilateral system is under stress, but no, it is not bankrupt. The real failure would be to do nothing.

It is time for the Security Council to assume its responsibilities and to reflect on its potential for action in the face of the growing number of crises. It is time to refine our tools to restore trust and build lasting peace. That is the objective of today's debate, organized by Switzerland — to rebuild the bridges that connect us.

Where there is trust, anything is possible. International law is based on the Latin phrase *pacta sunt servanda* — agreements must be kept. That principle embodies the mutual trust of parties who pledge their word and keep it. I am convinced that if we can restore that trust, we will be able to restore long-term peace.

To achieve that, we need to focus on the areas where multilateralism has real added value. First, we must ensure adherence to a common and respected normative framework, based on human rights and public international law. Predictability, not arbitrariness, is the basis for trust. Through trust, we can aim for a lasting peace.

We will also need to consider how the Council can strengthen the foundations of a broader peacebuilding architecture, which must be inclusive of all whom the population has designated as democratically legitimate. It must also respect cultural differences and care for the historical heritage that defines us. Imposed peace is not sustainable.

Finally, trust is built on concrete facts. Science and new technologies offer us opportunities to better anticipate and understand the risks of today and the opportunities of tomorrow. We must respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century with twenty-first century solutions.

Injustices and violations of the Charter of the United Nations do not justify the entrenchment of each behind their own positions. On the contrary, let us have the courage to question and rethink the system together in order to make it better. Strengthened by that conviction, Switzerland welcomes the initiative of the Secretary-General, who next month will propose a New Agenda for Peace.

Today's debate is a real opportunity to gather ideas and proposals from Member States and to take advantage of the synergies that unite us. Trust is earned through actions, not intentions. It is in that spirit that I believe in the strength of multilateralism.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Al Olama (United Arab Emirates): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to our colleagues from the Russian Federation and congratulate them on their successful presidency of the Council last month. I wish the same to Switzerland during its presidency of the Security Council this month.

We thank Switzerland for organizing today's meeting, and High Commissioner Türk, Youth Ambassador Chigwenya and Ms. Olonisakin for their insightful briefings. We also thank the Peacebuilding Commission for its written advice on this important topic.

Too often, generations do not have a voice in our policy decisions and discussions. Yet every decision we make will have an impact on the world that they will inherit. It is our duty to be good stewards, not only to focus on current challenges but to set the foundations for lasting peace. We appreciate the emphasis in today's discussion on futureproofing peacebuilding.

The Security Council responds to crises in the here and now, but exactly how it does so has long lasting impacts on the sustainability of peace. The lives of millions of people depend on the cumulative effect of each decision we take to build peace. Accordingly, I would like to emphasize four points to inform our discussions today.

First, inclusion remains critical for peacebuilding. Peacebuilding must be both for all and by all because policymakers alone are not the sole drivers of progress. The full, equal and meaningful participation of women and the inclusion of youth can ensure that decision-making processes address actual needs.

Incorporating their input contributes to building and consolidating trust. Alignment of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts across municipal, national, regional and international spheres helps engage communities at different levels. Meanwhile, civil society actors, and those from academia and the private sector, have the potential to amplify peacebuilding efforts from their unique perspectives.

Secondly, institutional reforms must ensure that the peacekeeping architecture is fit for purpose. By strengthening the peacebuilding architecture, we can help address a broader range of long-term challenges, such as, inter alia, climate change, extremism and global public-health emergencies. This also includes linking more effectively the work of peacebuilding and financial institutions. The United Arab Emirates also looks forward to discussing the recommendations of the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism in order to preserve global public goods for present and future generations.

Thirdly, it is crucial to address hate speech, racism, intolerance, misinformation and other manifestations of extremism. These forces are threat multipliers, sowing the seeds of division. They erode the social fabric of communities in gender instability and undermine all efforts towards peacekeeping. In contrast, the promotion of tolerance and human fraternity builds mutual trust and promotes social cohesion, which are critical foundations for peace. The emergence of new, powerful technological tools that can be used to connect or divide the world makes it imperative for all of us to pursue a common approach that addresses and guides the proper use and governance of these tools. These positive uses can be seen in providing accurate, informed and reliable data. Digital tools can help counter narratives of intolerance and hate that fuel extremist ideologies and undermine peace.

That leads me to my fourth and final point. We need to harness digital and innovative technologies to build and sustain peace. Data is key. It can provide unparalleled insights into the root causes of conflict, encompassing social, economic and political factors as well. Data can also function as an enabler for stopping conflicts in their tracks by using geographical information systems to predict the outbreaks of violence and monitor ceasefires.

This speech was written by a human. But soon it may be written by an artificial intelligence agent, such as ChatGPT, or others. These technologies, which are progressing at exponential speeds have the ability to magnify peacekeeping efforts or affect them negatively. Alongside the infinite potential that these technologies have, there is also a chance that these tools can be leveraged by bad actors to manipulate public opinion and affect peacekeeping in general. It is therefore imperative that we, as a collective multilateral body, engage relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to ensure that we are able to benefit from its development.

Finally, I would like to mention that the United Arab Emirates has been a long-time advocate of anticipatory action that aims to disburse resources and drive preventive work based on credible forecasts of climate-change-induced disasters, taking every action that has the potential to make a difference. The Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All initiative could provide a significant boost to scaling up anticipated reaction. We urge the United Nations to employ early-warning systems more broadly and at scale.

Peacebuilding is not simply an effort to preserve the present. It is also a proactive step required for us to prevent conflicts before they begin, before they escalate and evolve into protracted struggles. The United Arab Emirates will continue to support these efforts in order to shape peaceful and resilient societies for future generations.

Mr. Akimoto (Japan): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on Switzerland's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the first time in your country's history. Sir, Japan highly commends your initiative on this forward-looking topic. I would also like to thank briefers for their insightful briefings.

Today trust in the multilateral system and the United Nations is being tested. Conflict and terrorism remain a threat and are exacerbated by emerging risk multipliers. What we need to ask now is whether the United Nations, especially the Security Council, has the strong will and capacity to effectively respond to these challenges.

Sustaining peace requires persistent effort. To achieve resilient peace, a wide range of actors, especially women and youth, must be able to actively participate and be agents of change in their own societies. This participation can only take place when people feel secure.

The rule of law must be upheld, human rights protected and issues resolved through dialogue. Institution- and capacity-building, especially through education, are key. Japan has been working to realize human security by investing in people. The Security Council should serve as a role model for the international community.

Let me emphasize three points.

First, the Council should oversee the implementation of its resolutions and work towards mainstreaming the women, peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas.

Secondly, the Council should deepen discussions on the rule of law, human security, the protection of human rights and conflict prevention. The Council should reflect the outcomes of those discussions in the mandates of peace operations.

Thirdly, the Council should enhance its interactions with other actors. In that regard, Japan highly appreciates the Peacebuilding Commission's (PBC's) comprehensive advice for today's meeting. By fully utilizing the PBC's advice, the Council will strengthen the functioning of the whole United Nations.

The process to develop a New Agenda for Peace is now under way. This is a historic opportunity to enhance our collective capacity to achieve and sustain peace.

Let me conclude by expressing Japan's unwavering commitment to promoting peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts in the United Nations and beyond.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): Mozambique wishes to warmly congratulate Your Excellency, Mr. President, and your country, the Swiss Confederation, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. That is an important achievement, as it is happening two decades after Switzerland became a full-fledged member of the United Nations. We welcome the initiative of Switzerland to convene an open debate under the theme "Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: Futureproofing trust for sustaining peace".

We wish to express our deep appreciation to the Russian Federation for its excellent leadership of the Council last month. We thank Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Ms. Cynthia Chigwenya, Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa; and Ms. 'Funmi Olonisakin, Vice-President and Professor of Security, Leadership and Development at King's College London. Their briefings were most enlightening.

The notion of peacebuilding is a crucial element if we need to sustain peace and stability in our countries for present and future generations. In many instances, as Council members can see, peacebuilding goes hand in hand with peacekeeping or peacemaking, one process reinforcing the other.

We have learned from our short experience that peace must never be dissociated from development. Peace must always be linked to the umbilical cord that binds it with the development dimension and the search for the well-being of the people. As we strive to build sustained peace, our efforts should be directed towards addressing the root causes of conflicts and instability, including those related to the delivery of basic services and goods to the people.

We think that countries must assist or be assisted in sustaining their peace processes through the strengthening of the resilience of their social institutions. They must be supported in their efforts to invest in internal and social cohesion.

As a peacebuilding country, one of the key lessons Mozambique has learned from its own peace processes is the importance of addressing the development challenges to prevent the recurrence of widespread violence. It is our belief that the central role of peacebuilding should be to restore trust and rebuild the State authorities and governance structures. It should mean the Government's ability to perform its basic functions for the benefit of the people.

Building trust is yet another important enabler to sustain peace and stability. That process requires an all-encompassing, inclusive approach. Globally, inclusion should guide our collective and coordinated actions to resolve the multifaceted and complex challenges the world is facing today, such as inter-State wars, intra-State conflicts, international terrorism, organized crime and climate change challenges.

In that connection, international cooperation is of utmost importance. Unilateral and distorting approaches to the worldview will not serve the cause and purpose of peacebuilding. An environment of inclusiveness, fairness and justice at the international level is important for peacebuilding to prosper around the world. In the United Nations context, that means, above all, genuine and constructive attention to the agenda of the Security Council, including its reform in order to make that organ more inclusive, fair, just and democratic.

But we also need to address the thorny issue of the reform of international financial institutions to serve the cause of international peace and security, equity and justice among nations. Private entrepreneurship is important, but narrow economic gains alone at the expense of the least developed countries and the least privileged peoples can only endanger global peace and perpetuate instability and turmoil at the world level.

In that context, an increase in overseas development assistance flows, aimed at generating greater economic growth, is, in our view, of extreme importance. If we need effective global normative frameworks for all of us, it is imperative that we be guided at all times by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Mozambique believes that peacebuilding and sustaining peace should be based on the recognition of the critical linkages among peace, security, development and cooperation.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first meeting in May, I would like to congratulate Switzerland for its very first presidency of the Security Council, an event of historic significance. Rest assured of our full cooperation. We welcome the choice of subject for today's debate, highlighting the need to build trust and sustain peace. I thank Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa and Ms. Olonisakin for their useful briefings.

(*spoke in English*)

I would not be able to continue without mentioning that today is World Press Freedom Day. As we recall the fundamental principle of press freedom and celebrate the essential role that a free press plays in promoting democracy, transparency and accountability, we pay tribute to journalists who are often threatened, harassed and attacked for their work. We also take this opportunity to think of those hundreds of millions who still live in countries in which the freedom of the press remains a wish, repression is the rule and censorship makes — or rather breaks — the news. For us, freedom and peace go together.

The multitude complex challenges that are listed in the concept note (S/2023/283, annex) have one thing in common — cooperation, and if they persist, it is because of a lack of cooperation or because the solutions provided are insufficient. Cooperation requires goodwill and genuine commitment. It requires trust. Trust is the glue that holds people and societies together. It gives institutions lasting legitimacy and helps individuals and groups remain engaged in the long and arduous process of building lasting peace. Its absence, as witnessed so many times, can result in disruption, violence and conflict. The recent tragic events in the Sudan show where the breaking of trust can lead — to a catastrophe that is tearing the country apart. The frustrating lack of progress on the political track in Libya is the direct result of the lack of trust among the main actors. As mentioned, the lack of unity among stakeholders in Haiti has left the country in the clutches of gangs.

But let us look closer to home, at ourselves, in the Chamber. We know that the Security Council will not be able to discharge its responsibilities successfully without trust, working in good faith and continued cooperation among its members. The Council succeeds every time it comes together, united in purpose to find adequate solutions to a multitude of crises. It does not succeed when the Council, unfortunately, is used as a stage for propaganda and the pursuit of narrow interests, as we note is the case with regard to a number of important outstanding issues, not least the ongoing war of aggression in Ukraine. Equally, we will not contribute to making the world a better place by refusing to recognize in the Council the link between climate change and security, denying that serious and widespread violations of human rights lead to conflicts, or shielding totalitarian regimes that oppress their own citizens and undermine peace and security in the neighbourhood and at large. The raison d'être of the Council is to lead the battle for peace and security and not be taken hostage to contemplate aggression and drivers of instability in the world.

Wars and conflict have played a significant role in shaping world history. Humankind has paid a terrible price. By learning from past mistakes and precisely to escape the cycle of violence and anarchy, we have developed institutionalized forms of cooperation through the establishment of principles and the practice of multilateralism. Since the establishment of the Charter of the United Nations, we have laid down shared norms and rules to foster trust and enable ever-growing cooperation. That is how we have collectively contributed to the advancement of humankind — through scientific discoveries, economic growth, the reduction of poverty, cultural exchanges, peaceful negotiations and increased cooperation, trade and other forms of interaction, with respect for each other.

Nothing can justify attempts to go back and break that trust in the future because someone has remained nostalgic for the past. Therefore, our ability to abide by what we have commonly agreed, with respect for international law and the United Nations Charter, by holding transgressors to account, will determine the shape of the world in the future — a world with cooperation and understanding and with shared benefits, or a world undermined by confrontation, division and conflicts. As we know, the General Assembly has been repeatedly clear about that choice. Trust is not an abstract idea. It cannot be forced and cannot be artificially engineered. Building trust in post-conflict settings and peacebuilding processes requires continued effort and investment in human capital, through inclusion and participation.

While we face a multitude of old and new challenges and look to the future with worry, we firmly believe that only good, inclusive, representative, transparent and accountable governance will be up to the task of addressing inequality, poverty, insecurity, underdevelopment and climate change, by forging a contract that is based on trust with the people and for the people. When people are heard and understood, they trust and participate. Experience has shown that respect for human rights, democratic principles and values, including the promotion of the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in society, is a better guarantee for futureproofing trust and ensuring development and sustainable peace.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, let me remind the Council of the crucial and irreplaceable role of civil society, which must always have a place at the table, including in our debates in the Chamber. Its views, often honest, may not be to everyone's taste. But there is no doubt that civil society is indispensable if we are to seriously and honestly draw closer to the truth and base our discussions on the real concerns and aspirations of people in order to make informed decisions.

Ms. Oppong-Ntiri (Ghana): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Switzerland on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. We wish you success in your first-ever presidency. We also thank the briefers for their remarks.

As Ghana has often stated and as is widely shared, the multilateral system remains the best platform for advancing norms for peacebuilding and forging global solidarity for sustaining peace efforts. We therefore welcome the focus of today's debate, which provides us with an opportunity to deepen discussions on how to ring-fence trust and preserve space for national, regional and multilateral efforts to advance peacebuilding and sustain peace.

When we look at the state of peace around the world, it is clear that we need to do more. We are living in an era with the highest number of violent conflicts since the Second World War. More than 2 billion people are estimated to be living in conflict zones, and the threats and risks of insecurity have never been greater than they are now. The possibility of a nuclear conflict is higher; terrorism has become pervasive; the effects of the pandemic persist; climate change vulnerability has worsened the plight of many; cyberthreats are undermining freedoms, societies and democracies; and the migration crisis, as well as food and energy insecurity, has degraded the human security of many. Those threats have heightened the complexities, buoyancy and density of global insecurity and exposed gaps between our agreed norms and the outcomes delivered. The credibility of our voice is being marred by the inadequacy of our will for effective actions, and those threats portend significant danger ahead unless we make deliberate and concerted efforts to address them. Against the backdrop of the remarks I have just made, we would like to share five main points.

First, it is important to sustain the interrelated work of the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights and development — if we are to succeed with the peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda. It is pertinent to embrace a cross-sectoral approach to enhance the coordination of efforts across the pillars and the many organs and bodies in the multilateral system. That can be done without hindering the unique contributions that they are expected to make in accordance with their mandates. As a Council we need to leverage the strength of other bodies, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, in deepening our understanding of specific situations and informing how our actions can better support the efforts to sustain peace in those contexts. We also believe that the 2016 twin resolutions — General Assembly resolution 70/262 and resolution 2282 (2016), which broadened the concept of peacebuilding to encompass post-conflict situations and conflict prevention both in the first place and across the conflict cycle — must be prioritized for implementation, particularly at the national and regional levels.

Secondly, a candid recognition of the realities of our time should reinforce our commitment to respecting the Charter of the United Nations, including its purpose of developing friendly relations among nations. That should also underpin our efforts to embrace dialogue and deliberate diplomatic action to build mutual trust consistent with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Through such dialogue we can avoid misunderstandings about strategic intentions while misjudgments and unhealthy competition, especially among major military Powers, can be prevented. We believe that could consolidate the kind of trust required for sustaining peace at the global level.

Thirdly, in strategically partnering with regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council can tap into the science- and data-driven approach to peacebuilding through the early identification of patterns and drivers of violence, thereby improving conflict prediction and strengthening early-warning systems. That cost-effective approach helps to improve the allocation of peacebuilding resources, and we especially recommend supporting national and regional early-warning systems such as the 2002 Continental Early Warning System of the African Union (AU) and the Early Warning and Response Network of the Economic Community of West African States.

Fourthly, it goes without saying that prioritizing efforts to address the root causes of instability is the surest way to sustain peace. We encourage further investment in non-kinetic measures in tackling the underlying causes of instability through the adoption of a multidimensional approach that empowers critical agents of change, such as women and young people, in the processes of development, conflict prevention and governance at all levels. Commitment to the implementation of the agendas on youth, peace and security and women and peace and security is a critical enabler in amplifying their voices and harnessing their contribution to that noble cause. It is equally important to leave no one behind, by embracing at the national and local level a culture of peace that among other things broadens awareness-creation and the reinforcement of traditional and new institutions that can pick up early signals of conflict and address them. That should include systems of laws and practices that guarantee the rights and human security of all citizens.

Finally, the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace provides us with a great opportunity to increase confidence and build trust towards peace. The promotion of transparency around the use of armaments, as well as compliance with rules of engagement and prioritizing the use of diplomatic tools to address evolving threats, are also useful elements to consider. Additionally, proposing new ideas for boosting relationships such as that between the United Nations and the AU, as well as integrating gender perspectives into decision-making, are all useful elements that can enhance confidence- and trust-building in the New Agenda for Peace. We strongly believe that the provision of adequate resources to the Peacebuilding Fund should be a key component of the New Agenda for Peace, since it translates into greater investment in prevention and peacebuilding. In addition to encouraging an expanded donor base to the Fund, we believe that one of the viable means of providing it with a consistent baseline of funding is through United Nations-assessed contributions. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's aspiration for an annual appropriation of $100 million to the Peacebuilding Fund from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In conclusion, Ghana believes that peacebuilding and sustaining peace are possible and can be realized if we adopt a multidimensional approach characterized by ensuring inclusivity, as well as the strategic deployment of the tools in the Charter, backed by data and science, and by demonstrating strong political will in their implementation.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): I would like to thank Ambassador Nebenzia and his team for their competent and efficient leadership of the Security Council in April. I would also like to welcome you, Mr. President, and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the presidency this month, and to pledge our full support to assisting you. Let me also welcome High Commissioner Türk, Ms. Chigwenya and Ms. Olonisakin to today's open debate and thank them for their insightful briefings.

I am particularly grateful to your delegation, Mr. President, for the attention you have given to peacebuilding from the very outset of your presidency, beginning with a request for the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on this debate on a topic as important as trust. Our discussion today provides another opportunity for further reflection on peacebuilding and the collaboration between the Council and the Commission. As I have underscored a number of times, the exchanges between the two bodies are very welcome and could in fact happen more often. Furthermore, that cooperation is necessary — even essential — in order to achieve sustainable peace in

the face of the complexity of the challenges before us. We must take the trust between the two bodies to a higher level, because it rings somewhat hollow for us to prescribe strengthening trust to the outside world when we seem unable to strengthen trust between bodies within the United Nations itself. One relevant example in that sense is the issue of transitions. Despite the difficulties in marking the precise moment when peacekeeping should be evolved into peacebuilding, the PBC can and should take primary responsibility in overseeing the process of transition from conflict to development. That would allow the Council to dedicate its attention and resources to situations of effective threats to or actual breaches of international peace and security and enable the PBC to fulfil the role envisaged for it when it was created. However, that collaboration can prosper only if the Council regards the Commission as a full partner that it trusts and values, working alongside it in a constructive way.

The Council's endeavours to promote trust in peacebuilding processes should also rely on close cooperation and greater participation on the part of subregional organizations. Their legitimacy, first-hand knowledge and cultural understanding of the root causes and contentious issues of conflicts are important assets in setting conditions that are conducive to dialogue and sustainable peace. Stronger partnerships with international financial institutions are equally relevant in the quest to mobilize resources. The Council must support inclusivity in peacebuilding processes. We believe that the participation in those endeavours of all stakeholders, particularly local leadership and women, is essential to their success. Exclusion and marginalization undermine trust and lead to resentment, which can jeopardize peace initiatives altogether.

We cannot be successful in building up trust without taking into account the views and interests of all the relevant parties. That should be a guiding principle in the Council's approach to conflict resolution and the promotion of peace, including in its own deliberations, during which different actors and points of views must be heard and understood. Moreover, it lays a sound foundation for a genuine dialogue that generates sympathy, trust and eventually peace. President Filipe Nyusi's first-hand account of the peace process in Mozambique, which we heard in March (see S/PV.9299), was very eloquent in that regard.

My delegation believes that it is imperative to seize this opportunity to also reflect on the issue of trust within the Council. Divisions among Member States have widened significantly, which has had a spillover effect on the whole agenda of the Council. The failure of the Council to address pressing peace and security issues leads to the erosion of trust among its members and erodes its credibility. In that regard, efforts to expand the tasks of the Council to areas already under consideration in other forums does nothing to enhance trust or bolster credibility. We believe that the best way to rebuild such trust and render the Council more effective is by improving its representativeness and transparency, which can be achieved only through comprehensive reform. That must be an essential element of the New Agenda for Peace. Trust is also maintained when we all play by the same agreed rules. The Charter of the United Nations and international law remain the legal basis for our action. It falls on each one of us to renew our commitment to those principles and norms aimed at promoting a trustworthy and balanced multipolar order.

Lastly, I would like to thank High Commissioner Türk for highlighting the importance of respect for human rights in strengthening trust. Let me underscore that that must include not only civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights, both within and among countries, if such trust is to be sustainable.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): I would like to begin by congratulating Switzerland on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and by wishing you, Sir, and the Swiss team all the very best for a successful and fruitful term. I also thank Ambassador Nebenzia and his team for steering our work last month. I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this timely debate on futureproofing trust for sustaining peace. And I thank our briefers for sharing their experience and knowledge with us today.

We find ourselves in times of increasing turmoil. Millions of people live in conflict-affected countries in situations in which the very foundational elements necessary for trust, both within societies and among citizens, their Governments and the international community, are lacking. The Security Council must increasingly strive to build and engender trust in the United Nations, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Respect for human rights and international law are crucial pillars for building trust between citizens and the institutions that serve them. The promotion of normative frameworks through good-faith negotiation efforts at the level of various United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, is essential. A comprehensive vision for human rights that counters inequalities,

prioritizes sustainability and offers human security must be reflected in the daily lives of individuals if we are to reinvigorate trust in multilateralism. Malta calls for further collaboration and cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the wider United Nations system in order to encourage a whole-of-system approach to peacebuilding. Enhancing synergies and the broadening of cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council will make our work more effective.

Ensuring inclusivity in peacebuilding processes is also critical to foster trust. The Security Council has called for ensuring the full, equal, meaningful and effective participation of women at all stages and levels of conflict prevention and resolution during peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements. That must be implemented and safeguarded. Inclusive peacebuilding requires adequate financing that recognizes the specific needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations, including with respect to their health, education, livelihoods, access to land and participation in decision-making. Mistrust is a precursor to conflict. Communities around the world are becoming increasingly divided by disruptive actors that stand to gain from division and polarization. We must address the rhetoric of hate, which often precedes conflict. Malta underlines that investment in early-warning systems that help identify the elements fracturing stability and eroding trust within fragile communities is critical. That is another area in which the Council can strengthen cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission, increase the gender responsiveness of peacekeeping operations and engage more meaningfully with civil society organizations and independent actors. Similarly, as climate-related security risks are a reality for many communities, particularly those in conflict, adaptation and mitigation efforts could offer entry points for peacebuilding, thereby helping to foster trust within the society.

It is our responsibility to empower communities with the tools to identify dangerous rhetoric. Media information literacy and digital literacy must also be bolstered globally in order to enable citizens to discern the truth of the information they are shown, especially in the burgeoning age of artificial intelligence. Information and communications technologies are crucial tools for peacebuilders to mobilize, advocate, monitor and report violations, raise funds and provide services. Investing in information and communications

technologies, especially among refugees and internally displaced persons in conflict-affected areas, can improve protection and increase the diversity of peacebuilding actors. However, it can also increase the risks faced by human rights defenders. Gender-responsive legislation and regulation are needed to explicitly address online hate speech, harassment and abuse, especially against women human rights defenders. The modern era continues to generate increasingly complex challenges that the Council must contend with if it is to remain relevant. In *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), the Secretary-General identifies building trust and countering mistrust as our defining challenge. If we are to achieve a real, sustainable and lasting peace, we must strive to address that challenge through a response that takes a human-rights approach and is underpinned by consistency, equality and reinvigorated multilateralism.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I join others in congratulating Switzerland on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and assure you, Sir, of our full support. I would also like to thank United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Türk, Youth Ambassador Chigwenya and Professor Olonisakin for their informative briefings.

It is fitting that the country of Jean-Jacques Rousseau begin its Security Council presidency by convening an event on the importance of trust and the social contract. That Swiss philosopher's belief that people could experience true freedom only in a society that ensured the rights and well-being of its citizens still resonates more than two and a half centuries later. And Rousseau's veneration of Government under law finds a natural home in this Chamber and the Charter of the United Nations. Trust in national and international institutions is central to their legitimacy and to the fabric of society, as we heard today. Yet that trust in both has been severely tested. We face complex and interconnected challenges today to peace, security and development. In order to overcome them, we have to rebuild that trust.

Switzerland's concept note (S/2023/283, annex) should chime with us all — inclusion is key to building peaceful societies; global normative frameworks provide the guardrails for peaceful order; and facts, truth and transparency are crucial for enabling trust. These elements are at the heart of the sustaining peace agenda.

How can we build on that? I echo and underline three themes that were mentioned today.

First, the Council and the United Nations system can do more to anticipate risks and mobilize multilateral assistance earlier. Harnessing new technologies will revolutionize the way we understand conflict dynamics, enabling us to get ahead of crises and mitigate human suffering. We should nurture the trust and cooperation necessary to realize that.

Secondly, we should use the full breadth of peacebuilding tools for more integrated and coherent responses. The Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission can support nationally led prevention strategies and empower countries to build the trust and partnerships needed to turbo-charge their peace and development trajectories.

Thirdly, and critical to building trust and sustaining peace, is our collective commitment to the women and peace and security agenda. We need to translate our commitments into action, strengthening women's full and meaningful inclusion in decision-making and in peace and development processes.

The United Kingdom is committed to working with all countries to advance nationally owned peace, security and development objectives. Let us all work — here and at home — to restore the truth and the trust needed to realize those goals.

Mr. Mills (United States of America): Let me join others in congratulating the Swiss delegation and Government on assuming the presidency at a historic occasion. My delegation looks forward to cooperating closely in order to ensure that this is a productive month for the Council. Let me also thank you, Sir, for chairing this important debate. I also want to thank our briefers for their thoughtful and very informative presentations.

I think it is clear from the interventions that have gone before me that there is general agreement among all of us that conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding efforts are critical to responding to shared security and development challenges around the world if we are to reduce the recurrence of conflict. We in the Security Council can contribute to sustaining peace — in part, as many have said, through a more ambitious and structured collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission.

The United States reiterates its strong support for expanding the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in regional settings and on cross-cutting issues, including human rights and climate-related peace and security risks. That includes leveraging the Commission's convening power, particularly in its advisory role to the Security Council, in order to make peacebuilding activities integrated, coordinated and responsive to current dynamics.

As others before me have also emphasized, women, youth, local actors, marginalized groups and broader civil society must be actively engaged and sufficiently empowered to have a meaningful impact on the decision-making processes intended to achieve peace. We have said this many times in the Council, but it bears repeating. Peacebuilding efforts are more effective and much more likely to achieve lasting, inclusive outcomes for all of society when women are included. That means the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in decision-making, conflict prevention and peacebuilding and sustaining-peace processes.

Youth in conflict settings also tend to be unheard, even though they are often acutely impacted by violence and have a right to voice their perspectives on establishing peace and security in their communities. Youth engagement serves to enrich conversations around peace, particularly because they have a vested interest in long-term peace.

That is why I was so pleased to hear from Ms. Chigwenya this morning. Her message about rebuilding the trust of young people across the world and institutions, especially in the United Nations and in the Council's work, makes clear that this is an important task for all of us.

This moment is particularly ripe for big and some out-of-the-box thinking, and a New Agenda for Peace has the opportunity to respond. The New Agenda for Peace should offer a range of proposals to tackle these challenges. Some of them, like a focus on youth, gender, climate adaptation and resilience, conflict prevention and the intersections among all these issues, will — hopefully — be quickly and broadly embraced.

For our part, the United States strategy to prevent conflict and promote stability comprises a new whole-of-Government approach, with partner nations, to prevent violence and advance stability in areas that are vulnerable to conflict. Our strategy aims to address the drivers of instability and conflict, with a longer-term view, through partnerships, at all levels, and adaptive learning to inform decision-making as the dynamics change. The 10-year country and region plans, under the United States strategy, represent a meaningful long-term commitment by the United States to making

strategic investments in prevention that are critical to lasting peace. As President Biden has said, prevention is hard work, measured not in days and weeks, but in years and generations. I thank you again, Mr. President, for bringing us together on this topic.

Mr. Pérez Loose (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I take this opportunity to welcome and wish Switzerland every success in assuming the presidency of the Security Council, and thank it for convening this debate on long-term trust in sustaining peace. I thank the briefers for their comprehensive presentations and the Peacebuilding Commission for its written advice.

Trust can be sustainable only if the implementation of solutions proves to be effective. Moreover, for solutions to be effective, national ownership is central to identifying the root causes of conflict. Trust-building among multiple stakeholders is indispensable if we are to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflicts.

A social fabric weakened by deficiencies and mistrust is more prone to violence. Dialogue is indispensable. Once established, it must be accompanied by concerted efforts to strengthen the rule of law and accountability, eradicate and reduce poverty and inequalities and promote inclusive societies, within the framework of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In post-conflict contexts, sustainable peace has its foundations in the process of reconciliation, which is achieved through transitional justice and reparations to victims, as well as the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. These actions pave the way for a culture of peace and trust to take hold and endure.

With the twin resolutions of 2020 (General Assembly resolution 75/201 and resolution 2558 (2020)), the General Assembly and the Security Council recognized that progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development required integrating peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Accordingly, the Security Council has a responsibility to equip peace missions with the tools needed to continue strengthening long-term actions to leave no one behind.

It is necessary to continue deepening the synergies around peace missions at the earliest possible stage of integrated planning and coordination of transitions with all actors on the ground. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the progress made in the use of and access to information systems and accurate data that make it possible to assess risks and prevent conflicts or their recurrence. Information is important when it comes to preventing humanitarian crises, particularly those related to displacement caused by conflicts or natural disasters. We highlight the work carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which, since 1951, has kept statistics on forced displacement. These key data allow efforts to be focused on a given region, facilitating decision-making and response measures to provide timely humanitarian assistance.

The full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all spheres, as well as the leadership role of women in peacebuilding efforts, are essential measures for ensuring peaceful societies. The Security Council and the United Nations system must implement resolution 1325 (2000), particularly by including women in the mechanisms and processes of negotiating and implementing peace agreements.

What better way to ensure lasting tools for the future than by strengthening intergenerational trust? Young people have creative and adaptable tools whose effectiveness, based on trust and solidarity, can last for decades. That is why we must facilitate youth participation in conflict prevention and resolution and at all levels of decision-making, in line with resolution 2419 (2018).

Trust among nations is a crucial element in building peace. It is the result of a series of conditions that must be cultivated within the Member States, that is, by their societies and their leaders. The search for the foundations for lasting peace has been a long-standing concern.

In this context, I wish to recall the contribution made by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant in his 1795 essay entitled "Perpetual Peace". This reference may sound utopian, but many of his reflections are extremely topical. In this work, Kant observes that there are several conditions that would enable the maintenance of peace among nations, one of which is that the ideal form of government is republican — what is known today as constitutional democracy. The reason for this is that nations that maintain democratic governments are generally less likely to resort to violence in their international relations than those that do not. It is an observation that has had a great influence on the debate in international relations on peace and

security. How a government treats its citizens is a good indication of how it treats other nations. The trust that governments manage to engender among their citizens is reflected in the trust they manage to engender on the international stage. Indeed, the Council must not overlook the strong relationship between Member States' systems of government and international peace and security, in other words, the relationship that exists between democracy and international law.

It is no coincidence that the philosopher Kant wrote his famous essay on perpetual peace to which we have referred today, at a time of great turbulence, when great Powers were crushing weak nations into submission and enslavement. Nor is it a coincidence that my delegation has brought these reflections up today, at a time when we are specifically discussing peace and security and trust. The New Agenda for Peace must take into account the lessons learned and the importance of taking this relationship on board as the basis for peacebuilding.

Funds, including the Peacebuilding Fund, have a catalytic role to play. They increase investment, in particular official development assistance. Providing greater predictability to peacebuilding funding is therefore an important axis for ensuring that financial flows do not stop.

Finally, the Security Council must intensify its efforts to rebuild and strengthen trust among its members, lead by example and thereby ensure the protection and preservation of that most precious asset, peace.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I congratulate Switzerland on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month. I thank the Russian Federation for its work in the presidency of the Council last month. China welcomes today's meeting presided over by Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis. I wish to thank High Commissioner Volker Türk for his briefing just now. I also listened carefully to the briefings made by the other briefers.

I thank Switzerland for its initiative to focus the debate on the highly relevant theme of building trust. In the Foreign Minister's statement just now, we see his deep thinking on the issue.

Trust is like air, whose presence is easily taken for granted but whose absence is life-threatening. Be it between people or among countries, peace and cooperation will never be possible without basic mutual trust. Without

trust and the rules and order built thereupon, humanity will once again be subject to the law of the jungle. The world is now beset with a serious trust crisis. Behind the various complex issues is a series of intersecting and deteriorating deficits in development, peace, security and governance, as well as a long-standing deficit in trust.

Nothing undermines the political trust between countries more easily than blowing hot and cold or breaking promises in international relations, playing around with and not respecting the agreements they have signed and woefully going back on and hollowing out the political commitments they have made. Nothing damages mutual trust in the area of security more easily than forming exclusive military blocs, stirring up regional tensions and seeking absolute security for oneself at the expense of the security of other countries. Nothing defeats economic mutual trust more easily than engaging in decoupling, building high walls around small yards, distorting market rules to seek technological monopoly and suppressing the development and progress of other countries. Nothing causes a loss of trust in the international system more easily than disregarding the authority of the Charter of the United Nations, applying double standards and selectively applying international law.

Reflective of those behaviours are the self-important and imperious mindsets of those who seek hegemony, the sour grapes syndrome of those who cannot bear to be outperformed, the arrogance of those who deal with other countries "from a position of strength" and the pursuit of narrow self-interests. Such behaviours and mentality run counter to the efforts to deepen mutual trust, build lasting peace and advance global development and progress.

Trust and peace are closely linked with each other. That applies to relations between countries and relations within each country. For post-conflict countries whose internal trust is fragile, inappropriate external interference would only add insult to injury.

Some external forces use the pretext of human rights and other issues to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, impose their own systems and ideologies on others, pit factions against each other within the countries concerned, orchestrate the escalation of local tensions and create social division and conflicts, as a result of which the gains of peacebuilding are lost. The lessons for the international community, including the Security Council, in that regard are numerous, and all should learn from them.

We should recognize that, in the world we live in today, countries are more interconnected and interdependent than ever before and thus need to join hands globally to meet the challenges we face. We should firmly anchor our belief in the concept of a community with a shared future for humankind, practice genuine multilateralism, deepen mutual trust and promote and build global partnerships. Major countries should take the lead in standing up for integrity, cooperation and the rule of law; uphold mutual trust, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation; pursue broad-based consultations and lead by example in building a solid foundation of trust for the international community to create the conditions for lasting peace.

We should recognize that building broad-based and solid trust is key to lasting peace and security in post-conflict countries. The international community should respect the development paths and systems independently chosen by the peoples of all countries, pursue the political settlement of differences and disputes, advocate cooperation and dialogue, refrain from imposing solutions or indiscriminately applying unilateral coercive measures and help consolidate mutual trust in the countries concerned instead of creating chaos.

The United Nations should better leverage its mediation, good offices and the peacebuilding mechanism. Peacebuilding efforts should focus on helping countries concerned to build a system of social trust.

We should recognize that sustainable development is the foundation of lasting peace and a firm safeguard for the promotion and the protection of human rights. All countries should pursue a people-centred approach to development that benefits everyone. The international community and the United Nations should sharpen their focus on and increase investment in development and help developing countries overcome current economic difficulties, in particular financing bottlenecks. International financial institutions, with their serious moral deficit, face the risk of a gradual loss of global trust.

We should act immediately on the appeal of Secretary-General Guterres by promoting the building of a more open, fair and inclusive multilateral financial system that can better benefit people of developing countries.

We should also recognize that the rapid development of information technology and the extensive application of new media and social platforms have also created negative repercussions for trust among peoples and among countries. One country uses its own technological edge to build extensive matrix-like hacking networks and conduct surveillance on and steal secrets from other countries, including its allies and heads of international organizations. Those actions seriously undermine international mutual trust and poison the international atmosphere.

Emerging technologies have both pros and cons. The key is to maximize the positive impacts while minimizing the negative ones. We maintain that technology companies and online platforms should uphold the concept of science and technology for good, enhance self-discipline, spread positive vibes and take effective measures to combat disinformation. Governments should regulate and supervise them, in accordance with the law, to defend public interests. The United Nations should play a coordinating role by building a multi-stakeholder platform and facilitating an intergovernmental process to develop and improve universally accepted rules and norms.

The Chinese people always keeps their promises. Chinese diplomacy always honours its commitments and promotes amity. Under the United Nations flag, we stand ready to deepen mutual trust with other countries, pursue friendly cooperation, promote the building of a community with a shared future for humankind, advanced common development and safeguard common security for a common future.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I congratulate Switzerland on its historic presidency of the Security Council and on the initiative of holding this important debate on strengthening trust to ensure sustainable peace. I thank the briefers who introduced the debate, High Commissioner Volker Türk, Ms. Cynthia Chingwenya and Ms. 'Funmi Olonisakin, for their enlightening briefings.

Since the end of the Second World War, very few structures built by humankind have led to as much hope as the United Nations. Despite the imperfections that are inherent in any human endeavour, it is difficult to imagine the state of the world without the United Nations. The ambition, enshrined in the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations, to prevent war and promote lasting peace is an admirable goal that inspires trust, which must be constantly reinforced. It is obvious that we can indeed have the trust to free ourselves from the cycle of crises — solidarity crises,

security crises, humanitarian crises, health crises and identity crises — that dims aspirations and hampers the prospects of peace between and within nations.

The debate to which you, Mr. President, have invited us today has the merit of encouraging a renewed ownership of the goals of the Charter of the United Nations and promoting a reconciliation between our Organization and the aspirations of the peoples of the world.

For peace to be sustainable, we must reconfigure the social contract among nations independent of their size or stature, with the peoples of the world, in all their diversity, at the centre, and with the clear understanding that all peoples count and every life counts. Brutal force or power without morals must and cannot be the determining factor in the international community's coexistence. Above all, we must recast our identity as peoples of the world, as truly united nations, not competing poles of influence. If we do not, we run the risk of continuing to inevitably dig trenches for battlefields where the lifeless bodies of our young people will continue to fall, at the mercy of birds of prey.

The crucial confidence that we need to achieve lasting peace demands a genuine structural transformation of our Organization's peace and security architecture and the adaptation of our peace and security mechanisms to a global context of ever-changing crises and conflicts. While it is clear that the efforts of the United Nations are extraordinary, we are compelled to realize that the ever-increasing and unrelenting threats to international peace and security often take on new forms, which at times fuel feelings of frustration with our collective will and our international institutions and mechanisms.

Gabon will continue to affirm that prevention is a critical tool that should be central to our actions if we want consolidated and lasting peace. So far our prevention efforts have been slow, ill-adapted and underfunded. In fact, the inadequacy of the resources allocated to our Organization's prevention and peacebuilding efforts has greatly contributed either to a resurgence of crises in transition periods or to the emergence of new conflicts. In that regard, it is clear that the most important weapons for peace are, first, supporting United Nations prevention and peacebuilding mechanisms with adequate and predictable funding; secondly, strengthening the synergy between the United Nations pillars of sustainable development and peace and security and thirdly, addressing the root causes of conflict, including inequality, poverty and youth unemployment.

Conflicts destroy trust. They undermine sustainable development and, conversely, an absence of development can and often does lead to serious social crises that can create unrest in a country or an entire region. Financial, material and technological support for the implementation of sustainable development programmes is a genuine imperative for sustaining peace, especially in developing countries in general and African countries in particular. Adequate funding for Africa's Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, must be viewed as a necessity for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Taking effective account of new challenges in this process of restructuring the United Nations peace architecture should strengthen it and enable a more comprehensive approach. The effects of climate change and environmental degradation, combined with population growth, considerably reduce the access of the majority to existing resources and are a particular source of instability in a number of regions.

Within the United Nations system, the architecture for building and sustaining peace must be more inclusive. Needless to say, it is a recognized fact that exclusion and marginalization are dangerous enemies of trust. Africa must find its rightful place as a full-fledged player on the international scene and not simply as a geopolitical issue for the powers that be. Our approach to peace must be integrated and coherent in order to advance the sustaining peace agenda and counteract today's drivers of conflict and insecurity. That means strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, which have the advantage of being the most concerned and the best placed to take action. Above all, they are more familiar with the environment and the volatile complexity of issues on the ground. Concerted action and the implementation of common strategies in crisis situations are essential if the action is to be effective and produce the hoped-for results.

The clear linkages between peace, security and development have been duly acknowledged. It is a fact that many countries dealing with armed conflict are also facing obstacles to their sustainable development, because their institutional and governance capacities are easily overwhelmed. Conversely, countries struggling with persistent underdevelopment face challenges in providing security and remain prone to tears in their social fabric, while negative forces such as terrorism,

violent extremism, intercommunal violence and organized crime thrive easily in that environment. The emergence of new risk factors, such as pandemics and the ever-increasing threat of climate change, add further complexity to that difficult security environment. Those overlapping and interconnected challenges can be effectively addressed only with comprehensive and coherent strategies.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security, but to fulfil its mandate more effectively, it must work closely with other organs and agencies of the United Nations system in order to address the root causes of conflict in a holistic and systematic manner. Given the increasing interdependence of the various fragmented parts of the international community, and the changing linkages connecting the political, socioeconomic, health and environmental contexts, it is unreasonable to expect that the challenges of peace, security and development can be addressed in a sustainable manner in isolation from one another. If we are to deal with that, we must renew our confidence in the United Nations so that it remains at the centre of the process of safeguarding the fundamental principles of international law while promoting peace, security and development for all. For its part, the Council must find answers to the security implications of today's factors driving conflict and insecurity. That must lead us to further engage the entire multilateral system in addressing our multifaceted challenges. In that crucial task, we must be able to revisit the tools of our collective security system and consider the prospects for closer collaboration with the United Nations development system to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals remain within the reach of fragile States coping with cyclical crises.

In any case, I will conclude with this point. The Security Council must be able to strengthen its integrated approach along the entire peace, security, humanitarian and development path in order to promote people-centred solutions.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome you to today's meeting, Mr. President, and congratulate Switzerland on its leadership of the Security Council. A country's maiden presidency of the Council is indeed a historic event, and we wish Switzerland every success. We thank Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Chigwenya and Ms. Olonisakin for their briefings.

At a time when there is an obvious deep-seated divide between the positions of Member States and joint efforts are required to overcome the crisis and create a renewed, more sustainable international security architecture, the trust deficit and lack of a unifying agenda become particularly relevant. Speaking of trust, I feel compelled to mention the treacherous actions of our former Western partners, who over the past 15 to 20 years have managed to consistently destroy the green shoots of mutual understanding and cooperation that emerged after the end of the Cold War. I refer to the broken promises concerning NATO's eastward non-expansion, the promotion of the so-called colour revolutions and the attempt to impose a so-called rules-based order instead of international law and respect for the Charter of the United Nations. As a result of their efforts, today we live in a world in which truth means nothing and misanthropic and utterly false attitudes are imposed through the collective Western-controlled media, through which white is passed off as black and vice versa.

I refer above all to the situation in Ukraine, a country whose role, as a result of the efforts of the United States and its allies, has been relegated to that of a bargaining chip in the geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the West. It is for that purpose that over the past eight years they have installed on our borders a Russophobic neo-Nazi dictatorship, declaring war on everything Russian and everything that once objectively connected us. The situation has come to the point that NATO now wages a proxy war against Russia, raising the spectre of the most devastating consequences for all of humankind. How can there be any talk about trust in such circumstances? It is also clear that the actions of the West have a direct impact on the potential for cooperation among the leading world players in the context of resolving regional crises. For Western countries, which project that on a competition with Russia and China, this is a zero-sum game, and we categorically disagree with such an approach.

That state of international affairs undoubtedly affects the work of the Security Council and other international platforms. As such, we see deep-seated disagreements on a large number of issues discussed in the General Assembly. All of that seriously tests the resilience of the United Nations system and affects its capacity to effectively carry out its core mandate of conflict prevention and peacekeeping. One clear sign of that situation is the crisis in the implementation

of existing agreements and deals and the resolutions of the principal United Nations organs. When those instruments no longer serve the interests of Western States, their non-compliance with them is dissimulated and they are declared irrelevant or simply rejected. The crisis of trust also directly affects mediation efforts. That trend is most glaring in the case of the Minsk agreements on Ukraine and Germany and France's role in concluding them. Not only have Paris and Berlin failed to get Kyiv to implement the Minsk agreements but they also subsequently admitted that the purpose of signing them was to give the Ukrainian regime time to prepare for war.

Unfortunately, those trends are not limited to individual States but are also reflected in the work of the entire United Nations. Recently, we have seen an erosion of trust in the United Nations — an Organization that is supposed to represent the interests of all Member States and to be a model of impartiality and integrity, whose staff are obliged to act in strict compliance with Article 100 of the Charter. We see that erosion not only on the political track — and even more so on the human rights track — but also on the ground, in the countries in which United Nations missions are deployed, at the very level at which agreed political decisions are implemented. The increasing disinformation and misinformation concerning the United Nations is a problem that deserves special attention and has recently been actively discussed in various forums of our Organization. In our view, that problem requires a comprehensive approach, since negative comments about the United Nations are not always attempts to tarnish its reputation. Some of those criticisms reflect the frustrations of host States and their populations and should not be ignored. On the contrary, United Nations peacekeeping missions need to respond by clarifying their mandates, reaching out more to ordinary people via media outlets and implementing a range of local quick-impact projects. That could help to build constructive engagement and trust with the host country, thereby strengthening the credibility of the United Nations.

Inclusivity and taking into account the views of all actors are elements of trusting relationships, both at the international and country levels, especially where conflicts rage. The domestic crises of countries cannot be resolved without taking into account the interests of all the groups in their populations. That process is complex, painstaking, often long-term and, most important of all, must be nationally led. There is no one-size-fits-all solution; we need to seek out unique recipes based on the specific social, ethnic, cultural, civilizational and historical characteristics of each given society. Only the Governments of States can ensure such a sustainable social contract. The role of the international community is to provide appropriate political support, share experience and provide humanitarian and economic assistance. All of that must be done with full respect for the sovereignty of the host State. Interference in the internal affairs of States has never led to sustainable results. Moreover, such interference may not only become an insurmountable obstacle to trust between the main actors but might also lead to the dissolution of States.

That brings me to another important manifestation of that crisis of trust, which is the dilution of the role of national Governments in representing the interests of their own populations. Frequently, we have seen that the information provided by the authorities of a number of countries is questioned almost by default. It supposedly needs to be confirmed by the opposition, civil society or other bodies. At the same time, data obtained from certain kinds of non-governmental organizations is accepted without question. Moreover, the more a given Government's seeks to chart an independent course, and thereby invokes the resentment of former colonial Powers or the self-proclaimed world's policeman, the more that approach is seen.

In the Security Council we hear from dozens of different representatives from within and outside the United Nations system in order to get as much information as possible. But it is important to understand that no amount of testimonies from representatives of non-governmental organizations can substitute the data provided by Governments; to argue otherwise would be to attack the inter-State nature of the United Nations. We are convinced that regional integration bodies, which know at first hand the problems of their member States, can play a constructive role in supporting the efforts of States to ensure the well-being and security of their citizens. In particular, we note the efforts of the African Union and the countries of that continent to build an inclusive and diverse African society that remains united in its common history and culture.

In conclusion, we would like to note that the only way to build confidence is through equitable dialogue and a willingness and readiness to listen and to hear, as well as to consider each other's positions and interests in good faith, understanding that the security

of one cannot be strengthened at the expense of the other. It is also important to return to the culture of consensus-building, which in recent times has been seriously undermined. We outlined that position in our contribution to the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace and hope that our approaches will be reflected in it.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to join my colleagues in congratulating Switzerland on its historic assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and wishing it every success. It goes without saying Mr. President, that you can count on France's full support in that regard. I thank the briefers for their very informative presentations. My thanks also go to you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on a key condition for ensuring lasting peace: trust. I would like to highlight three points.

First, it is primarily up to Member States to build trust by upholding commitments and inclusive institutions and processes. Respecting international law, refraining from the use of force and ensuring the peaceful settlement of disputes are the necessary conditions for trust and cooperation among States. Violations of those principles — Russia's current war of aggression in Ukraine particularly comes to mind right now — undermine the international order based on agreed rules. Respect for the Charter of the United Nations and effective multilateralism must be our collective goals, and international law must be respected everywhere. That is why France consistently defends its application in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and calls for the restoration of a political horizon, which is the only way to restore the trust between the parties needed to enable the implementation of a two-State solution. It is also up to States to strengthen confidence in their own institutions, and that is predicated on respect for human rights and the rule of law, the fight against corruption and good governance. Justice and the fight against impunity are also prerequisites for lasting peace.

Freedom of expression and opinion and freedom of the press contribute to fighting misinformation, restoring confidence in the facts, which are so vital, and preventing incitements to violence. Stakeholders must ensure women's participation in political and peace processes. I am thinking in particular about Afghanistan, whose recovery will never come without the participation of half of its population. In the Sudan,

when the time comes, all political forces must engage in a peaceful and inclusive process. The commitment of young people is also fundamental, and in that regard I sincerely welcome the participation of Cynthia Chigwenya, Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa, in this meeting.

The United Nations must forge ahead to create the necessary conditions for lasting peace. Conflict prevention, which has been mentioned often this morning, must be a cross-cutting priority for the Organization, as exemplified by the successes of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. The Peacebuilding Commission must continue to build confidence through its partnerships and operational approach with all States concerned. The United Nations must help restore trust where it has been lost. The Secretary-General and his Envoys and Special Representatives should do their work as directly as possible on the ground through their good offices. It is also up to peacekeeping operations to support confidence-building measures. I am thinking of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which should continue to support the Contact and Coordination Group for non-military measures in the Great Lakes region. I am thinking of Cyprus, where the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus must encourage the establishment of confidence-building measures to shore up trust between the communities. Trust also depends on the follow-up and effective implementation of commitments. Special political missions have their role to play, especially with regard to verifying compliance with commitments and agreements. I am thinking of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which should monitor the consolidation of the ongoing ceasefire among several armed groups when the time comes.

Lastly, trust must be based on reliable and predictable partnerships. The European Union and its member States stand ready to respond to crises. Altogether we have deployed more than 5,000 personnel to peacekeeping operations. In the Middle East, for example, the European Union and its member States have provided €27 billion in humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable Syrians in Syria and the entire region since 2011. Lasting peace must also be built on trust in our partners. I am thinking in particular of the solutions that have been promoted by the African Union. That is why France supports

the operationalization of the African Union Peace Fund and the ramping up of African peacekeeping operations. And we stand ready to resume discussions on that vital topic in the Security Council.

Confidence-building must be at the heart of our work on the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. In that regard, France has submitted 20 proposals to strengthen the authority of the collective security system and update its response by rethinking the role of the United Nations in guaranteeing international peace and security. Together we can build and reinforce the paths leading to lasting peace.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on the Prime Minister of North Macedonia.

Mr. Kovachevski (North Macedonia) (*spoke in Macedonian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to congratulate Switzerland on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the first time, and I welcome your call, Sir, to emphasize the importance of issues related to peacebuilding. Today's debate reaffirms the traditional and flawless commitment of the Swiss Confederation to the noble cause of peace, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and international law. I am especially pleased to be the first Prime Minister of North Macedonia to address the Security Council and to have an opportunity to participate in this discussion today.

I believe that our current attitudes should be based on past successes in which the United Nations and the multilateral system have demonstrated their effectiveness. As we have a moral obligation to contribute to the New Agenda for Peace today, we cannot help but reflect on the experiences of the previous Agenda for Peace, in 1992, as well as the beginning of the long-standing first and only preventive United Nations mission to our country of 30 years ago — the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) — which was widely regarded as a successful preventive action.

The foundation for peace is strengthened by cooperation and prevention, and we, the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations, are responsible for that. That has been said many times, and in our case it has been proven in practice. During the difficult years of war in the former Yugoslavia, our first President, Kiro Gligorov, showed his wisdom in demonstrating his responsibility and commitment to peace, enabling us to peacefully achieve our independence and international

recognition of North Macedonia as an independent and sovereign State. During the wars in our immediate neighbourhood, we had our own national agenda for peace, which necessarily implied ensuring internal consensus but also close cooperation with the United Nations, as well as with regional organizations, primarily the States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union. That was how the necessary conditions were created for the success of UNPREDEP. We prevented a spillover of the conflict and peace and stability were preserved, saving countless lives and preventing unnecessary destruction. It was also very important that trust was created, while a culture of dialogue was slowly but surely developing as the only way to overcome even the most serious challenges.

It is through that culture of open dialogue that 30 years later, North Macedonia has become an exemplary country in terms of resolving outstanding issues both at home and with its neighbours. We have tackled an abundance of difficult decisions that had to be made over those 30 years. We made difficult but imaginative and courageous choices that have enabled us to become a NATO member and begin negotiations with the European Union with a protected and acknowledged Macedonian language, identity and culture. From a country that 30 years ago was hosting peacekeeping missions, we have become a source of stability and ourselves host international negotiations.

It is crucial to strengthen trust in our institutions, the United Nations and justice. In our actions, we should be guided, above all, by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, solidarity and the importance of active and permanent engagement wherever it is needed to reduce suffering. In that regard, the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals is fully complementary to the insistence on securing a more peaceful, stable and just world for all. Unfortunately, today we are quite far from realizing that vision. The ongoing Russian military aggression against Ukraine has changed global relations to such an extent that there is an urgent need to reaffirm the legal framework of reference adopted by our founders, whose clear intention was to avoid the horrors of war. This time, as many times before, the Republic of North Macedonia firmly stood on the right side of history, on the side of the democratic and free world, on the side of the right of every country to self-determination. Today all of us together must again stand on the side of peace and recommit ourselves to respect the Charter of the United Nations.

As an equal part of a federation that was among the founders of the United Nations, but also as a country that 30 years ago acquired its own independent place in the Organization, the Republic of North Macedonia raises its voice and shares its concern regarding a crisis that is weighing on the United Nations, as well as the international legal order, world peace and stability.

Aware of the growing risks, we must use the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace as an opportunity to create conditions for united action. Tomorrow will ask us what have we did today, just as today we wonder why we did nothing yesterday. We need peace now and immediately.

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

Ms. Lührmann (Germany): I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this timely debate on how to build trust to foster sustainable peace. I would also like to thank the briefers for their valuable analysis and recommendations.

People around the world put trust in the United Nations. They see us as a beacon of hope. Particularly in times of darkness, it is the United Nations and its agencies that remain on the ground, providing food and shelter when it is most needed and fostering trust when hatred prevails. Trust is vital for building and sustaining peace, not only in conflict-affected countries, but also within the multilateral system.

To foster trust within the multilateral system, all States Members of the United Nations must adhere to the Organization's principles. We need to agree on a coherent and value-based framework for our joint, multilateral efforts to build and sustain peace worldwide. The Council has a particular responsibility to build and sustain peace based on agreed core principles.

I will focus on two main points — trust as a core element for successful peacebuilding and concrete steps to strengthen trust in our common efforts towards building and sustaining peace.

First, in your statement, Sir, you rightfully identified trust as a central element and prerequisite for successful peacebuilding efforts. At the United Nations level, that implies adherence to the jointly developed peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda, as formulated in the 2016 twin resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council (resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262). Both the

General Assembly and the Council adopted this agenda by consensus. It should therefore continue to serve as the main framework for United Nations peacebuilding.

The agenda is clear about the interlinkage between security, development and human rights. It is also clear about the importance of prevention, by specifying that sustaining peace:

"encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict (and) addressing root causes" (resolution 2282 (2016), eighth preambular paragraph)

In that context, we are glad to see that the Peacebuilding Commission's written advice to this debate contains a clear reference to the importance of prevention, referencing the rule of law, transitional justice, accountability, democracy, gender equality and respect for, and protection of, human rights and fundamental freedoms as key aspects for sustaining peace.

At national and local levels, trust and prevention necessitate broad inclusion and participation. To be successful, peacebuilding efforts should recognize the positive force of diversity. They need to address the causes and consequences of conflict and also respond to the needs of diverse communities.

Peacebuilding efforts have to respect the dignity of all people and groups. For instance, in Mozambique, as recently discussed in the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, the peace process has ultimately been successful thanks to its inclusive nature and the recognition of the country's diversity.

In acknowledgement of the particularly important role of women, children and marginalized groups in peacebuilding, Germany advocates their systematic inclusion. Our recently published guidelines on feminist foreign policy offer an orientation in that respect. It is a proven fact that the inclusion of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding has contributed to more peaceful post-conflict societies.

Together with other Member States present today, Germany supports the Principles for Peace initiative, which advocates the establishment of a shared frame of reference and common standards among peacebuilding actors.

Secondly, let me now outline concrete steps to foster trust in our joint efforts towards building and sustaining peace. Following up on recent open debates in the

Council and ongoing discussions in the Peacebuilding Commission, the entities should collaborate further in order to better address existing challenges.

To overcome those challenges, we need full political ownership for peacebuilding and sustaining peace from all Member States. An agreement on the introduction of assessed contributions for the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund would underline that joint political ownership.

As current Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and main voluntary contributor to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, Germany will remain committed to promoting the United Nations peacebuilding agenda.

In order to advance and deliver on the prevention aspects of the peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda, data-based early warning and anticipatory action, including climate adaptation, play a key role. For that reason, Germany supports several projects, such as the Organization's Complex Risk Analytics Fund and the African Union's early-warning and climate-mitigation initiatives.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace offers a great opportunity to develop and agree on ways to strengthen trust in our joint efforts towards sustaining peace. Together with Namibia, as Co-Facilitators of the Summit of the Future, we stand ready to actively support and engage in discussions to identify a common approach.

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

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): We congratulate Mr. Ignazio Cassis, Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, and the delegation of Switzerland on your presidency of the Security Council. We thank you for organizing this critical debate.

We agree with all the previous speakers that building and sustaining peace will never be achieved without building trust among States and their institutions, peoples and their Governments, and regional and international organizations and their Member States. Building trust is the foundation needed to ensure the flexibility and ability to address the current turbulent times and crises.

The world today is ushering in a new era of turmoil, with new conflict hotspots that are threatening peace and development, particularly with food shortages, spikes in energy prices and growing poverty as a result of consecutive economic crises. These all push us to shoulder our responsibility to attempt to find practical solutions that lead to building sustainable peace. Building trust is the best way to futureproof a culture of trust for sustainable peace to overcome the complex and intertwined turmoil accompanied by various long-term causes and effects.

We would therefore like to highlight several points that could constitute a general framework to futureproof trust for sustaining peace.

First, we stress the importance of promoting links between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. That will contribute to tackling the root causes of armed conflict and strengthening peace, security and development, especially in Africa. Under the leadership of its President, Egypt attaches great importance to this issue, especially with regard to the post-conflict reconstruction and development dossier in Africa.

Second, the importance of continuing to pay attention to African issues and try to stave off conflicts. We must strive to prevent the current global geopolitical situation from leading to less attention being paid to African issues.

Third, the need to fight terrorism and extremism through an integrated and robust international cooperation, to confront all risks of terrorism all over the world, especially in Africa. We must tackle terrorist groups, cut off their sources of financing or cause them to dry up, while countering extremist ideologies.

Fourth, the need to pay further attention to peacebuilding component and provide necessary and adequate financing in that area as a primary condition for ensuring the success of our efforts. We must seriously address options for peacebuilding in the light of the current international challenges where financial allocations for programmed peacebuilding activities are reduced. We have to provide a minimum level of capability to build resilience in the countries that host peacekeeping operations, and we call upon Member States to ensure that peacebuilding efforts will also be financed through assessed contributions, including via the Peacebuilding Fund.

Fifth, the need to support the efforts of various States in building their institutions and national capacities, and strengthen good governance, which would prevent them from falling into cycles of violence in national contexts where national institutions identify, plan and implement their priorities.

Sixth, the importance of mobilization resources to create an environment conducive to economic growth, foreign investment, opportunities for job creation in accordance with priorities of national ownership of sustainable development.

Seventh, the linkages between implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving sustainable peace must be done in accordance with the importance accorded by the Agenda to the goal of elimination of poverty, ensuring sustainable development without leading to any imbalance in the achievement of any of the objectives.

Eighth, the importance of promoting efforts aimed at ensuring the participation of women and youth in peacebuilding efforts by empowering women and including youth in all fields. This must be translated into policies that will overcome socioeconomic challenges faced by them.

Ninth, the importance of promoting partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), especially by continuing the consultative meetings between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, in order to explain African perspectives in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and enhance synergy, coherence and complementarity in the efforts of both entities, while relying on the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Before concluding, I wish to commend the role and welcome efforts of the Secretary-General in putting forward the general framework in the New Agenda for Peace, which includes many valuable suggestions. We look forward to seeing a focus in the New Agenda on investment in conflict-prevention efforts and the provision of sustainable financing for such efforts. We must also counter terrorism and extremist ideologies by directing the Agenda towards the actual needs of African states, while taking into consideration national ownership and implementing the priorities and needs of African States. All of the foregoing are elements of an effort to develop multilateralism and strengthen its effectiveness in the achievement of sustainable peace.

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): It is my great pleasure to address a Swiss presidency of the Security Council on behalf of Liechtenstein for the first time. We hope it will be the first of many.

Our starting point in our reflections today must be the existing structures in multilateral frameworks, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the centre. Sustainable Development Goal 16 frames accountable institutions and the rule of law as indispensable for the predictable environment needed to build trust and sustain peace. In international human rights law, we have also set minimum expectations for the treatment of marginalized groups. A predictable and rights-respecting environment creates the opportunity to take approaches to conflict resolution that are themselves sustainable and preventive. Engagement by relevant actors must take place to varying degrees through the conflict cycle. Peacebuilding and trust-building require sustained political attention and investment. This morning, I will offer brief comments on the dimensions of inclusion and of justice.

Building a broad coalition for peace must be something for which we are constantly striving. Inclusive settlements are longer-lasting and more rights-respecting. We know that negotiating teams and mediators that reflect society as a whole are more likely to generate sustainable results. But inclusion is not only about who is consulted; it is also about how those inputs are reflected. Stakeholders must not only be at the table; they must also see stakeholder engagement reflected in resulting documents, processes and missions for them to be truly sustainable.

That means, of course, as has been said many times, that women should be meaningfully included in prevention and peacebuilding. For more than half the population, this should be an expectation, not an aspiration. We know gender equality offers a path to sustainable peace and conflict prevention, but nearly a quarter of a century after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we are moving in the opposite direction, with the reversal of generational gains in women's rights in many parts of the world. A painful recent example is the

Sudan. When mediation efforts prioritize persuading armed men to lay down their guns rather than building a broad, inclusive and resilient peace, we run the risk of reinforcing the patriarchal power dynamics that are at the root of many of today's conflicts.

Inclusion should also reflect minority groups as well as and in particular indigenous peoples. The work of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues deserves a mention in this debate and further reflection by relevant bodies and actors. The creation of self-government, federalism and autonomy regimes for minority groups, implemented with great success within the Swiss Confederation, are positive models for addressing potential conflict and finding a modus vivendi for relevant communities.

The rule of law is underpinned by the promise of justice. It is also a crucial aspect of sustainable peace. This means reconciliation and accountability for the most serious crimes under international law. The truth of this statement has been illustrated many times *e contrario*; the lack of accountability for the aggression against Ukraine in 2014 is just one of the most recent cases in point. It was undoubtedly a key driver for the full-scale invasion in 2022. As relevant situations move through the conflict cycle, transitional justice is essential to creating a sustainable political settlement and for building trust among those involved and affected by conflict. Criminal accountability is one important aspect of transitional justice; other forms of truth-telling, such as truth and reconciliation commissions, can be just as important in ensuring that victims are able to address the harms done to them on their own terms.

While Council mandates should set the stage for transitional justice processes, the Peacebuilding Commission must be at the forefront of considering transitional justice in the context of sustaining peace. The Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund have addressed issues of transitional justice, notably in the Gambia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Colombia, and we would like to see a significantly enhanced role for the Peacebuilding Commission on transitional justice in future — a dynamic that we hope to see reflected in the upcoming New Agenda for Peace.

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

Ms. Zacarias (Portugal): We would like to commend Switzerland for holding the presidency of the Security Council for the first time and for convening today's timely and important debate. I also wish to thank the briefers for the briefings we heard today.

Trust requires transparency, communication and inclusion. How, then, can we foster trust in sustaining peace and peacebuilding processes?

As we see it, communities are more likely to have trust in the process if the conflict or situation it is aimed at addressing is identified as an emerging threat in a transparent and timely manner, including through early warnings and strategic foresight; if the solutions to respond to it are designed in consultation with those communities; and if their implementation is carried out in close contact and coordination with the communities. Their voices are necessary not just to design the measures, but also to determine whether the process is effective or needs to be amended.

Let me also make two points concerning communication.

First, I would like to commend the recent strategic review by the Secretariat of strategic communications across United Nations peacekeeping operations, acknowledging the need for the United Nations system and the Member States to perform better in that area of crucial importance.

Secondly, as today is World Press Freedom Day, it is worth recalling that trust requires a social environment in which people can express themselves freely, in which Human Rights are respected in their entirety, and in which free and independent media contribute to promoting democracy and to ensuring that institutions are accountable to the people they serve.

Beyond transparency and communication, we also need inclusion. One important step to ensure the Security Council contributes to fostering that inclusion and participation is to make the Council itself more representative. The most direct way of ensuring that would be through its reform, broadening the scope of countries represented in it. Meanwhile, other steps can be taken, such as increasing consultations with stakeholders — regional organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society, local actors such as grassroots women's groups, youth and youth-led organizations — thereby fostering efforts in conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

In that context, allow me to commend Switzerland's commitment to giving a voice to civil society in the programme of work during its presidency of the Security Council.

The New Agenda for Peace will be an opportunity to identify ways to bolster trust in peacebuilding processes, and we look forward to the policy brief to be published in the summer. In that context — and many have said it before me — we need to put women and girls at the centre of security policy. We need to take into consideration a holistic view of peace anchored in human rights and development for all. We need to ensure greater cooperation between the Security Council and the Human Rights Council, as well as with the Peacebuilding Commission. We need to strengthen trust among the United Nations bodies that deal with the complexity of preventing, building and sustaining peace.

In conclusion, let me recall that the concept note (S/2023/283, annex) for this debate rightly points out that trust is also about expectations and predictability. However, the misuse of the veto in the Security Council can be greatly detrimental to fostering predictability. The veto initiative (resolution 76/262), adopted one year ago, showed the interest among the wider membership in ensuring further accountability on the use of the veto and reinforcing the role of the General Assembly. The wide support of the Franco-Mexican political declaration and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct shows there is a growing consensus on the need to restrict the use of the veto in certain circumstances. We should continue discussing the implementation of those specific instruments and their efficacy. The New Agenda for Peace should recognize that and call on permanent members to refrain from using the veto.

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

Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand): We thank the Russian Federation for presiding over the Security Council last month and congratulate Switzerland on assuming the Council presidency this month. Having been personally present here in 2002 when Switzerland joined the United Nations as its 190th Member, it is gratifying to witness this historic occasion. I wish to commend Your Excellency, Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, for presiding over this important and timely open debate on "Futureproofing trust for sustaining peace" against a backdrop of growing conflict across the globe. I thank the briefers for their insights.

We recall a report by the World Bank and the United Nations, issued in 2018, entitled "Pathways for Peace", which underscores the high costs of conflict and the importance of prevention. It found, for example, that countries experiencing violent conflict were estimated to experience a 2 to 8.4 per cent loss in annual gross domestic product growth; conflict prevention, on the other hand, was expected to generate costs savings of between $5 billion and $70 billion.

It is clear to all: there must be a stronger and more sustained investment in peace. And let us not forget that the establishment of the United Nations itself was an investment in peace. So finding effective ways to sustain peace, by investing in peace, should remain one of the United Nations core priorities.

The concept note (S/2023/283, annex) rightly refers to risk multipliers. The corollary is also true: we need to promote peace multipliers.

I will focus on peace multipliers — the three Cs — conditions, catalysts and a culture of peace.

First, on cultivating the conditions for sustainable peace, we need a people-centred approach, ensuring that people's interests and rights remain front and centre. That is why any effort to sustain peace must include promoting sustainable development, and that is why locally driven development projects must go hand in hand with peace initiatives, as practiced by Thai peacekeepers under the United Nations in the Sudan. That is why the rescuing of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an urgent priority, to be operationalized through a successful SDG summit this September.

Equally important is the cultivation of human security and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. When people's basic needs and dignity are respected, the conditions are more favourable for peaceful societies to endure. With those conditions, there will be enhanced trust and confidence, and that helps sustainable peace.

Secondly, with regard to developing catalysts to sustain peace, inclusivity and participation are important catalysts. At the national level, all stakeholders, from women and girls to people with disabilities and vulnerable groups, should not only be consulted but also actively engaged in sustaining peace, as well as policy

development. That is why Thailand fully supports the women and peace and security agenda and sees the importance of women in not only peace processes but also in development processes.

Another critical catalyst is active engagement by regional actors, especially regional organizations. Regional contexts matter. Regional wisdom counts. That is why we commend the Secretary-General's ideas on supporting regional actors in sustaining peace, as suggested in *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982). And that is why we find of interest the suggestions of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism on promoting a framework of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations on human security and sustainable development.

That brings me to one of the most important catalysts of all and that is strengthening the instruments for peaceful means, especially diplomacy, here at the United Nations, not only in this Chamber but also throughout this building. The United Nations role as a trusted, impartial platform, with strong convening power to bring parties in discord together to resolve peacefully their shared problems, should be enhanced through efforts that range from reinforcing the role of the Secretary-General to building synergies between various actors in the United Nations system and developing better strategic foresight here at the United Nations, as suggested in *Our Common Agenda*.

But this can happen only if there is trust and confidence here at the United Nations. So, perhaps that should be our priority as well, in tandem with building trust and confidence in areas around the globe where sustainable peace is threatened. As you, Mr. President, said earlier this morning, let us rebuild the bridges that connect us. Let us indeed.

Thirdly and lastly, on promoting a culture of peace, if we all practice a culture of peace, anchored in tolerance and respect for diversity and abiding respect for international law, norms of behaviour and peaceful means in addressing problems, then sustainable peace everywhere has a better chance.

In conclusion, reinforcing peace multipliers will help to strengthen trust and confidence and sustain peace. All those endeavours contribute to preventive diplomacy, which remains an important ingredient in our investment in sustainable peace — an investment that we not only have to protect but also expand. And we certainly hope that this investment will be an important part of a New Agenda for Peace anchored in the Charter of the United Nations.

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

Mr. Marschik (Austria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the first time in your country's history.

Switzerland and Austria, two neighbouring countries that are not members of any military alliance, with a long-standing tradition of supporting dialogue and peacebuilding, both of which are home to one of the United Nations four duty stations and are unswervingly committed to effective multilateralism, are pursuing similar, if not identical, priorities in the area of international peace and security. I believe Switzerland will bring added value to what we all expect from the Security Council, and I wish you, Mr. President, all the best in this important task.

(*spoke in English*)

I commend Switzerland for choosing a topic for today's debate that addresses the core of building peaceful and inclusive societies, but also the lifeline of multilateralism that we live here at the United Nations: trust. I also acknowledge today's briefers, among them Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, particularly as we will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the World Conference on Human Rights next month in Vienna.

As time is short, I will focus on three very brief points: first, inclusive and just societies as a prerequisite for peace; secondly, networked multilateral institutions; and thirdly, the rule of law as a guarantor of trust.

In recent years, we have come a long way in understanding that only inclusive and just societies can be a sustainable basis for peace. The respect for human rights, the rule of law and sustainable development are the best guarantors of peace. The women and peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda provide a useful lens in this regard. Austria also advocates for the inclusion of marginalized groups such as minorities and internally displaced persons. There is more to be done to better understand how climate change affects peace and security, and we call on the Council to further the climate, peace and security agenda.

It is important to recall that prevention does not only concern "fragile" countries — prevention concerns all of us. Just as human rights are universal and the Sustainable Development Goals must be implemented by every country, so every country also must do its share to build inclusive, just and peaceful societies. Mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review and the voluntary reviews under the High-Level Political Forum provide useful tools in this respect. Ultimately, they serve to advance peace worldwide.

Secondly, trust also stems from reliable partnerships and cooperation. Leveraging and complementing each other's strengths is the only viable way to tackle the challenges that we face. Austria therefore advocates for a new networked multilateralism on a global level — a United Nations that relies on and cooperates more closely with regional and subregional organizations. Sustainable financing of the operations of regional partners, including of the African Union peace support operations mandated by the Security Council, plays a key role in this regard. Regional organizations themselves serve as trust-building entities. Tomorrow there will be a meeting on the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), so allow me to mention briefly that the OSCE was never a club of like-minded countries, but much rather served as a platform for trust-building measures and dialogue to advance collective security. Even in these very challenging times, we must not abandon this core idea, however difficult that may be.

Thirdly, let me address the trust deficit on an international level. Trust is about expectations and predictability — that was expressed very eloquently in the concept note (S/2023/283, annex). The respect for international law and the rule of law guarantee predictability on an international level and help to foster trust. When this trust is broken, global cooperation wanes. We see that in every field of international cooperation: core security regimes, such as that of nuclear disarmament, only function with trust enabled through international treaties and agreements. For years, therefore, Austria has advocated for the strengthening of the rule of law and for more effective mechanisms to ensure the respect for our global norms, including the Charter of the United Nations. Let me be clear: it is not a question of a lack of norms. It is the lack of adherence and implementation that is of concern. If we no longer respect the law, we lose a key instrument in peacefully regulating our international relations, the most effective instruments with which to build trust among nations.

I will make one final point, if I may. Trust is also closely linked to truth, to facts and evidence-based information. It is very timely to say this, on the day that we mark the thirtieth anniversary of World Press Freedom Day. We need to remember that independent and pluralistic media are preconditions for advancing peace and security based on facts and evidence. Polarized political and societal discourse, crackdowns on critical voices and independent media, attacks against journalists and media workers, and hate speech undermine the access to accurate and reliable information. Trust needs truth, and truth needs free media and journalists who can work in safety to ensure its dissemination.

Once again, I would like to thank you, Sir, and Switzerland for putting trust at the centre of our discussions today and for the opportunity to share our perspective in this open debate.

The President (*spoke in French*): 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 members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.