



Security Council

Seventy-fifth year

8699th meeting

Friday, 10 January 2020, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Pham (Viet Nam)

Members:

Belgium	Ms. Schaetzen
China	Mr. Wang Nian
Dominican Republic	Ms. García Tapia
Estonia	Mr. Auväärt
France	Mr. Michon
Germany	Ms. Bade
Indonesia	Mr. Soemirat
Niger	Mr. A Barry
Russian Federation	Mr. Kuzmin
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ms. Porter
South Africa	Ms. Tshabalala
Tunisia	Mr. Naouali
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Roberts
United States of America	Mr. Simonoff

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Upholding the United Nations Charter

Letter dated 31 December 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2020/1)

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The meeting was resumed at 10 a.m. on 10 January.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with longer statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Bavdaž Kuret (Slovenia): I wish to thank the Viet Nam presidency of the Council for organizing this debate, in which the wider membership can present its views on upholding the Charter of the United Nations. I also wish to thank both briefers.

Slovenia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see S/PV.8699), and wishes to add few remarks in its national capacity.

The entire legal order that regulates international relations and its security structure is built on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which are broad enough to cover new challenges and are just as relevant as they were at the inception of the Organization. Notwithstanding the discussion around Article 103, we believe that the United Nations Charter is the international treaty that prevails in the case of conflicting obligations under other treaties. It must always be respected and implemented — never undermined. The rights and obligations arising from the Charter are equal for all Members and we all benefit from them. All States are obliged to ensure respect for the Charter, and Articles 1 and 2 must be the basis for our behaviour in the international arena.

The Security Council has been entrusted with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. So far, the Council has succeeded in some cases, but has failed in many others. Members of the Security Council discharge that responsibility on behalf of the entire United Nations membership and should therefore look beyond their national interests. We believe there is plenty of room for the Security Council to make better use of the Charter's potential, beyond Chapter VII. In our opinion, the Council should be more active in preventing conflicts instead of only reacting to them. We encourage it to use Chapter VI more often and to explore ways of analysing crises and

risks as early as possible in order to address them head-on and, if necessary, take collective action.

The Council should address the root causes of conflicts, keeping in mind that gross human rights violations are an alarming indicator that a larger conflict may be under way. When acting in response to a crisis by establishing a mission, the Security Council should stress the rule of law and justice and closely cooperate with the Peacebuilding Commission. Peace and justice reinforce each other. We also wish to encourage the Secretary-General to make use of Article 99 of the Charter.

One of the major intersections between the United Nations Charter, the Security Council and the rule of law is the enforcement of those rules and decisions, especially through the International Court of Justice. We welcome the Security Council's discussions and cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. They are essential and uniquely equipped to address situations of risk and conflict, as well as post-conflict situations in particular regions.

Let me recall that the Charter and the Organization were not imposed on us, but were created by generations that endured the worst human experiences. Upholding the Charter is the first step towards ensuring that the Organization and its States Members will act for the purposes and by the principles enshrined in it.

Let me conclude by saying that, with the latest developments in the Middle East, the need for the United Nations to be a framework for dialogue is more evident than ever.

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

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): We congratulate Viet Nam on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting, which complements the meeting convened by the State of Kuwait during its presidency of the Council in February 2018 (see S/PV.8185) on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and Mrs. Mary Robinson for their informative briefings.

At the outset, I want to underscore the dangerous escalation in the Gulf region, which is a source of grave

concern for all of us. Its repercussions could affect the security and stability of the region. We echo the repeated appeal of the Secretary-General for de-escalation by calling for restraint in order to address the situation politically and prevent further tensions and threats.

Seventy-five years after the creation of the United Nations, the Charter continues to be a constitution that guides multilateral action. It is an instrument of international law that outlines a clear framework for governing relations among States. It also provides measures that allow us to address threats to international peace and security in a collective and effective way. The purposes and principles of the Charter include action to establish friendly relations among States by working collectively in a unifying manner in the face of aggression, while respecting the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of others.

The Charter, its purposes and principles represent the first line of defence for small countries. We in the State of Kuwait recognize that very well. The liberation of Kuwait in 1991 clearly demonstrated what the international community can do when it acts under the auspices of the United Nations.

Security Council resolutions aim to champion the rule of law, right and justice. Kuwait's liberation is a successful historic example of the ability of the Security Council to put an end to aggression and to violations of the noble purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. During our term, we were guided by the Charter when dealing with the issues on its agenda. We are confident that the Council could be more effective in addressing the challenges of today's world by utilizing the instruments provided to it by the Charter, including by making the best possible use of Chapter VI, which includes the peaceful settlement of disputes, mediation and arbitration.

We also emphasize that the Council must give more attention to precautionary measures aimed at preventing disputes by addressing them at an early stage. We strongly believe in the constructive role that could be played by regional and subregional organizations in maintaining peace and security at the regional and international levels in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. Greater cooperation should take place between the Security Council and regional organizations.

During our term on the Council, we introduced a presidential statement on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States (S/PRST/2019/5). We hope that the Council will follow this up with a view to promoting dialogue between the League and the Security Council, all the more so because many of the items on the agenda of the Security Council relate to Arab issues. We therefore welcome Viet Nam's intention to hold a debate this month on cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

In conclusion, the success achieved by the tools provided by the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security will depend on unity and consensus within the Council. Over the decades, we have seen the Council unable to resolve some crises owing to deep-rooted differences between the positions of its members and to the use of the veto. Consequently, we stress the importance of the Council showing unity so that it can uphold its responsibilities under the Charter and take firm and effective decisions to counter the dangerous threats and challenges facing our world in this new decade.

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

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): At the outset, I would like to welcome the new elected members of the Security Council — Estonia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Viet Nam — and to wish them every success in their work. I also commend Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kuwait, Peru and Poland, with which Kazakhstan worked in the Security Council, for their important contributions to the work of the Council during their tenure.

I congratulate the delegation of Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency in the Security Council for the month of January 2020 and, of course, on its successful start in convening this open debate on such an important subject.

We consider today's debate to be very timely and valuable, taking into consideration the upcoming celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and of the end of the Second World War. The United Nations Charter was meant to set up rules of work as the common endeavour of all nations in order to maintain the fragile peace and security following the Second World War.

It is important to remember that the Charter was written in the blood of the millions of victims of world wars and armed conflicts. Any violation of its Articles, especially with respect to ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, could result in the tragic mistakes of the past being made once again.

Unfortunately, the current world situation shows that the United Nations Charter as well as the principles of international law are being seriously tested, leaving the world on the verge of full-scale military stand-offs. In this regard, it is urgent to ensure a strict commitment by all Member States to the generally recognized norms and principles of international law.

In order to uphold the United Nations Charter, my first President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, during his address to the General Assembly in 2015, proposed the convening of a United Nations conference at the highest level with the aim of reaffirming the basic principles of international law. We believe that that initiative, especially in this jubilee year for the Organization, continues to be relevant and can give fresh impetus to restoring dialogue, mutual understanding and trust in international relations among States. We call upon the Secretary-General and all Member States to consider convening such a high-level event during the General Assembly's session in September 2020.

Let us be frank: the United Nations Charter and other norms and principles of international law were not imposed on us against our will. We all collectively and independently accepted and acceded to them on a voluntary basis. That is why it is the obligation of each and every Member State to comply with their provisions, even if at times it does not seem to align with its interests. We should avoid situations in which international law and the United Nations Charter are used selectively.

The most efficient tool that the Security Council has in its possession to maintain international peace and security is the use of the potential of regional bodies. Strengthening cooperation with regional organizations, including mechanisms of preventive diplomacy, is very important for upholding the United Nations Charter. In that regard, I would like to recall another initiative of Kazakhstan's — the creation of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which has been successfully functioning for more than a quarter century.

In the current environment, which is characterized by a trust deficit, the confidence-building mechanism that CICA provides in the area of international relations has become the most potent instrument for the peaceful prevention of conflicts. Focusing on actions rather than on words, we are working to transform CICA into a full-fledged regional organization for security and development so as to stem conflicts and find ways to collectively prevent them altogether. Kazakhstan, as the next Chair of CICA, in 2020, will deploy every effort to that end.

In conclusion, the erosion of international law and global institutions, including the United Nations, poses a great danger for all of us. It is our strong belief that the Security Council, especially the permanent members, should be at the forefront of upholding the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law, and we all must show the collective will to abide by them.

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

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the friendly delegation of Vietnam on joining the Council and presiding over it this month. I wish you all the best. I also thank you for having convened this open debate on the topic "Maintenance of international peace and security: upholding the Charter of the United Nations", which coincides with the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter.

I would like also to welcome the new non-permanent members of the Council, and I wish them all the best. I thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and Chair of The Elders Mrs. Mary Robinson for their briefings.

The Republic of Yemen was among the first countries to sign the Charter of the United Nations. We, along with other peoples of the United Nations, have committed ourselves to the Charter's provisions and to the maintenance of international peace and security as a basis for prosperity and well-being. Through special political missions, peacekeeping operations and other entities, the United Nations supports consensual solutions and the settlement of conflicts through peaceful means, including by preventive measures, mediation and multilateral diplomacy, as a means to tackle threats to international peace and security.

In that regard, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy to Yemen, Mr. Martin Griffiths, for their efforts to reach a comprehensive political settlement in Yemen, which has suffered for more than five years from an unfair war waged by the armed Houthi militias, supported by the Iranian regime. Those militias continue to show intransigence and refuse to fulfil their commitments under the relevant Security Council resolutions, most recently regarding the Stockholm Agreement. However, the Yemeni Government has always shown a sincere desire to achieve a comprehensive and just peace based on the three agreed terms of reference, namely, the Gulf Initiative and its implementation mechanism, the outcomes of the National Dialogue and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015).

We have always given priority to the interests of Yemen and Yemenis to achieve our dream of building a new, federal Yemen that would meet our aspirations and support our brothers and friends in the region. Because of our belief in the principles and purposes of the Charter, we have always engaged positively with the efforts of the Special Envoy to end the conflict by peaceful means and to maintain regional and international peace and security.

Our world has seen the emergence of non-State armed militias and groups as well as of extremist and terrorist groups, which have exacerbated crises and human suffering and threatened peoples along with regional and international peace and security. The Yemeni Government calls once again on the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility under the Charter of maintaining international peace and security, to exert further pressure on Houthi militias and to implement its relevant resolutions on Yemen. The goal is to reach a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Yemen that would meet the aspirations of the Yemeni people to a lasting peace built on the agreed terms of reference, achieve socioeconomic development and allow Yemen with its long history and civilization to move forward towards a better future for its people and contribute actively to building a world in which peace, stability and well-being prevail.

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

Ms. Rodríguez Abascal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by

the delegation of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We congratulate Viet Nam on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the current month and the five new non-permanent Council members for the 2020-2021 term. We wish them every success in discharging their responsibilities. We also acknowledge the work done by the delegations of Equatorial Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Kuwait, Peru and Poland as non-permanent members of the Council in 2018 and 2019.

We welcome the holding of this open debate at the ministerial level, which is both timely and necessary. The United Nations and the Charter of the United Nations were born of the imperative need to save the world from another world war and with the perennial goal of ensuring peace, security, dignity and development for all the peoples of the world. As this year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of its adoption, we reiterate Cuba's firm commitment to defending the purposes and principles of the Charter, which are the cornerstone of multilateralism, one of the main sources of international law and a guide for the conduct of States in their international relations.

However, continued violations of the Charter and breaches of international law, including the use or threat of use of force against sovereign States, acts of aggression against the sovereignty of other nations and interference in the internal affairs of States, continue to occur on a daily basis. We reject the prosecution of unconventional wars for purposes of hegemonic domination, attempts to reimpose a unipolar order, targeted assassinations of foreign leaders, the plundering and theft of natural resources, the imposition of unilateral coercive measures, policies of extraterritoriality, unilateral sanctions, all forms of pressure and all other such acts of aggression that undermine multilateralism, jeopardize peace and stability and disrespect the provisions of the Charter.

The Security Council must carry out its functions in accordance with the powers conferred upon it by the Charter itself to safeguard international peace and security, but it must do so without double standards or discrimination, and always in accordance with justice and principles. It is therefore the duty of all to work towards reaching peaceful solutions and to firmly, effectively and resolutely avoid war. In particular, this main organ of the Organization must exhaust all avenues

to safeguard peace and life, and prevent the promotion and actualization of the philosophy of dispossession, agendas involving regime change and attempts to violate the right of peoples to self-determination. It must promote a just, democratic and equitable international order that responds to the demand for peace, development and justice of peoples throughout the world and contributes to the full implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It must defend multilateralism and reject any proposal that would constitute interference by the Council in matters falling within the purview of the other principal organs of the Organization, especially the General Assembly.

A truly strong and participatory United Nations is required, with a transparent and duly democratized Security Council and a revitalized General Assembly that supports States in consolidating their sovereignty for the future which should be determined by every nation without any kind of interference.

In Cuba, we have fought for peace; we have cooperated with many other peoples in the search for a better life; and we have stopped at nothing to defend our independence and sovereignty. We have never been intimidated or bowed down — nor will we be bowed down — by the illegal and criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade that the United States Government has imposed on our small island for almost six decades, which has now been intensified by a brutal economic war and the comprehensive application of the Helms-Burton Act, while disregarding the appeal of the international community, which has rejected that policy and demanded that it end 28 consecutive times in the General Assembly.

As the President of Cuba, Miguel Díaz Canel Bermúdez, has said,

“Cuba will take all measures needed to stop the interventionist efforts of the United States, safeguard the tranquillity and welfare of the population, safeguard national unity and defend, at any cost, the sovereignty and independence of the country.”

Our country will continue to contribute, with its limited resources, all its energy and unwavering will, to the well-being of other peoples, especially those most in need, through inclusive international cooperation for sustainable development. Cuba will remain committed to defending the Charter for the promotion of international peace and security.

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

Mr. Popolizio Bardales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): As a country committed to multilateralism, international law and the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, Peru welcomes the timely initiative of Viet Nam to convene this important open debate in a year marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

Since the end of the Second World War, humankind has evolved and made significant progress. The Organization has been instrumental in building a better world. In many cases, however, progress has been uneven and the international order has shown limitations in responding effectively to new and changing realities. We view with concern the spread of conflicts and the emergence of new threats to international peace and security that, in many cases, are caused by geopolitical tensions and global phenomena, such as growing inequality, the effects of climate change, the arms race and transnational organized crime. In such an environment, neither ramping up violence nor resorting to war is a viable or acceptable alternative for the international community.

This sensitive situation is exacerbated by current and frequent violations of international law, including Security Council resolutions and especially international humanitarian law. We cannot maintain international peace and security without respecting the rule of law and ensuring more inclusive societies. For example, one of the cornerstones of the international order is the prohibition of the use of force in any way that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we are concerned that some countries are positing arguments and interpretations that are ultimately alien to international law and undermine the collective security architecture.

The limitations of the international community in addressing these realities should lead us to strengthen the dialogue, preventive efforts and international cooperation that are so necessary to implement the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. We emphasize the validity of those purposes and principles and those of the Organization in order to resolve the serious problems facing us and to sustain and develop the collective security architecture and a rules-based international order so that we can thwart the emergence of major threats to peace and security.

Specifically, we deem it necessary for the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, to promote dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter. We believe that this is vital to reaching peaceful solutions to major conflicts, such as those that are considered by the Council and which pose an ongoing challenge for it. Our task is to step up our efforts to ensure that the United Nations stands more robust in complying with the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter, and that it becomes a catalyst for cooperation and partnership at all levels, with a view to making peace, social inclusion and prosperity available to all.

I would like to conclude by recalling that former Secretary-General and compatriot Javier Pérez de Cuéllar noted that the role of a political institution, such as the United Nations, is to draw a line between efforts to build a better future and conflict and making it possible for nations to stay on the right side of that line.

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

Mr. Santos Maraver (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by extending the condolences of the people and the Government of Spain to the families and countries affected by the plane crash of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752.

The Charter of the United Nations was the founding document of new international relations based on the shared purpose of preserving succeeding generations from the scourge of war and promoting fundamental human rights. In 2020, as we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization, it is time for us to recall the obligations to which Member States voluntarily agree, without exception, under the Charter and before the rest of the international community. The exercise of those responsibilities requires a steadfast collective commitment to multilateralism.

That is why I am grateful to Viet Nam for this opportunity to share ideas on the future we want and the United Nations we need. This debate is all the more important in the light of the escalation of tensions and dangerous situation in the Middle East and the Gulf in recent days, which we hope will be addressed through diplomatic means to prevent the further loss of life.

For Spain, peace and security mean giving priority to political action, improving the effectiveness and

consistency of peacekeeping operations, boosting preventive diplomacy and reinforcing a comprehensive approach to the three pillars of the United Nations. In that regard, Spain would like to pay tribute to and endorse the words of Secretary-General Guterres at the beginning of this meeting, as well as to thank Mary Robinson for her wise briefing (see S/PV.8699).

To make further progress, we must continue to strengthen three areas: the working methods, mandates and partnerships of the Security Council.

First, with regard to the working methods of the Council, I would like to thank Kuwait for the impetus that it gave in that area. I would also like to express our support to Ambassador Inga Rhonda King of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. It is a positive step to further institutionalize the monthly stocktaking meetings of the outgoing presidency, known as the Toledo format, which Spain promoted during its recent term in the Council.

We attach great importance to the equitable distribution of the workload in the allocation of penholders between the elected and permanent members of the Council. We should seek synergies by giving priority to the appointment of co-penholders, which would bring together the Chairs of the sanctions committee and those responsible for the dossier on the country concerned.

Secondly, the mandates of the Security Council should be a genuine road map — realistic, substantial and flexible. They have a direct impact on people, especially on the victims of conflict. They must include and prioritize key aspects, such as the protection of civilians, the women and peace and security dimension and attention to children in armed conflict. That approach must focus on defining the mandate of the Council, ensuring its adequate financing in the Fifth Committee, integrating the critical work of the Peacebuilding Commission into the stabilization phases and, lastly, implementing a coherent and articulated exit strategy.

Thirdly and lastly, on partnerships, Spain recognizes the progress made and the great potential that lies ahead for cooperation among the United Nations, the European Union (EU) and the African Union in the areas of cooperative security and crisis management. Deeper and more effective triangular cooperation requires a continued framework of strategic partnership that, we hope, extends to all regional organizations to

address all areas of common interest and fosters close relations between the Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council and the EU Political and Security Committee.

I will conclude my statement by recalling that the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Council will resume in January. Spain, a member of Uniting for Consensus, supports a flexible and balanced approach that takes into account proposals from other groups. We support a more democratic, representative and transparent Council. We are confident that the international system will thereby succeed in adapting to the challenges and changes of the future.

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

Mr. Al-Mouallimi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to congratulate the Republic of Viet Nam on taking its seat on the Security Council and on presiding over it this month. I wish Viet Nam and its friendly people further progress and prosperity.

Since its foundation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has sought to maintain international peace and security and to enhance collective action under the United Nations, due to our strong belief in the purposes and principles of the United Nations and our desire to promote peace, prevent wars and destructive conflicts while maintaining international peace and security.

We meet today at a time when the world is more than ever in dire need of maintaining peace and security and upholding the Charter of the United Nations, especially as we witness frequent and accelerated conflicts and tensions, more so than we have seen in decades, especially in our region, the Middle East and the Arab Gulf region. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia urges all countries to commit to the Charter. We also urge the international community to shoulder its responsibilities, particularly for the need to end the Israeli occupation, including the occupation of Palestinian territory and other Arab territories, which runs counter to the principles of the United Nations and its Charter.

The Council must compel Iran to respect the sovereignty of the States of the Middle East States and to abide by international law and treaties, while ceasing its attempts to destabilize the region and the entire world. We condemn Iran's violation of Iraq's sovereignty by attacking two Iraqi military bases. We stress the ongoing efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia to protect brotherly Iraq from conflicts and wars so that the people of that country can live in security and prosperity. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will always stand by Iraq in order to thwart any attempt to destabilize its security and stability and its place in the Arab world.

In order to solve the problems of the world today, we must promote reason and peace over war and destruction. We must together seek to save the world from further conflict, spread the message of peace, strengthen the role of multilateral diplomacy and enhance mediation to resolve crises. That has always been our approach in our foreign policy. We have launched many initiatives, including the signing of the Riyadh agreement between the legitimate Government of Yemen and the Southern Transitional Council and of the peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken other initiatives over the past few years. Thanks to our policies, we have spared the region many conflicts and played a great role in maintaining international peace and security.

While emphasizing our efforts to maintain international peace and security, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia this week announced the founding of the Council of Arab and African States bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. We believe in the importance of that Council for enhancing cooperation, investment and development among the States of the region and helping to maintain security and address challenges and threats.

Committing to the purposes and principles of the Charter requires that we review the Charter and amend it in a manner that would take into consideration the aspirations and challenges of the twenty-first century. That is why the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fully supports the efforts to reform the Security Council, and reform the United Nations in general. We also call on all parties to commit to world multilateral structures and preserve and maintain international treaties.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will spare no effort in cooperating with the United Nations, and specifically with the Security Council, as well as with other countries, as we believe in collective work to ensure humankind's prosperity. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will continue to play a responsible diplomatic role and promote international law and its precepts, which have always been the basis for international action. We need to make decisive policies and decisions

in order to counter challenges with all firmness and determination. We also need to work seriously and swiftly to maintain global security and stability, while defusing tensions everywhere.

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

Mrs. Senewiratne (Sri Lanka): At the outset, I wish to join other delegations in congratulating the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on its presidency of the Security Council and for organizing today's important open debate at the very beginning of the year marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. The participation of His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam and similar high-level representation by other Member States in today's debate is a demonstration of the importance of the subject matter.

Sri Lanka aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Today's debate takes place at a crucial time, when the global landscape is facing a number of challenges and threats, requiring concerted efforts to adhere to multilateralism, diplomacy and the further strengthening of our collective measures for the maintenance of international peace and security, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. More than seven and a half decades ago, 50 representatives signed the United Nations Charter, which created the Organization. In the name of we the peoples of the United Nations, they pledged to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Those words remain etched in our collective memory to ensure adherence.

The Charter of the United Nations has been deemed a living document because its core principles are those we hold dear and to which we adhere, including human rights, the dignity of the human person, the equality of gender and of nations, large and small, the principles of non-intervention and non-violence, the peaceful resolution of disputes and building consensus and peaceful coexistence. Those principles are the bedrock of the Organization, reflected in its Charter, and have been central to global values, norms and principles for decades. As we entered this milestone year for the United Nations, it is timely to rededicate our collective commitment to the Charter and reflect on

our past successes and challenges in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Today the world is confronted by numerous challenges, which include terrorism and the rise of extremism, giving way to radicalization, grave environmental degradation, social upheaval, post-conflict situations, refugees and mass migration, financial crises, growing inequality and poverty. No country is immune to those challenges, and they therefore need to be addressed collectively, with the United Nations providing the framework to that end. The efficacy of the Organization is determined by we the Member States and will be shaped by our ability to work together to support multilateralism and confront global issues with determination and cooperation to forge global consensus in achieving peace and security, development and human rights.

At the same time, we must ensure that the solutions also mirror the hopes and aspirations of all States and their peoples equally, not just those of a select few. Therefore, the looming threat to multilateralism must be arrested forthwith by adherence to the rules-based international order, based on the United Nations Charter.

I am pleased to note that, this year, Sri Lanka also commemorates the sixty-fifth anniversary of its admission to the United Nations in 1955. Since then, Sri Lanka has continued to contribute to the collective work of the United Nations, including by having been a member of this organ from 1960 to 1961. Sri Lanka has engaged significantly in the area of United Nations peacekeeping operations as a troop-contributing country since 1956, thereby demonstrating the country's commitment to global peace and security.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Sri Lanka's commitment to a rules-based global order, firmly supported by its full respect for the United Nations Charter and the primacy of multilateralism and cooperation. At this important juncture, let us all rededicate ourselves to United Nations processes with renewed vigour and commitment. I am confident that our deliberations today will inspire us to search for collective, constructive and cooperative ways to work with greater purpose for the betterment of all and our future generations, to leave no one behind.

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

Mr. Amorín (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to thank Viet Nam, current President of the Security Council, for convening today's timely debate to consider the role of the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. I would also like to thank Mrs. Robinson and the Secretary-General for their briefings. The Secretary-General, through his reform initiatives, works actively to achieve the objectives of the Charter.

Nearly 75 years ago, the United Nations was established with the aim of achieving global peace and unity among States, which were to resolve their conflicts by peaceful means and through cooperation and friendly relations. The Charter entrusts the Security Council with the task of maintaining international peace and security. Article 24 of the Charter states that, in order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that the Council acts on their behalf in carrying out its duties under that responsibility.

The Charter confers upon the Council responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security, and such responsibility must be fulfilled under international law, while respecting the principles set out therein. The most fundamental principle of the system we created is the promise to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and to settle disputes by peaceful means. To that end, the Security Council has a central role to play and must, at all times, work in cooperation with the General Assembly. In that regard, relations must be strengthened with the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations tasked with dispute settlement. In that context, the Security Council must encourage the settlement of disputes, in particular legal ones, when other means, such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation, have not been effective. It is also crucial to prioritize preventive diplomacy, which Secretary-General Guterres fervently advocates to prevent the outbreak of major conflict.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Uruguay has advocated for transparency in the work of the Security Council during the period in which we had the honour of being a non-permanent member of the Council. At that time, we ensured that we always worked to uphold legality and transparency.

International law — an essential component of modern international relations, whose main source, within the Organization, is the Charter — spawns stability and predictability. More important, compliance with international law protects us from abuses by the most powerful and facilitates the peaceful changes required by the international community. In compliance with the responsibility conferred upon it, the Security Council must ensure respect for human life in conflicts, when they could not be avoided. It must promote respect for humanitarian law in its relevant resolutions and, consequently, impose the necessary sanctions with a view to observance of humanitarian law.

One aspect that is not unrelated to the maintenance of international peace and security is the promotion of international criminal justice. Our guide should be strict respect for human rights, and when violations are flagrant, the Security Council should assume a more active role in prosecuting such violations and their perpetrators. Pursuant to the Rome Statute, the Council must, where appropriate, refer complaints of atrocity crimes to the International Criminal Court and promote the corresponding investigations, thereby pursuing the punishment of perpetrators and the fight against impunity.

On that point in particular, there is unfortunately much talk of assigning criminal responsibility to the perpetrators — in other words of ensuring accountability — but we should do more to take concrete action. The deterrent effect that a properly functioning international criminal justice system would have on potential perpetrators and warlords is unquestionable.

The international community can remain at peace through a balance that depends on each of the States that comprise it and on respect for the law emanating from this Organization, which is a common law that differs from domestic law and is made up of international norms or generated through the repetition of behaviour that is accepted and followed by all.

At present, we are witnessing with concern a dangerous trend — the failure of many Member States to comply with the resolutions adopted by the Security Council, which shows no or very little attachment to the law emanating from that organ and the system as a whole. In complying with those rules, account must be taken of the scope and functions of the Security Council, which must not exceed its remit.

We must not lose sight of the principles of non-intervention and self-determination when dealing with internal conflicts. The Council must act in keeping with the means and scope provided for in the Charter and when the conditions and situation so require, and it must give special consideration to proportionality when adopting its measures. As has already been said, the Council's resolutions must be inspired by and focused on the protection of individuals and on the unrestricted observance of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

The use of the veto to protect purely national interests when international law has been violated does not contribute in any way to the transparency of the Organization, while it weakens the Council and leaves those most affected in any conflict — the civilian population — without legal protection.

At times like these, when we are trying by various means to strengthen preventive action, the Security Council must use all the tools available to it, within the limits of the law, for the maintenance of peace. Perhaps we should seek new and imaginative ways of doing so and promote additional forums for dialogue that would start from the Council and engage the General Assembly in a permanent dialogue. Such innovation is especially urgent given the emerging challenges to international peace and security, such as migration and climate change.

Uruguay believes that it is time for a necessary change of pace in the Security Council so that, through its collective action — within the framework of the law and without exceeding its mandate — it can achieve greater unity of action and increase its effectiveness, while continuing to respect all the guiding principles of the Charter that gave rise to the Organization, the pillar of multilateralism.

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

Mr. Arbeiter (Canada): I thank the President for dedicating this first open debate of the decade to marking the history of the Charter of the United Nations.

Much has already been said, so if you will permit me, Mr. President, I would like to share the story of my grandmother, whose life coincided with that of the Charter. My grandmother was a remarkable woman. She was strong, assertive, determined and unflappable. She belonged to the extraordinary generation of men,

women and children born between the First and Second World Wars, many of whom did not survive to see the Charter come into being.

My grandmother was born in Łódź, Poland, in 1921, the seventh of eight children. Her parents named her Bru'cha — which means prayer in Hebrew. She was 18 years old when the Second World War broke out and Poland was partitioned. With the help of an older brother, she managed to make it to the somewhat safer Soviet Union. Authorities there tried to compel her to take Soviet citizenship. Steel-willed from birth, she refused and was arrested and sent to a forced labour camp. She and my grandfather, Sam, met at the camp, were secretly married there and escaped after three years of hard labour.

While the United Nations Charter was being negotiated, Bru'cha was living in a displaced persons camp in Austria, now with a young son — my father — and a newborn daughter, searching for remaining relatives. Bru'cha, Sam and their children eventually travelled by boat, as so many refugees and migrants still do, landing in Quebec City on the *SS Samaria* on 28 September 1948. My grandfather became a laundry presser and my grandmother worked the night shift at a bakery in the heart of Montreal, where they eventually settled.

(spoke in French)

In 1956, a few short years after becoming a Canadian citizen, Bru'cha would learn how Lester B. Pearson developed the idea for the first fully-fledged United Nations peacekeeping force. She heard of the leadership of Canadian Major General Burns who led the force. Bru'cha may have felt that the international community had turned a corner. States would help when needed, with force if necessary. A new multilateral path was being forged.

In 1960, my grandmother learned of the biggest membership growth in the United Nations' short history, with 17 new States admitted, 16 of them African, 15 of which had just won their independence. Like many others, she would reflect on how the international community was getting stronger, richer, more open to diversity.

The major United Nations milestones reached in the 1960s and 1970s reinforced the essence of the United Nations, namely, leveraging cooperation to solve global challenges. In a relatively short period, the United Nations Development Programme was established, the

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons came into force and the first ever world conferences on the environment, food and women were convened. The Charter was continuing to drive the international community to work together, while at the same time reinforcing the limits of State behaviour.

In 1977, with Canada serving as an elected member, the Security Council imposed a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa. A decade later, in 1987, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was adopted in Bru'cha's home town. The most successful treaty ever, the Protocol gave her a sense, at age 66, that an organization established four decades prior was capable of evolving to address unforeseen issues.

(spoke in English)

In the year 2000, at the age of 79, my grandmother witnessed the unanimous adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Canada was an elected member of the Security Council at that time, and her grandson — that was me — was about to join the Canadian foreign service. In 2014, before her death at the age of 92, Bru'cha would learn that there were more refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers than at any other point in history. She saw much of her early life replayed on small screens, in real time, from different places.

My grandmother escaped persecution in Poland, survived the holocaust in present-day Russia, was a displaced stateless person in Austria, arrived penniless in Canada, worked hard, raised a family, saved, prayed, loved, lived and died. Her story is special to me, but it is not unique, nor is it limited to time and place.

In an era of resurgent authoritarianism, growing antisemitism and hatred of all kinds, it is not difficult to see parallels. However, a major difference is the advent of the United Nations Charter and the global safety net it sought to usher in. The Charter's values are timeless and universal. It outlines tenets of decency, State behaviour, rights and obligations. The Charter tells us what should happen in Syria, for the Rohingya and for the world as a whole.

I would like to think that the best homage we can pay to it and to people like Bru'cha is to respect the Charter, to see it as it is — a living document that directs and anchors us but allows the United Nations to evolve to address emerging issues.

That is not necessarily about reopening the Charter but rather revitalizing some of its provisions. There is nothing hindering creative use of Article 99 to support conflict prevention. More can be undertaken to enhance regional arrangements, which Canada hopes will figure prominently in the briefing Viet Nam has convened on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, later this month.

It is also worth noting that the measures contemplated in Article 41 are by no means comprehensive. Instead, the form and scope of potential non-military measures are left to the Security Council to determine.

Canada sees that as both a strength and an obligation. To us, upholding the Charter means seeing it as supple enough to respond to the challenges of today. This week in particular, that means heeding the Secretary-General's recently issued statement to "stop escalation, exercise maximum restraint, re-start dialogue and renew international cooperation." As always, Canada stands ready to do its part.

Prime Minister Trudeau has been in close contact with his counterparts in the region and around the world, delivering very much the same messages. Canada has consistently called for safeguarding the rules-based international system. As reflected in the Charter, the Council has a critical role to play. We all do.

Finally, as the Secretary-General noted and my grandmother personally experienced, civilians pay the highest price for conflict.

In the latest example, Canadian hearts are heavy following the tragedy involving Flight PS752 in Tehran. We mourn the death of 176 people, including 63 Canadians and many Iranian, Ukrainian, Swedish, Afghan, German and British nationals. While we are many nations united in our loss, the connecting flight from Kyiv arrived in Toronto yesterday with 138 empty seats. That represents the depth of the loss for Canada — citizens, residents, extended family members, international students, mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sons, colleagues, friends and neighbours.

We joined the statement made yesterday in the Council (see S/PV.8699) by the representative of Ukraine on this tragedy. We are committed to diplomacy with Iran. We have requested Iranian cooperation to allow Canadian experts to assist with the identification and recovery of victims. Prime Minister Trudeau has also

requested a credible, complete investigation into Flight PS752, including with the participation of Canadian experts. This is an international tragedy affecting numerous Member States. Together, guided by the Charter and with the assistance of the United Nations system, we can act to investigate, provide answers to victims' families and prevent another tragedy.

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

Mr. Zellenrath (Netherlands): First of all, we offer our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the Ukrainian airliner that crashed in Iran. We understand their pain and my Government expects that the crash will be fully investigated.

On behalf of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, let me express my sincere thanks to the delegation of Viet Nam for convening this open debate.

Seventy-five years ago, the Charter established the multilateral system based on international law, multilateral cooperation and the rule of law. Back then, few people could have believed possible the many achievements that this has brought to us all. We commend all the hard work of the men and women worldwide who have contributed to global peace and security, justice and economic and social development.

However, despite those successes, the multilateral system is under pressure. Like others, we are deeply concerned about the recent events in the Middle East and it is of the utmost importance that we stop the use of weapons and give space to dialogue and de-escalation. It is the responsibility of all Member States to maintain and strengthen the multilateral system.

In that light, allow me to focus on two key areas where the Kingdom of the Netherlands is assuming its responsibility to maintain and strengthen the current multilateral system — preventing conflicts and ensuring accountability.

The first area concerns conflict prevention. As noted only days ago by my Foreign Minister, Stef Blok: “Democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law are crucial for any healthy resilient society.” In the most fragile regions of the world, we are contributing to establishing an early warning/early action system and addressing the root causes of conflicts. We do so by contributing to the establishment of peacebuilding programmes and transitional justice mechanisms,

building the capacity of security and rule-of-law institutions and monitoring mechanisms by civil society.

In particular, the ability of women to participate in, and influence the outcome of, political, peace and security processes helps to address the root causes of conflict and results in more durable and stable peace. That is why we empower women to participate in those processes in various countries, such as in Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan and Colombia, and support women's participation in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.

Upholding the Charter also means ensuring that those responsible for gross human rights violations and abuses are held accountable for their crimes. That is the second area where the Kingdom of the Netherlands is assuming its responsibility. The Hague is the proud host of the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and many other international organizations that play a key role in the international legal order.

We support investigative mechanisms, such as the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since 2011 and the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. We also support the adoption by the International Law Commission of the Draft Articles on Crimes Against Humanity and the recommendation to elaborate a convention on the basis of those draft articles. Such a convention would fill an important gap in the current legal framework.

In addition, together with others, we are leading efforts to conclude a convention on international cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes — also known as the MLA initiative. We urge the States that have not yet done so to join this important initiative.

In conclusion, when the multilateral system is under pressure, when upholding agreed international rules and norms is no longer a given, when multilateral institutions have difficulties in addressing contemporary challenges, all Member States bear the responsibility

to address those weaknesses. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is committed to maintaining and strengthening the current multilateral system and we stand ready to engage with all Member States to achieve that in order to ensure that the United Nations is fit for purpose and ready for the next 75 years.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Mardini.

Mr. Mardini: I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important and timely discussion.

When the Nobel Peace Prize was first awarded in 1901 it was given to two joint winners — Frédéric Passy, who advocated against war; and Henry Dunant, who campaigned for better protections in war. The Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law are much like those two prizewinners. The United Nations Charter includes rules on going to war in the first place — *jus ad bellum* — while international humanitarian law applies in war — *jus in bello*. Those two distinct bodies of law complement each other to prevent wars on the one hand, and to better protect people in the case of war on the other.

Today, in these times of heightened tensions and uncertainty, I will focus on two key points.

First and most critically, under international humanitarian law, civilians must be protected against attacks. Parties have a responsibility to take precautions in their attacks and to consider the effects of their attacks so as to spare the civilian population and civilian objects. Indeed, certain objects, such as medical units and transports, cultural property and objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population have specific protections.

Under international humanitarian law, an attack must be cancelled if it becomes apparent that it is prohibited. Parties must refrain from carrying out an attack when the expected harm to civilians and civilian objects outweighs the military advantage sought. It thereby becomes a disproportionate, unlawful attack under international humanitarian law. Where circumstances permit, advance warning must be given for attacks that may affect the civilian population. If there is a choice between military objectives offering a similar military advantage, the option posing the least risk to civilians and civilian objects must be selected.

Secondly, one of the purposes of the United Nations, as set out in Article 1(3) of the United Nations Charter, is to solve international problems of

a humanitarian character. To that end, the Security Council addresses humanitarian concerns in armed conflict. It has an important role to play in both maintaining international peace and security and in addressing humanitarian concerns.

As one of the oldest and largest humanitarian organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross knows all too well the suffering that takes place when armed conflict occurs. In today's world of heightened tensions and protracted conflicts, the Security Council and the international community, more broadly, must redouble their efforts to prevent wars from happening in the first place. Equally important, when wars do happen, they must do their utmost so that parties and those that support them respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law because, in practice, that is what reduces human suffering and preserves human dignity.

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

Mr. Carazo (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica wishes you every success during your presidency of the Council. On behalf of my country, we invite the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to adhere to the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, to which several of the delegations that have spoken have referred. We also acknowledge the valuable contributions made to this debate by the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and the Chair of The Elders, Mrs. Mary Robinson.

The contemporary world is witness to the increasing impact of complex factors that are contributing to global destabilization and sparking, worsening and prolonging conflicts. These factors, including inequality, the climate crisis and the emergence of cross-border armed militias and extremist groups, have become increasingly complex, regionalized and internationalized. These are the new challenges to international peace and security, which the United Nations must confront and resolve on the basis of its Charter, 75 years after its entry into force. Member States must therefore fight to uphold the Charter of the United Nations, and that is why today's debate is so timely and urgent.

Costa Rica believes that this anniversary must be a call to action to fulfil the mandates enshrined in the Charter. It is also time to redouble efforts to promote the reforms that will ensure that the United Nations system as a whole, and the Security Council specifically,

become more responsible, consistent and transparent. This must be the anniversary that consolidates the leadership of the United Nations as the epicentre of global governance, at a time when multilateralism is floundering and unilateral actions are jeopardizing global stability.

In order for the United Nations to take up the reins of global governance, the Security Council must shoulder the responsibilities incumbent upon it in the maintenance of international peace and security, bearing in mind human rights considerations in its actions and enhancing its conflict-prevention efforts. When Governments fail to comply with their responsibility to protect their citizens, the international community, particularly the Security Council, must use means such as preventive diplomacy, good offices and mediation.

We must aspire to ensuring that the Security Council acts in a timely manner, not when it is too late or, worse still, does not act at all. So that the United Nations can be consolidated as the epicentre of global governance, we must be very cautious about the use of instruments such as the veto — tacit or express — that distort the purposes for which they were designed and prevent the United Nations from addressing global challenges. When a permanent member resorts to the veto or the threat of the veto, it publicly turns its back on the right of victims to justice and peace and undermines international efforts to combat impunity. If a Security Council is to discharge its crucial role of upholding respect for the Charter, it must be borne in mind that the use of the veto, principally when atrocity crimes are involved, betrays the trust of millions of people in the United Nations as their last source of hope.

For that reason, Costa Rica supports Liechtenstein's proposal that when that occurs, the General Assembly should be convened and informed and express its views on the issue. Placing the United Nations at the epicentre of global governance is not only limited to enhancing the work of the Security Council and its role in preventing conflicts and maintaining international peace and security but also implies further strengthening the General Assembly and the Organization as a whole. Our efforts must therefore be focused towards that end.

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

Mr. Flynn (Ireland): Mr. President, I wish to thank you for having organized this important debate. Ireland congratulates Viet Nam on its election to the

Council and for successfully meeting the challenge of chairing the Council during its first month. I also congratulate the other new members of the Council and wish them well.

Ireland also expresses its gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Chair of The Elders for their valuable briefings yesterday. We strongly echo their support for multilateral approaches to current challenges, and we in particular commend Mary Robinson's highlighting of the dangers posed to international peace and security by climate change and nuclear proliferation.

Mr. President, your Deputy Prime Minister, who presided over the Council yesterday, said in the General Assembly last September (see A/74/PV.11) that given today's daunting challenges, it is critical that we all work together to revitalize multilateralism and strengthen the United Nations and that we must all reaffirm the fundamental importance of international law and the United Nations Charter.

In very similar terms, the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, in his General Assembly address (see A/74/PV.6), said that we, the Members, must ask ourselves whether we are being true to the values and principles of the United Nations Charter. He noted that the United Nations and its agencies are under attack through underfunding, withdrawal of support and the promotion of narrow self-interest. Even more fundamentally, he observed, the very idea of a rules-based order is being called into question and undermined.

In such circumstances, President Higgins called on all of us to recognize our collective responsibilities and to advocate for multilateralism. He stated that partnership, cooperation, mutual trust and respect are at the heart of multilateralism. They are embedded in the rule of law and in values that aim to protect all individuals on this planet and their rights, aspirations and dignity.

Indeed, at this current time of heightened global tension, Ireland urges all to heed the Secretary-General's call for de-escalation, and we reiterate the importance of the United Nations and the primary role of the Council in preventing and resolving conflict.

The promise of the Charter of the United Nations, when it was agreed 75 years ago as the world emerged from the devastation of the Second World War, was precisely to save humankind from the scourge of war.

We have made significant progress in this regard, including due to the establishment of peacekeeping operations in 1948. Ireland has been proud to participate in these operations for more than 60 years, and we pay tribute here today to the more than 3,000 uniformed personnel from 120 countries, including Ireland, who have lost their lives in this service.

The Security Council has also responded to the greater complexity of conflicts and crises by adapting its response, not only through the evolution of peacekeeping but also through the development of peacebuilding mandates and the establishment of political missions, with humanitarian actions and through the good offices of the Secretary-General and his representatives.

We have also seen the United Nations take important steps to uphold the values and advance the vision set out in the Charter. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change showed the capacity of the international community to put its faith in multilateralism and chart a course towards the common good.

It is clearer to us today than ever before that peace and security, development and human rights — the pillars of the United Nations — are intrinsically linked. Mary Robinson has repeatedly pointed out how climate change affects security, as she did again so powerfully here in this Chamber yesterday. Hunger, the issue of access to natural resources and the denial of human rights are also major factors.

The Security Council at present is, frankly, failing to meet its responsibilities. It is divided on many issues, with some permanent members repeatedly vetoing draft resolutions. The situation with regard to the provision of cross-border humanitarian relief in Syria is just the latest example. Ireland expresses its support in particular for the efforts of the elected members to overcome these divisions and pledges to work towards this if we are elected to the Council for the 2021-2022 term.

Multilateralism is based on the principle of compromise, of shared vision, of finding the capacity to put ourselves in the language, thoughts, culture and concerns of each other. It allows the large and small, the powerful and weak, to coexist in shared concern and joint prospect for the betterment of a shared world.

We know that common challenges call for common responses so that the United Nations can best serve the peoples in the enduring spirit of the Charter. In this, the seventy-fifth year of the Charter, we should spare nothing in the quest to achieve those goals.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Ms. Shaheen (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on its presidency of the Security Council this month. I also wish to commend you, Mr. President, for rightly choosing the topic of this open debate on how to strengthen respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially in the context of maintaining international peace and security.

Our meeting comes at a time when the Middle East is at a critical juncture of heightened tensions whose severity needs to be reduced, with diplomatic means used to spare the region further escalation. The signing of the United Nations Charter, approximately seventy-five years ago, was a critical point for the world's transition from war to peace. The provisions of the Charter were drafted amid the effects of the Second World War, with its first sentence underscoring the determination to save future generations from the scourge of war.

However, the ratification of the Charter alone is not enough to achieve its purposes and principles; continuous commitment and efforts by all States are required in order to achieve its noble goals. Increasing instances of non-compliance with the provisions of the Charter over the past decades have led to more instability and chaos, particularly in the light of the ongoing violations in our region by State and non-State actors of the principles of sovereignty and non-interference enshrined in the Charter. It is therefore necessary that, at this important stage, Member States strengthen their commitment to the Charter and to international law, which are the main guarantors of international peace and security, especially for small States that rely on the power of international law to protect their sovereignty and security.

The United Arab Emirates believes that the peaceful settlement of disputes is one of the main pillars upon which the United Nations was founded. That is evident when it comes to addressing the issue of the three Emirati islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu

Musa. My country also supports the United Nations-led political processes for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the region.

In that regard, the United Arab Emirates supports the call made by the Secretary-General to halt escalation in the region and revitalize international cooperation with the participation of the States of the region. The United Arab Emirates reaffirms its commitment to seeking political solutions and plays a mediation role and spreads the values of tolerance throughout our region, which continues to suffer from violence and extremism. We note in that regard the importance of benefiting from the good offices of the Secretary-General and activating the powers conferred upon him by Article 99 of the Charter, as an essential element in addressing potential threats to international peace and security at an early stage.

The United Arab Emirates would like to make some recommendations to enhance the implementation of the provisions of the Charter within the framework of our individual and collective responsibility to protect future generations from the scourge of war.

First, the Security Council must consult and coordinate with the States concerned in order to be able to deal with the cases on its agenda more effectively, provided that consultations and coordination extend beyond the scope of countries experiencing conflicts to include neighbouring countries affected by instability, as they are most capable of understanding the nature and complexities of the conflict.

Secondly, regional and subregional organizations can play a greater role in addressing regional tensions and achieving security and stability. The Council should strengthen coordination with the League of Arab States and the African Union to address the sensitive security situation in the region. Chapter VIII of the Charter includes a framework to build on the comparative advantages that exist at the regional, subregional and international levels in dealing with today's complex crises.

Thirdly, the humanitarian cost of conflict, exacerbated by inconsistencies in the implementation of the Charter, must not be overlooked. In that regard, my country wishes to underscore that it will continue to play a leading role in supporting humanitarian projects in the region and beyond. The United Arab Emirates is among the small number of countries worldwide to have consistently exceeded the United Nations

targets by contributing more than 0.7 per cent of our gross national income for development assistance. In that regard, my country supports the suggestion in the concept note circulated ahead of this open debate (see S/2020/1, annex) regarding the need to build the capacity of States in order to abide by their legal obligations arising from Council resolutions.

Given the belief of the United Arab Emirates in the importance of friendly relations between countries, which is one of the Charter's goals, my country will host later this year the Dubai Expo 2020 under the theme "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future". The objective is to build partnerships and present innovative ideas that will forge the world of tomorrow. We are confident of States' ability to create a world full of opportunities, security and sustainability through their commitment to multilateral mechanisms, cooperation and abiding by the purposes and principles of the Charter. We invite all States to join us in such efforts.

In conclusion, I would like to wish Viet Nam every success in its presidency of the Security Council this month.

The President: I once again wish to remind all speakers to keep to the allocated time limit.

I now give the floor to the representative of Uzbekistan.

Mr. Ibragimov (Uzbekistan): First of all, allow me to commend the Government of Viet Nam for convening today's open debate on upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security, which is indeed a very important and timely event given the various complex processes currently taking place across the globe.

This year we will commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It is an important milestone where we can look back to critically assess accomplishments, identify shortcomings and address new challenges in order to effectively uphold our Organization's Charter. Such a thorough analysis takes on special significance today, as we witness an unprecedented process of the formation of a new alignment of power at the global and regional levels. The world is becoming less predictable and more unstable. The strength and effectiveness of the multilateral institutions and mechanisms designed to ensure international security have been put to the test. In that regard, it is now critical to strengthen

the central role of the United Nations in international relations, especially by supporting the core pillars of the Organization.

One of the imperatives to that end is upholding the Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security, which is the first purpose inscribed in the Charter ahead of other priorities. Article 1 of the Charter states that the purposes of the United Nations are to maintain international peace and security and to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace. Therefore, Article 1 not only emphasizes the importance of ensuring international peace and security, but also clearly calls for undertaking collective measures in order to achieve that goal. In other words, it underlines the importance of multilateralism as an essential prerequisite for safeguarding international peace and stability.

The aggravation of terrorist threats in the world poses serious challenges for international peace and security. Uzbekistan believes that, along with other factors, ignorance and intolerance are at the heart of international terrorism and extremism. Given those circumstances, our most important task nowadays is to fight for the hearts and minds of people — especially young people, who now constitute the largest generation in the history of humankind, totalling 2 billion people upon whom the planet's future and well-being will depend. Our urgent task should therefore be to provide the conditions for young people's self-realization, creating a barrier against the spread of the virus that is the ideology of violence.

In that regard, I would like once again to highlight the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan to develop a United Nations convention on the rights of youth, aimed at stepping up efforts at the global, regional and national levels to meet the needs of our youth, build capacity, expand rights and freedoms and serve the best interests of young people in all their diversity around the world. That initiative fully complies with the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and also echoes the Secretary-General's recent New Year's message, in which he named young people as our greatest source of hope and reaffirmed his support for their aspiration to play a greater role in shaping the future. We believe that now is the perfect time to define the rights and role of young people in our contemporary world.

In conclusion, I would like to underline that Uzbekistan remains firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and an international order based on the rule of law, which are indispensable foundations for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

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

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the outset, we would like to congratulate the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on its assumption of the Security Council presidency and pay our respects to His Excellency Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam. We should also like to express our gratitude to the delegation of Viet Nam for having organized this open debate to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations and for submitting the concept note on the topic contained (S/2020/1, annex).

We welcome all of the new elected members of the Security Council — Estonia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Viet Nam — and wish them and their delegations success. We are also grateful to Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kuwait, Peru and Poland for their important contributions to the work of the Council during their tenure.

Armed conflicts, aggressive expansionist policies, terrorism, separatism, transnational organized crime and extremism, coupled with human rights abuses, financial crises and environmental degradation, continue to affect millions of people around the world.

The Movement is committed to supporting multilateralism with the United Nations at its core. Preserving and strengthening the values of multilateralism and international cooperation, which underpin the Charter of the United Nations and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is fundamental in promoting and supporting the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, development and human rights.

At its eighteenth Summit, held in Baku on 25 and 26 October under the theme "Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure a concerted and adequate response to the challenges of the contemporary world", the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirmed the validity of the purposes and principles

of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles and norms of international law as indispensable in preserving and promoting peace and security, the rule of law, economic development and social progress and all human rights for all. The strict observance of the principles of international law and the fulfilment in good faith of the obligations assumed by States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, are of the greatest importance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its continued concern over the current difficult and complex situation in the field of disarmament and international security. In that regard, the Movement calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. The Movement expresses its deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and, in that context, reaffirms the need for all States to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law, at all times. Every State has the duty to refrain, in its international relations, from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Such a threat or use of force constitutes a violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and shall never be recognized as a lawful means of settling international issues.

The Non-Aligned Movement is committed to supporting and promoting the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles and norms of international law, including those related to the territorial integrity of States and the inviolability of their international borders; the inadmissibility of the use of force; and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. That also extends to the right to self-determination of peoples under foreign occupation and colonial or alien domination, as well as to denounce, and demand the repeal of, unilateral coercive measures against Member States that are not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations, or are inconsistent with the principles of international law or the Charter of the United Nations — given their extraterritorial implications and illegal character — or violate human rights and prevent the full economic and social development of the peoples subjected to them.

The Movement reaffirms and underscores its principled position and commitment with regard to the promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the relevant resolutions, including those adopted by the Security Council. In that context, we also emphasize the significant role played by the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, in promoting and encouraging the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Statute of the Court. The Movement urges the Security Council, the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies duly authorized to make greater use of the International Court of Justice as a source of advisory opinions and interpretation of international law within the scope of their activities.

The Movement, faithful to its commitment to strengthening its role as an anti-war and peace-loving force, reaffirms its determination to work for the establishment of a peaceful and prosperous world and a just and equitable world order. We also renew our determination to work for a multipolar world through the strengthening of the United Nations and multilateral processes, which are indispensable to our efforts to promote the interests of our nations and humankind as a whole.

Allow me to conclude with several remarks in my national capacity.

The Charter of the United Nations rests on the goal of developing friendly relationships among nations based on respect for one other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, without pursuing any policy of expansionism, aggression, occupation or ethnic cleansing. Yesterday we witnessed Armenia's renewed attempt to mislead the Security Council. Armenia's speculations and claims with regard to the right of self-determination have nothing in common with that principle as it is set forth in the United Nations Charter, the 1975 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Helsinki Final Act and other international documents. Armenia's misstatement is particularly unacceptable, as it was delivered in the Security Council (see S/PV.8699), which adopted four resolutions on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, namely, resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993). The mandate of the ongoing peace

process, mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group, is based on those Security Council resolutions.

The immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from the Nagorno Karabakh region and the other seven adjacent occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the restoration of the territorial integrity of my country within its internationally recognized borders represent a basic premise for the settlement of the conflict. That is what Armenia must fulfil entirely.

In that connection, I would like to quote the Secretary-General, who yesterday stated the following:

“While the Charter and its purposes and principles remain as relevant as ever, our tools must adapt to new realities. We must use them with greater determination and creativity. That includes ensuring the implementation of the Security Council’s decisions by Member States pursuant to Article 25 of the Charter.” (*S/PV.8699. p. 3*)

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

Mr. Ke (Cambodia): At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate Viet Nam on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We wish to thank Viet Nam for convening this important debate. I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and the Chair of The Elders, Mrs. Mary Robinson, for their informative briefings yesterday (see *S/PV.8699*).

Cambodia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of the Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and by the representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

As we enter the new decade, it is important to reflect on the difficulties and successes the global community has faced since the turn of the twenty-first century. Despite tremendous achievements in the sciences and technologies, with the Internet bringing people closer together, it is unfortunate that conflicts, crises and power politics have left a lasting negative imprint on the world. The year 2020 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and calls for concerted, collaborative action. The United Nations was established to maintain international peace and security, safeguard human rights and promote international development, with the Charter of the

United Nations guiding the global community in the achievement of those aspirations.

As is highlighted in the concept note (S/2020/1, annex), the Charter of the United Nations has helped Member States record significant achievements and progress in fostering peace, security and international cooperation, while its purposes and principles have become the foundation of international law. As such, the Charter is the central pillar upon which peace, security and global development must stand. In that light, the Royal Government of Cambodia would like to reiterate its unyielding commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. Cambodia strongly believes that the principles of respect for the sovereign equality, independence and territorial integrity of States, as well as non-interference in the domestic affairs of States, play an important part in building long-lasting peace and prosperity for all. In seeking to promote respect for the Charter with a view to safeguarding the three pillars of the United Nations, my delegation would like to focus on the following points.

First, our collective whole must ensure that the United Nations is a more responsive, transparent and accountable institution for the future. The changing realities of the twenty-first century require the Council to act decisively in a cooperative and transparent approach. One way for the Security Council to promote effective peace and security action, in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter, is by strengthening its peacekeeping engagement, including through the provision of clear, focused mandates for missions. Since 2006, Cambodia has deployed thousands of its peacekeepers to some of the most demanding missions across the world. Experience shows that clear peacekeeping mandates, together with political support and sufficient resources, as well as adequate financing and logistical support, are key elements necessary for the United Nations to effectively safeguard and protect the most vulnerable civilian populations in conflict situations.

Secondly, the international community must focus its efforts on the peaceful settlement of disputes, which is a central tenet of the Charter. The prevention of conflict must be at the core of our work, with early and decisive action taken to curtail any unnecessary escalation of disputes. Moreover, greater political will must be exercised by all parties. The promotion of socioeconomic development should be increasingly focused, with purposeful cooperation among all

United Nations Members. That will further reinforce respect for the Charter while promoting peace and security globally.

Furthermore, States should make every effort to resolve their disputes peacefully through negotiation, mediation and dialogue. Indeed, in upholding the Charter of the United Nations, respect for international law should be promoted, while double standards in the application of such law and the use of economic coercive measures against States must be avoided.

As I conclude, allow me to note that regional organizations such as ASEAN, of which my country is a member, have taken it upon themselves to further promote the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter and have closely collaborated with the United Nations in that respect. The Royal Government of Cambodia will continue its active work to uphold the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, respect for human rights and development, in order to strengthen and promote the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations for the future.

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

Ms. Agladze (Georgia): At the outset, let me express our deepest condolences to the victims of the Ukrainian passenger aeroplane crash in Tehran this week. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims. We believe it is of the utmost importance to ensure a swift and comprehensive investigation of the crash.

Almost 75 years since the founding of the United Nations, we still live in a world where the main principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations — the principles of the sovereign equality, the non-use of threat or force against the territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs — are violated on a daily basis. Multilateralism and the rules-based order are under attack. Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations gives the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on behalf of Member States. That is why it is so important that today, in this Chamber, we discuss how international law and the Charter are being respected and the implications of this issue around the world.

Let me share the worrisome experience of my own region where, due to the destructive role of one of the Security Council members, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of two of its neighbouring States are being violated. This year marks the twelfth anniversary of Georgia experiencing a full-scale military aggression by Russia, which resulted in the illegal occupation of 20 per cent of my country's territory. A few years later, Ukraine fell victim to the same aggressor.

In the aftermath of the August 2008 war, the mandate of United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia was brazenly terminated by the veto cast by the Russian Federation, a permanent member of the Security Council and a party to the conflict, thereby creating a total vacuum of the international security presence in the occupied territories of Georgia when it was most needed. Those blatant violations of the fundamental norms and principles of international law and disregard for the territorial integrity of the sovereign States is a massive blow to European security and the entire international order.

Despite Georgia's continued commitment to peaceful conflict resolution, which implies the de-occupation of our territories and reconciliation and confidence-building between the war-torn communities, all our efforts are met with resistance from the occupying Power. Russia is not fulfilling its international commitments and continues to violate the European Union-mediated ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008.

Let me also underline that, to this very day, even international human rights mechanisms are not allowed to enter the occupied regions. Both regions remain heavily militarized with Russia's full-fledged military bases, regular military drills remaining the source of the destabilization of the already extremely fragile security environment in the wider region. Russia's ongoing steps towards de facto annexation of these Georgian regions by gradually dragging them into its military, political, economic, social and legal system further aggravate the situation.

This illegal process also results in the extreme deterioration of the humanitarian situation and violations of human rights on the ground, including the rights of ethnic Georgians to life, health, education in their native language, residence and property, as well as restrictions on the freedom of movement. The practice of installing barbed wire fences and multiple artificial

obstacles on Georgian territory, as well as regular closures of the so-called crossing points, greatly exacerbate security and humanitarian conditions on the ground, even resulting in fatalities.

In conclusion, I wish again to reiterate that we strongly believe that it is only by upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and through respect for international law that we can deliver on our pledge to maintain peace and security and pave the way for the protection of human rights and sustainable development. We therefore once again reaffirm our strong commitment to multilateralism and rules-based order.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Trinidad and Tobago.

Ms. Beckles (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to contribute to this open debate on upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. We commend the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, as current President of the Security Council, for this welcome and appropriate open debate. We thank the Secretary-General and Mrs. Mary Robinson, Chair of The Elders, for their comprehensive presentations, which set the platform for a meaningful discussion.

I also wish to congratulate the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. With a population of 110,000 people, it is the smallest nation ever to be elected to the Security Council.

It is indeed regrettable that as we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, our discussion on this topic comes amid escalating tensions and threats to peace and security in many parts of the world. As a family of nations, we face challenges that require us more than ever to place emphasis on multilateral, rather than unilateral approaches. Trinidad and Tobago remains convinced that, by strengthening partnerships through mutual respect and cooperation, we can transform our global circumstances to the benefit of humankind.

It is evident that the challenge before us is to make the world peaceful and secure, and this should be a priority for all States. Trinidad and Tobago therefore submits that, to achieve that objective, all States must conform to the principles of the international rule of law and observe the principles and purposes laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Charter has as its main purposes to maintain international peace and security, to promote and protect human rights and to effectively address pressing international economic and social issues, such as development, through international cooperation. All of the possible principles, methods and procedures for the maintenance of international peace and security are laid down in the Charter of the Organization, delineated in Chapters VI and VII, on the pacific settlement of disputes and on action with respect to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression, respectively.

Trinidad and Tobago is of the view that global adherence to the Charter significantly contributes to the maintenance of international peace and security. As a result, Trinidad and Tobago fully subscribes to the rule of law, in keeping with our legally binding obligations flowing from the Charter.

The vulnerability of women and girls in situations of armed conflict and armed violence continue to engage our attention. We hold firmly that women and girls must be equal partners in our collaborative efforts to build peaceful and sustainable societies and to promote and protect human rights. The promotion of gender equity and equality is essential in this regard. It is equally important to consolidate an integrated social protection system that improves living conditions and creates opportunities for women and girls to achieve their full potential.

Trinidad and Tobago remains a strong proponent of the Arms Trade Treaty, which we submit represents a significant achievement in the global fight to eliminate the diversion of conventional arms to the illicit market, which could contribute to the reduction of untold suffering, particularly that of women and girls.

The quest for international peace and security cannot be divorced from the fervent desire of all peoples to live in freedom and without fear for their lives. The lack of religious and ethnic tolerance and respect for human rights have fuelled horrific crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression. The Security Council has a key role to play in responding to acts of aggression, as stipulated in Article 39 of the Charter.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) takes account of this key role and preserves the primary role of the Security Council in determining an act of aggression. The international community

should therefore seek to strengthen the foundations of the ICC, of which Trinidad and Tobago is one of the founding architects, as the tribunal for bringing to justice those accused of committing the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. The embrace of the ICC by all members of the international community would greatly assist in ensuring the peace and security of Member States and in promoting and protecting the human rights of peoples.

Trinidad and Tobago will continue to join multilateral efforts that contribute to peaceful and secure societies. On a national level, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to ensuring the safety and security of its citizens and has adopted a whole-of-Government approach to national security, where all ministries and national agencies share responsibility and are accountable for the safety of the State.

In conclusion, Trinidad and Tobago affirms that the maintenance of international peace and security, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations, is in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, if implemented fully, will promote and encourage peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and enhance the lives of all peoples around the globe.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We congratulate Viet Nam on having recently joined the Security Council for the term 2020-2021 and on assuming the presidency of the Council. We also express our best wishes to the rest of the non-permanent members.

Our country associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Almost 75 years ago, as a result of the vast devastation inflicted by the Second World War, the international community decided to join forces to forge a tool to prohibit war in the conduct of foreign policy. The outcome was the Charter of the United Nations, a treaty that is today legally binding on 193 States and enshrines the basic principles and norms governing international relations.

The Charter is an act of faith in the best of humankind and a code of conduct for all States Members of the

United Nations. The principle of the legal equality of States obliges all of us — without distinction between large and small, or weak and powerful — to respect it in letter and spirit alike. There is no scope for any State to proclaim itself to be exceptional or to decide when to comply with the Charter or to ignore it when convenient. Likewise, we are obliged to abide by the Charter in its entirety; we may not decide to accept some sections and reject others. All of us accept, for example, that the principles of political independence and the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, the peaceful resolution of disputes and the right to the self-determination of peoples, among other things, are essential for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Today we are witnessing the resurgence of supremacist ideologies that deny the equality and diversity of humankind, driving the world to the brink of war with unpredictable consequences — an armed conflict with which one State, believing itself to be above international law, threatens the very existence of an entire civilization; a State that trumpets its military power and its exceptionalist ideology to impose its national sovereignty over the sovereignty of all the peoples of the world. This is a return to the darkest moments of the last century, when domestic national objectives combined with ambitions of global domination to fuel the use of armed force out no international legal controls. This is endless war as a method of oppression and expansion of power — a world with no Charter of the United Nations!

We ask by what authority a Government may systematically violate, with impunity, the Charter of the United Nations by conducting indiscriminate bombings and extrajudicial executions; by violating the territorial integrity of or invading sovereign countries; by imposing coercive measures against more than one-third of humankind; by violating the principle of non-interference in internal affairs; by imposing collective punishment against civilian populations; by defending torture as a State practice; by threatening entire nations with naval blockades; by threatening to destroy the cultural heritage of a people; by violating the immunity of diplomatic headquarters; by conducting economic terrorism; or by preventing diplomats from States that do not obey its orders from exercising their rights in the United Nations? The answer is very simply — no Government has any such authority. No such authority exists.

Our 193 States and, more specifically, the members of the Security Council, tasked with taking measures to maintain or restore international peace and security, must prevent the catastrophe that is war and uphold the Charter of the United Nations. Throughout human history there has never been a better alternative to the Charter. Ignoring its value and binding character is not only a betrayal of the past generations who bequeathed us this tool for peace but also a betrayal of future generations who deserve to live free from the unspeakable suffering of war. We cannot allow the United Nations to perish on our watch or for it to suffer the same fate as the defunct League of Nations. That failure led to the Second World War II, and it is our duty to prevent a third.

In conclusion, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as a responsible member of the international community, today reaffirms its commitment to the Charter and to the norms of international law. We put into practice the peaceful coexistence among nations, based on mutual respect. We are therefore announcing today our support for the establishment of a group of friends in defence of the Charter of the United Nations, with the purpose of safeguarding for all the peoples of the world the effective application of the most important legal, moral and intellectual instrument devised by humankind, which has succeeded since 1945 in preventing a third world war.

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

Mr. Mahmaminov (Tajikistan): At the outset, I would like to congratulate Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I also express my appreciation for the convening of today's open debate on such an important topic as upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the Chair of The Elders for their constructive briefings.

Maintaining peace and security is an issue of top priority for the entire international community. For this reason, in order to stop wars and settle conflicts the international community must shoulder its responsibility to undertake urgent collective measures. The norms and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations retain their fundamental significance in international relations. We fully subscribe to what the Secretary-General has said: "Peace, justice, human

dignity, tolerance and solidarity are enshrined in the Charter and bind us together". Indeed, we can succeed only if we work together.

During the existence of the United Nations, the world has made considerable progress in technological, information, economic and social development, which through globalization is spreading across the world. However, the negative aspects of such phenomena as international terrorism, extremism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and the exacerbation of environmental issues pose a serious threat to the international community. The current situation requires all countries to take more robust action and make firm commitments by facilitating region cooperation and partnerships based on fair, effective and mutually beneficial economic relations.

My country, Tajikistan, therefore calls on all those concerned to maximize their efforts towards a speedy and full settlement to the long-standing and current conflicts in different parts of parts of the world, and especially in the Middle East. The United Nations plays a key role in coordinating Member States' efforts in order to effectively meet the challenges of our time and attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

The notion of war and peace is not alien to Tajikistan. From their own experience, the Tajik people are well aware what death, devastation and pain war can cause. My country had to face such challenges in the initial stages of establishing itself as a sovereign State. The consequences were deplorable. The five years of imposed civil war claimed extensive human casualties, displaced a million people and caused enormous economic devastation. But as a result of successful progress in peacebuilding, we managed to deal with those difficulties.

Over the past two decades, under the leadership of President Emomali Rahmon, the country has come a long way and, despite many challenges, succeeded in achieving peace, stability and sustainable development. We are proud of these accomplishments. One of the main lessons that can be drawn from our experience is that it is only through cooperation and joint actions that we will win the fight against the forces of evil and global threats.

The United Nations, regional organizations and other partners — such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and others — played a

successful and important role in achieving a peace process in Tajikistan. Upon the successful completion of the mission of the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia was established in Ashgabat. Today it promotes dialogue between the Governments of the countries of the region on finding solutions on how to address emerging problems and eliminate potential threats to peace and security.

The upcoming commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nation, in September, will provide an opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to multilateralism and to the United Nations. In this regard, we are looking forward to adopting a unifying declaration that captures Member States shared vision for a common future.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that as an advocate of broad-based cooperation, Tajikistan believes that only collective and coordinated efforts and effective regional and international cooperation can serve as a foundation of our common success in maintaining peace and security. The mutual understanding and cooperation that have prevailed in this Organization since its establishment remain the only path towards a bright and clear future and universal peace and prosperity.

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

Mr. Prasad (Fiji): I wish to congratulate Viet Nam on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and for having convened this debate, as well as to congratulate all the new members of the Security Council.

The United Nations is commemorating 75 years since its founding. The United Nations was founded, as per the opening sentence of the Charter, with a vision to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. That responsibility ultimately lies with the Security Council. The Security Council sits with that burden. That burden could not be clearer in relation to developments in the Middle East over the past few days.

The Security Council has since its founding influenced international peace and security. When it acts with speed, it always prevents conflict. When its members act in concert, it saves many thousands of lives. When the Council fails to agree, conflicts

become protracted, women and children suffer the most and many lives are lost — it is that simple.

There is a wide range of issues that demand the Council’s attention — the heightened tensions in the Middle East; international terrorism; risks arising from new technologies; nuclear proliferation; and the 13 existing peace operations. The Secretary-General, in his briefings this week, spoke about geopolitical fractures and the growing tide of nationalism that is harming multilateralism. He spoke about growing mistrust in the United Nations. I could not agree with him more. All these challenges mean we need a Council that is decisive; that demonstrates purpose and urgency; and that exercises flexibility and creativity but ultimately acts within the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

Regional organizations play an increasingly critical role in assisting the Security Council in its peace and security responsibilities. They understand local dynamics. They have connections and a growing capacity to play a critical role in the prevention of conflicts and building peace. The Pacific has provided an excellent demonstration of that role in assisting a fellow member of the Pacific Islands Forum — Solomon Islands — to transition out of conflict. Going forward, that link needs to be strengthened.

At the time the Charter was agreed, Fiji was not a free country; we acquired our independence twenty-five years later. We are proud to share the fiftieth anniversary of our independence with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations this year; both are equally important to us.

Not all the current challenges could have been imagined by the framers of our Charter. Today the world faces a new war of a type that the drafters of the Charter could not have imagined 75 years ago. The Pacific Island Forum leaders have declared climate crisis as the gravest security threat facing the Pacific islands. We started 2020 with the tragic expression of that grave challenge: the bushfires across Australia tell us we are at war with the planet.

The majority of United Nations peace operations are today in regions that face some type of climate-induced stress: water stress, food insecurity, destroyed livelihoods — all are consequences of climate change that fuel intra- and inter-State conflicts. It does not take a rocket scientist to tell us that stresses that are caused

by the climate crisis, whether on land or sea, are fuel for international terrorism and extremists.

Our biodiversity, oceans, forests and lands are threatened by global warming. There are no front lines. There are no safe areas. The melting glaciers in the North, the dying coral reefs of blue Pacific in the South, the charred biodiversity across Australia are all frontlines in the climate crisis. Yet the gravest threat to peace and security comes from the slow-onset impacts of the climate crisis — one impact after another, repeated year in, year out, can transform stable States into unstable and fragile States. Nowhere is that felt more intensely than in small States.

The founders of the United Nations, opening the Charter with their vision “to save successive generations from the scourge of war”, showed great foresight. They did not limit or constrain the meaning of war in a definition based on guns and weapons. The climate crisis has all the intrinsic features of war — it kills human beings; water, food and insecurities are weaponized in climate-induced conflicts; and as in all wars, women and children bear the brunt of suffering and pain — and we are losing this war. To win the climate war may seem like an impossible proposition, but at the General Assembly, Nelson Mandela reminds us every day that it always seems impossible until it is done.

As we mark our seventy-fifth anniversary, it is time to recommit ourselves to our Charter. It is time to raise our climate ambition, to rekindle our multilateral spirit and apply ourselves collectively to tackle what Fiji’s Prime Minister describes as the battle of our lives.

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

Mr. Al Omoush (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to commend your initiative, Mr. President, to convene this meeting on the theme “Maintenance of international peace and security: Upholding the United Nations Charter”, which coincides with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

I would also like to congratulate Viet Nam on joining the Council for the period 2020-2021. I wish you, Sir, all the best at the helm of the Council this month. We look forward to working with you and with the incoming members of the Council: Estonia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and all the other briefers for their valuable statements.

Commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and to the rules of international law has always been the mainstay of our foreign policy. Jordan has always been committed to respecting international and bilateral treaties and conventions, while implementing all international resolutions. We have rejected double standards and selective approaches, especially when it comes to resolutions on the Palestinian question, based on our belief in the role of the United Nations as the authoritative standard for international relations and the diplomatic settlement of disputes and for the establishment of international law.

Jordan, which joined the United Nations in 1955, fully believes that this international Organization cannot succeed in carrying out its responsibilities unless it is committed to implementing its resolutions and related operations in compliance with the values of justice and international law. The international community, at all levels, must implement all the commitments resulting from those resolutions.

In its foreign policy, Jordan is also committed to upholding international norms and the diplomatic principles governing bilateral and multilateral relations, while maintaining the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others. We are committed to moderation and believe that regional and international disputes can only be resolved through peaceful means, diplomacy and dialogue, while refraining from resorting to force or the threat of using it.

The United Nations and responsible countries renounce the escalation of violence in order to spare the world further wars and human suffering as a result of military confrontation.

In the context of the rapid pace of change in international political and strategic relations, the recent international crises, especially those in the Middle East, have shown the importance of the principles and purposes on which the United Nations was founded and its central role in establishing and maintaining international peace and security. They have also demonstrated the need to increase the effectiveness of the Organization by providing it with all the necessary resources and mechanisms to empower it and to address the root causes of its deficiencies.

My country therefore supports the wide-ranging reform programme launched by Secretary-General António Guterres to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the Organization and its capacities to counter crises. In that regard, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan presided in 2019 over the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, which called on the Secretary-General to convene annual sessions of this Conference. Jordan's leadership has garnered the support of the countries of the region and other countries concerned as it demonstrates Jordan's full commitment to supporting the initiatives of the Secretary-General based on our belief in achieving regional and international peace and security.

Our region urgently needs to build trust, strengthen cooperation and achieve peace rather than suffer conflicts so that our people can live in peace and security in order to realize the future they want. The significant changes, challenges and priorities of the international community, as well as addressing them, are adequate proof of the need for the Organization to adapt, develop and improve so that it can carry out its work in an effective and tangible manner, especially to deal with transnational challenges, particularly terrorism, violent extremism, xenophobia, climate change, migration and refugee issues. The nature of such challenges requires comprehensive international action to address the root causes through a deeper understanding of the interconnected socioeconomic and existential dimensions of those phenomena, the solutions to which must be equally comprehensive and far-reaching.

That also applies to international peace and security. The international community must do its utmost to uphold justice and ensure the implementation of international resolutions by providing the necessary political environment founded on respect for human rights and tolerance, as well as creating opportunities for inclusive development and finding fundamental solutions to unemployment and social imbalance. That would contribute directly to building stability, trust and universal justice that would exclude no one. Throughout the world we must uphold the values that are the foundation for our harmony and mutual coexistence.

In line with our commitment to the Charter, the promotion of peace, the protection of humanity and the alleviation of the impact of wars and conflicts on

vulnerable groups worldwide, Jordan has participated for decades in United Nations peacekeeping operations across the world. In fact, we have contributed more than 100,000 Jordanians to peacekeeping operations that help to protect civilians in difficult and complex situations. The Kingdom will continue to support the United Nations approach and efforts for peacebuilding and peacekeeping at all levels.

Given the important role of young people in building and maintaining peace and security, during its membership of the Security Council for the period from 2014 to 2015 Jordan proposed the historic resolution 2250 (2015), on youth, peace and security, to help integrate young people as an essential partner and to promote their positive role and representation in decision-making in order to empower them and enable them to achieve sustainable peace and counter extremism. That initiative by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al-Hussein Bin Abdullah helped to introduce a new phase of United Nations engagement on youth, mobilizing the necessary international support to give young people the attention that they deserve while ensuring a better future for them and protecting them from the negative effects of conflict and from being recruited by evil, violent and extremist forces. We also stress the important role of women in establishing security and stability in their communities as well as their fundamental role in spreading the principles of harmony, tolerance and peace. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the Organization and its Charter in the twenty-first century, we must prioritize young people in the international community.

During the general debate of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein emphasized that

“[t]olerance, compassion and the equality of all human beings are the values that make global harmony and collective action possible. Those are the values that permeate the Charter of the United Nations — to live together in peace as good neighbours, to honour the rights and equality of all and to combine our efforts and unite our strengths, not only in order to maintain peace and security but also to improve human life through justice, prosperity and greater hope for humankind.

“Those are the moral obligations that the United Nations founders set forth. Now they are

our responsibility. We must not fail.” (A/74/PV.3, pp. 39-40)

The President: As there are still more than 20 names on the list of speakers, I once again remind all speakers to keep to the allocated time limit.

I now give the floor to the representative of Oman.

Mr. Al Hassan (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): Seventy-five years ago, the peoples of the world reached consensus on a noble objective — saving humankind from the scourge of war. To that end, they adopted a number of values, principles and codes of conduct aimed at maintaining peace and promoting the values of tolerance and cooperation among all countries and peoples.

My delegation agrees with what was said by the Secretary-General, namely, that peace is humankind’s most precious value and that the Charter of the United Nations is the foundation of international relations, which must be based on mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, good-neighbourliness and cooperation towards common interests as well as the mutual sharing of benefits among countries. From this rostrum, we call on all Member States to commit to the purposes and principles of the Charter, which are at the core of peace. Disregarding those purposes and principles, their non-implementation or their selective implementation would lead to chaos and instability and would threaten international peace and security.

We also stress respect for all the Articles of the Charter, in particular those set out in Chapter VI, which establish peace diplomacy, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force and coercive sanctions. That would save lives and reduce losses.

Given the tensions and conflicts facing the world, we see an increasing responsibility to be shouldered by the United Nations. It is therefore important to underline the need for a more balanced and more cooperative relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. In order for Security Council resolutions to be more credible, they should be in line with the provisions of the Charter, in particular the principle of respect for the national sovereignty of States.

In conclusion, I would like to note that in the Sultanate of Oman we value the importance of the Organization and this Council. We highly value its work and that of its Secretaries-General. We hope for

concerted international efforts in the upcoming period so as to reach international consensus in order to put an end to many conflicts around the world, in particular the Palestinian question, since its settlement is long overdue and it has an impact on the peace and security of the Middle East region and the world. We also emphasize the need to provide further assistance to our brothers in Yemen so that differences can be resolved and humanitarian assistance can be increased in order to alleviate the human suffering of the Yemeni people.

The President: I congratulate the representative of Oman on delivering the shortest statement this morning and I encourage all speakers to follow his example.

I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and Mrs. Robinson for their valuable inputs. Croatia aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see S/PV.8699). I will add several points in my national capacity.

The adoption of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were decisive moments in human history. In order to prevent the horrors of the Second World War from reoccurring, Member States decided to establish a powerful global organization to protect peace and to promote development and human rights. However, because of the Cold War, the promises envisaged by the Charter remained unfulfilled.

The end of the Cold War finally created a political climate that enabled more effective action in safeguarding peace and preventing mass atrocities. In addition to the better functioning of the institutions provided by the Charter, United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions, as well international accountability mechanisms, were introduced. For years, the number of conflicts and atrocity crimes were steadily decreasing. That is no longer the case. In recent years, the number of conflicts, as well as atrocity crimes, has been once again on the rise. Impunity is running rampant. The lack of decisive multilateral responses undermine the rules-based international order. Effective prevention is too often blocked by divisions in the Council and the use of veto by its permanent members.

The Charter gives the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of

international peace and security. Within the Council, special trust is given to its five permanent members, vested with special powers. However, such special powers, including a permanent seat on the Council, as well as the right to veto, are accorded to permanent members in the understanding that they would use them responsibly, benefitting all peoples and all United Nations Member States.

Croatia has always been a strong and vocal advocate of multilateralism, while at the same time calling for the necessary reforms that would enhance the effectiveness and relevance of the Organization, especially the Security Council. Who sits on it is not the only issue; we would like to see the Council more engaged in preventing crises and dedicated to its Charter duties rather than any particular interest. In order to maintain the Council's authority and relevance in maintaining global peace and security, we need more cooperation and global responsibility in its work.

Therefore, Croatia welcomes and supports the initiative to establish a code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as the French-Mexican initiative whereby the five permanent members of the Council would commit to refraining from the use of veto in cases in which the commission of mass atrocities has been proven. Both initiatives reflect the spirit of the Charter and its intention to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. In a practical sense, it is crucial that those initiatives do not require an amendment to the Charter, which is, as we all know, extremely difficult because of procedural requirements, as well as vested interests.

Croatia also supports and is a part of the multilateralism initiative. Current challenges, such as weapons of mass destruction, as well as cyber and environmental threats, can be successfully addressed only through joint, well-coordinated efforts. Croatia also upholds the responsibility to protect (R2P), as consensually adopted in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document (General Assembly resolution 60/1). It is not legally binding like the provisions of the Charter, but, in addition to being morally binding, it is also politically binding on all Member States, especially the members of the Security Council, which have special responsibilities under R2P.

However, the primary aim of R2P is the prevention of atrocity crimes, not reaction to them. There are many

things that could and should be done before the point of no return is reached and atrocities are committed. In preventing mass atrocities, peace and security, development and human rights aspects are closely interlinked. Therefore, the Security Council, the rest of the United Nations, regional organizations, Member States and civil society should be coordinating and acting together.

In conclusion, we must uphold the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They are humankind's survival guide, but they should also be complemented by additional multilateral responses to newly emerging threats. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter, the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of R2P create plenty of opportunities for discussion, hopefully leading to more effective action on the prevention of conflicts and atrocity crimes.

We must reverse the negative trends. We the peoples demand it from us here and now.

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

Ms. Fatima (Bangladesh): I congratulate you, Mr. President, on Viet Nam's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I also congratulate the new members of the Council and express our deep appreciation to the outgoing members for their commendable work.

Our Constitution mirrors the Charter of the United Nations in its unwavering commitment to international peace and security, based on the principles of respect for national sovereignty and equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, the peaceful settlement of international disputes and respect for international law. In the words of the father of our nation in his maiden address to the United Nations,

“The noble ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are the very ideals for which millions of our people have made the supreme sacrifice” (*A/PV.2243, para. 2*).

It is on the basis that steadfast commitment that Bangladesh continues to be a leading contributor to United Nations peacekeeping. The humanity and courageous leadership shown by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in hosting more than a million persecuted Rohingyas, which saved the region from

potential destabilization, also emanates from that abiding commitment.

Rising from the devastation of the Second World War, the United Nations, guided by its Charter, was at the forefront of multilateral efforts to leverage global socioeconomic development and the promotion of human rights for achieving sustainable peace and addressing conflicts and violence. We have since moved on to a more complex world with new and unprecedented challenges endangering international peace and security. The nature of conflicts and their consequences are far more unpredictable and colossal, compounded by asymmetric security threats coming from non-State actors and a new generation of threats in cyberspace. Other emerging challenges, such as climate change, poverty, inequality, terrorism, violent extremism and human displacement have also added new dimensions to traditional global threats.

Yet the Charter has withstood the test of time and shaped the rules-based international order in which we live today. It remains the most powerful and the only universally acceptable instrument before us. There is an urgent need, however, to move from words to an era of action. The ongoing system-wide United Nations reforms can be catalytic in ensuring more effective and results-driven actions. The greater involvement of the wider membership, especially the developing countries, can also provide the much-needed impetus.

To that end, Bangladesh supports the United Nations renewed focus on prevention for ending and resolving conflicts. A culture of peace and non-violence can be an all-embracing driver. We must also leverage the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in addressing the drivers of conflict. The International Court of Justice and other international legal bodies and tribunals can certainly play a more pivotal role in ensuring justice and ending the culture of impunity. There is also an urgent need to end crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes. We call on the Security Council to provide a more decisive approach in that regard.

As the women and peace and security agenda turns 20 this year, we must ensure justice and gender equality through its implementation. In order to tap into the enormous strength of our young generation, the youth, peace and security agenda has to be pursued in a more effective manner. We also need to build on the regional models of peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

We are passing through a critical time when the very notion of multilateralism is in question. It is imperative now — perhaps, more than ever — for the entire United Nations membership to unite and engage to use the Charter in its true spirit and address global realities and the aspirations of current and future generations. We must work towards a more innovative application of the principles of the Charter, and the Security Council has the primary responsibility in that regard, safeguarding the interests of greater humankind for peace and security. Bangladesh stands ready to do its part.

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

Mr. Duarte Lopes (Portugal): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate. Let me congratulate you on assuming the presidency. I would also like to welcome all the other new members of the Security Council as they start their mandates.

Portugal is strongly committed to a reinforced multilateral system with the United Nations at its centre. We view peace as a broad concept, promoting both human rights and sustainable development. We therefore support the comprehensive ongoing reform of the United Nations system to fully uphold our collective vision of international peace and security, including through conflict prevention, as enshrined in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations. Only political solutions and preventive diplomacy allow the international community to act with responsibility in order to avoid escalation and spillover risks.

The Security Council plays a central role in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes. Negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and resort to regional mechanisms are some of its best tools. Moreover, we think that the working methods of the Security Council should be adapted to enhance transparency and efficiency.

Peacekeeping operations are a privileged instrument of the Security Council in maintaining peace and security. Supporting those operations has been and will remain a priority for my country. That commitment is translated in our presence in eight of the United Nations current missions. The Action for Peacekeeping initiative and the joint Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations are further evidence of positive steps. Furthermore, we need to focus on the peace continuum

and the paramount role of peacebuilding, namely in transition scenarios.

In that vein, we support stronger and more regular coordination between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as additional focus on climate challenges and other potential sources of conflict. The critical importance of reinforced participation by women and youth has been proved in recent and ongoing missions.

Let me conclude by expressing our firm belief that this year's commemoration of the United Nations seventy-fifth anniversary will be an opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to multilateralism, grounded on the primacy of international law and on the principles and values of the United Nations Charter. We owe it to the past to prevent the same tragic mistakes. We owe it to the present, to those still mired in conflict and poverty. We also owe it to the future, as caretakers of this irreplaceable and essential Organization.

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

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): At the outset, I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very relevant and timely high-level debate.

Greece aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union (see S/PV.8699) and wishes to contribute the following additional remarks.

Greece was one of the initial signatories of the Charter of the United Nations and a founding member of the United Nations almost 75 years ago. For us, international law constitutes the cornerstone of our policies in our wider region and beyond, as well as the fundamental basis of our relations with all our partners.

Our historical experience has convinced us of the high value of multilateralism, as embodied in our participation in the European Union. It has also made us a staunch supporter of the peremptory rule of the United Nations Charter that prohibits the use or the threat of use of force and acts of aggression in international relations — a rule that underpins our collective security system embedded in the Charter. It is the collective responsibility of all States Members of the United Nations to settle their disputes by peaceful means, as set forth in Chapter VI of the Charter, which provides several methods for their prevention and settlement based on the primacy of international law in international relations. At the same time, we believe

that preventive diplomacy and early warning can also avert the emergence and escalation of conflicts, and, in that respect, we recognize the crucial role of the Security Council in addressing international disputes at an early stage and without delay.

In that context, allow me to point out the fundamental significance of respect for the rule of law and the public order of the oceans as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. With its universal and unified character, the Convention contributes to the strengthening of peace and security, cooperation and good-neighbourly relations among all nations and is a factor of stability and security in a challenging international context. We therefore stress the need to abide by its provisions, which have long been recognized by jurisprudence as reflecting customary international law, and therefore refrain from actions that are in violation of Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force.

Greece deems it important that we all comply with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, fully implement Security Council resolutions and safeguard the fundamental indisputable norms governing international relations, such as respect for the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, non-aggression and good-neighbourly relations — that is our common duty and obligation. It is equally important to resolve disputes through peaceful means, but always on the basis of international law — that is our common responsibility. Transforming those doctrines into practice constitutes the quintessence of our approach to international relations and the future we want.

In that regard, Greece's bid for election as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2025 to 2026 is guided by its strong aspiration to uphold the United Nations Charter and our clear dedication to work tirelessly to maintain international peace and security.

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

Mr. Kayinamura (Rwanda): At the outset, Rwanda extends its congratulations to you and your team, Mr. President, for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month and thank you for organizing this important debate, ahead of the celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. We also welcome the new members of the

Security Council and wish them success. We appreciate the contributions made by the outgoing members of the Council.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The list of speakers, from yesterday to today, testament to how important this topic is. We appreciate, Sir, that you have extended this meeting until today to give Member States a chance to take the floor. Most points have been mentioned, but allow us to stress a few points.

The authors of the Charter of the United Nations were not mistaken when they began this great document by recalling the horrors and pains of the scourge of war, which we unfortunately forget from time to time. They did not envisage how much the international system would evolve, but their bitter experience convinced them that multilateral cooperation was the only way to save humankind from destruction. They were right. That is the true spirit of this Organization. The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter enhance that vision and practice of multilateral cooperation by engaging and encouraging States to pursue cooperation over isolation, peaceful settlement of disputes over war and the pursuit of a common vision in which Member States can relate as equals. Indeed, the formation of the United Nations and its evolution over the years have shown us that multilateral cooperation is central to peace and security in the world.

The role of the United Nations is being questioned and international treaties are being challenged. That means that, at times, multilateral cooperation is at a crossroads, perhaps at a time when we need it most, with contemporary challenges, including climate change, terrorism, poverty and inequalities, which all require a multilateral system to move them forward. No one doubts that no country can address those challenges alone. A stronger United Nations, reflecting the realities of the contemporary world, will allow it and its Member States to meet those challenges today and in the years ahead.

There are many achievements of which we can be proud as we look back on the past 75 years. The world is a better place in many ways. We see progress in the areas of peace and security, economic development, human rights, social development, health and many

other sectors. Indeed, if it was not for multilateral cooperation, we may not have recorded as much success.

But there is still a long way to go. The world is a dynamic place and history is always evolving. New challenges have emerged over the years and require us to adapt to them. To that end, allow Rwanda to make a few points.

First, while we all pursue our national interests, at the core of it all we need to build on the fact that the people we serve have common aspirations. They want to live in a peaceful, sustainable and dignified world. Let us build on the mutual aspirations of our peoples, rather than focus on small goals. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen international relations, based on international law, and the United Nations remains the best forum in which to discuss those issues.

Secondly, there is a need for all Member States to uphold the Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security. We must also strengthen multilateral cooperation. Most contemporary challenges — be they terrorism, climate change, transnational organized crimes and many others — will be effectively addressed if we work together.

Thirdly, our world has been integrated and globalized far too deeply for us to dismember ourselves and try to fix things alone. In that regard, the United Nations will become even more relevant in the years to come. We all therefore need to renew our commitment to the rules-based multilateral system.

Fourthly, the primary body responsible for maintenance of international peace and security is the Security Council. It also needs to make wider and more effective use of the procedures and frameworks available to settle disputes.

Finally, Rwanda reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the Charter, and we will continue to play our part to enhance multilateral cooperation in the pursuit of a just, peaceful and prosperous world for us all.

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

Mr. Suan (Myanmar): I would like to congratulate Viet Nam on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and for organizing today's important debate on upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. The debate is most

timely and pertinent under the present circumstances of growing global security challenges and the increasing threat to multilateralism.

Myanmar joined the United Nations in 1948 as a newly independent country, believing in the purposes and principles of the Charter, with high hopes and the determination to build a new nation of peace and security, prosperity and equality in the family of nations, out of the ravages of war. Throughout the years, Myanmar has always fulfilled its international obligations under the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, as a responsible member of the Organization.

Seventy-five years after its adoption, the Charter remains valid, as the most important and universally accepted international legal instrument to guide, promote and maintain international peace and security and to protect humankind from another catastrophic world war. Today, the world continues to face serious traditional and non-traditional security challenges that demand concerted global efforts. Present and emerging global issues, such as growing geopolitical contentions, international terrorism, transboundary crimes, localized armed conflicts associated with ethno-nationalism and the massive outflow of refugees, are the new security challenges we are encountering today at an unprecedented scale.

Against that backdrop, the rise of unilateralism, nationalism and protectionism have compounded serious threats to international law and multilateralism. At this critical time more than ever before, the world needs a stronger United Nations to harmonize our collective efforts in strengthening multilateralism and maintaining international peace and security.

The strict observance of the principles of international law and adherence to their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations by all Member States are essential for the maintenance of peace and security. Every State has the responsibility to abide by the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States.

All disputes and conflicts must be resolved by peaceful means, through political dialogue and negotiations, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. The threat or use of force and unilateral coercive measures against other

States are against the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. In that regard, it is most important that the United Nations and the international community support the chosen ways and initiatives of the countries concerned in settling their disputes or conflicts.

As the Security Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the principles of objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity should be applied to all Member States, large or small, when carrying out the Council's mandate. The application of double standards and politicization of issues must be avoided. The confidence, trust and full cooperation of all United Nations Member States must be nurtured for the successful implementation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations is at the heart of multilateralism, on which we place our hopes and aspirations. Myanmar has always abided by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and strongly supports the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We hope that the United Nations will continue to be a beacon of fairness and justice and play a leading and exemplary role in maintaining peace and stability and promoting development and human rights for all, so that we will be able to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to build a better and safer world for all mankind.

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

Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to hail with love and pride every martyr who has made the ultimate sacrifice in order to preserve the homeland.

At the outset, Iraq would like to congratulate the delegation of the Republic of Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month and to wish it every success. We also congratulate the other new members of the Security Council — Estonia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia. We wish them all the best during their membership. We wish to thank also the delegations of the outgoing non-permanent members, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, the sisterly State of Kuwait, Peru and Poland for their efforts during their terms in the Security Council.

Let me begin by quoting the first lines of the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations,

“We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.”

From this Chamber, my delegation would like to note that Iraq was one of the very first founding countries of the United Nations. We were among the 50 countries that signed the Charter on 26 June 1945. Today, I recall once again that important event as I express our strong commitment to the fundamental rules that govern international relations. We stress our strong belief in the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, foremost among which are respect for the independence, territorial integrity and sovereign equality of countries, as well as non-interference in internal affairs, good-neighbourliness and the peaceful settlement of conflicts. We also believe in refraining from the use or threat of use of force and in eradicating security threats through cooperation in service to the basic interests of all peoples.

Iraq's struggle against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant — terrorist Da'esh — from 2014 until our victory in 2017 was one of the positive developments in the region. It reflected the practical application of an important principle of the Charter, namely, the importance of international cooperation in tackling threats to international peace and security. That victory was achieved thanks to the sacrifice and blood of all the components of our security forces, with the support of our people and the international coalition, as well as our friends, brothers and neighbours. Iraq became the focus of everyone's interest in eradicating the danger posed by Da'esh, which threatens international peace and security. All our friends and brothers agreed to commit to implementing the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to supporting Iraq's fight against terrorism, restoring peace and stability and rebuilding the country after the destruction wrought by the terrorist Da'esh gangs.

Nevertheless, we must note the fact that some countries have not fully abided by the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and have chosen conflict over cooperation to fulfil their

interests. They have resorted to force, thereby violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and leading to catastrophic consequences that threaten international peace and security. If they had abided by the United Nations Charter, things would not have escalated to such an extent or reached such dangerous levels as is the case today. The regrettable events witnessed by Iraq over the past few days and weeks represent clear provocative acts against the Iraqi State, Government and people. They endanger Iraq's security, sovereignty, territorial integrity and social security and have brought it to the verge of a great danger, not only within the country but in the region and the entire world as well.

Accordingly, here in this Chamber we have stressed time and again the need to spare Iraq from involvement in external conflicts among friendly and ally States. Our territories should not be opened for such conflicts. That would undermine the victories achieved against terrorism and stability in Iraq as well as the universal campaign of solidarity to reconstruct the destruction caused by terrorism in Iraq. It would also undermine fighting the remnants of Da'esh and give the forces of evil and terrorism the chance to destabilize Iraq and the region, which would open the door once again for the terrorist group Da'esh to threaten international peace and security.

Iraq is currently busy rebuilding itself and moving towards a better future. The last of those steps was taken on 1 October 2019, when Iraqis exercised their constitutional right by protesting, in line with the relevant human rights and fundamental freedoms contained in Article 1, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter, with a view to drawing a new, bright future for Iraq in which the people would enjoy security and prosperity and the country would disassociate itself from regional and international conflicts. Over the past three months, we have achieved that which had not been achieved in an entire decade. We have responded to the demands of the protesters, the Iraqi Parliament has enacted a new election law and the membership of the Independent High Electoral Commission has been renewed, under the supervision of the United Nations through the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

In addition, measures have been taken to achieve legislative and executive reform. The recent violations of our sovereignty and territorial integrity have strengthened the will of the Iraqi people to disassociate

themselves from all conflicts, crises and tensions in the region. That would dash the dreams of the Iraqi people to live in safety and stability. We have had enough war and destruction; we cannot bear any new wars in Iraq. The only thing we want is peace and stability. We are the enemy of no one; rather, we are friends to all. We hope that all parties will use wisdom and reason in their decision-making and resort to political and diplomatic channels, for those are the primary options for confronting current problems in line with the foundational principles of the United Nations, leading to respect for the Iraqi people and their sovereignty.

We condemn attacks and aggressions that violate the sovereignty of Iraq, the United Nations Charter and the relevant provisions of international law. We call on the Security Council to also condemn them and to

continue shouldering its responsibilities to guarantee the stability of Iraq and ensure that it will not be involved in any regional tension or crisis. The Council should call all for calm, self-restraint, the alleviation of tension and the avoidance of any unilateral action that would weaken joint the international efforts against terrorism. Such action could be exploited by terrorists to carry out criminal acts targeting our Iraqi people, which would dangerously undermine national, regional and international security.

The President: There are still a number of speakers on my list for this meeting. With the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend this meeting until 3 p.m. on Monday, 13 January.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.