



# General Assembly

Seventy-sixth session

**79<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting  
Thursday, 9 June 2022, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Shahid ..... (Maldives)

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

## Agenda item 115 (continued)

### Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

#### (a) Election of non-permanent members of the Security Council

**The President:** The five outgoing non-permanent members are: India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway. Those five States are not eligible to be re-elected today. Their names should therefore not appear on the ballot papers.

Apart from the five permanent members, the Security Council will include the following States in the year 2023: Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates. The names of those States should therefore also not appear on the ballot papers.

Of the five non-permanent members that will remain in office in the year 2023, three are from among the African and Asia-Pacific States, one is from among the Eastern European States and one is from among the Latin American and Caribbean States. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1991 A (XVIII), of 17 December 1963, the five non-permanent members should be elected according to the following pattern: two from among the African and Asia-Pacific States, one from among the Latin American and Caribbean States and two from among the Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect that pattern.

In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that, of the two States

to be elected from among the African and Asia-Pacific States, one should be an African State and one should be an Asia-Pacific State.

I should like to inform the Assembly that those candidates — their number not to exceed the number of seats to be filled from each region — receiving the greatest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of those present and voting will be declared elected. If the number of candidates obtaining a two-thirds majority is less than the number of members to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot to a number not more than twice the number of places remaining to be filled.

Also, consistent with past practice, in the case of a tie vote, and when it becomes necessary to determine the candidate or candidates to be elected or that will proceed to the next round of restricted balloting, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to those procedures?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Regarding candidatures, I have been informed of the following. For the two vacant seats from among the African and Asia-Pacific States, two endorsed candidates have been communicated, namely, Japan and Mozambique. For the one vacant seat from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, one

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candidate has been communicated, namely, Ecuador. For the two vacant seats from among the Western European and other States, two candidates have been communicated, namely, Malta and Switzerland.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election by secret ballot.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting. Any announcements, including those concerning withdrawals of candidatures, should therefore be made prior to the commencement of the voting process, that is to say, before the announcement of the beginning of the voting process. In addition, ballot papers will be given only to the representative seated directly behind the country's name plate.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Members are requested to remain seated until all ballots have been collected. Ballot papers marked "A", "B" and "C" will now be distributed.

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

**The President:** In accordance with resolution 71/323, of 8 September 2017, the names of States that have been communicated to the Secretariat at least 48 hours prior to the election today have been printed on the ballot papers for each of the regional groups. Also, additional blank lines corresponding to the number of vacant seats to be filled for each of the regional groups have been provided on the ballot papers for inscribing other names, as necessary.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed and to put an "X" in the boxes next to the names of the Member States, from the relevant region, for which they wish to vote and/or to write other eligible names on the blank lines. If the box next to a State printed on the ballot paper is checked, the name of that State does not need to be repeated on the blank line. The total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed the number of vacant seats to be filled, as indicated on the ballot paper.

A ballot paper will be declared invalid if it contains more names of Member States from the relevant region than the number of seats allocated to it. Accordingly,

on the ballot papers marked "A", for the African and Asia-Pacific States, the total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed two; on the ballot papers marked "B", for the Latin American and Caribbean States, the total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed one; and on the ballot papers marked "C", for the Western European and other States, the total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed two.

A ballot paper will be declared invalid if none of the names of the Member States on that ballot for which votes were cast belongs to the relevant region.

If a ballot paper for a region contains one of the following, the ballot remains valid, but the vote for the corresponding Member States will not be counted: first, the names of Member States that do not belong to the region concerned or, secondly, the names of Member States that will continue to be members of the Security Council next year.

If a ballot paper contains any notation other than votes in favour of eligible candidates, those notations will be disregarded.

*At the invitation of the President, the representatives of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brazil, Portugal, Slovenia and Tunisia acted as tellers.*

**The President:** I request delegations that may not have voted to do so now by approaching the front of the Hall to cast their votes.

The voting is now closed. No more ballot papers will be accepted.

In the interest of time, the General Assembly will now proceed to consider the other items announced in *The Journal of the United Nations* while the ballots are being counted.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115.

#### **Agenda item 114**

#### **Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations**

#### **Note by the Secretary General (A/76/300)**

**The President:** In accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United

Nations, and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of the matters with which the Council has ceased to deal.

In that context, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General, circulated in document A/76/300. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/76/300?

*It was so decided (decision 76/566).*

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 114?

*It was so decided.*

## Agenda item 31

### Report of the Security Council

#### Report of the Security Council (A/76/2)

**The President:** I would like to extend special thanks to His Excellency Mr. Ferit Hoxha, Permanent Representative of Albania and President of the Security Council for the month of June 2022, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council for 2021. I would also like to commend the delegation of France for its leading role in the process of drafting the report's introduction.

It is encouraging to see that, for the second time, the report is being presented ahead of time, consistent with the decision taken in 2019 (S/2019/997). I am also glad to have witnessed the gradual reopening of the Security Council to its wider membership throughout 2021. The past year has seen an increase in high-level meetings at the United Nations, as compared to pre-pandemic times, which epitomizes the value of in-person diplomacy. With that, it is important to remind ourselves of how essential inclusivity is to our Organization. I would like to particularly highlight and salute the fact that the number of women present in Security Council meetings during 2021 increased as compared to 2019. That is a great achievement, and one that I hope will only continue.

As we know, the world has been overburdened by a string of crises, from climate change to terrorism, to desertification, cyberthreats and nuclear proliferation.

The conflict in Ukraine is yet another crisis, and it threatens to shake the foundations of our increasingly fragile multilateral system. The conflict has had a major ripple effect on our global economy and has disrupted both our food and energy supply chains. It is the most vulnerable who are bearing, and will continue to bear, the burden of that disastrous knock-on effect.

The primary purpose of the United Nations is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to maintain international peace and security. That is a shared responsibility. The Security Council was created precisely to maintain peace, and its role under Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations is to act on behalf of Member States. The General Assembly, as specified by the Charter, has a key role in relation to the Council. Specifically, the Assembly has a responsibility to discuss issues relating to peace and security and to make recommendations to States or to the Security Council.

The report before the Assembly and today's discussion is an opportunity for the membership to exercise its right to assess the work that the Security Council executes on our behalf. As with any United Nations organ, the Security Council must be held to account for its actions, or for its lack thereof. It is my firm belief that an ever-stronger and more effective, transparent and accountable United Nations is the foundation upon which we can build a better world. There is always room for reflection and growth. Revitalizing our Organization and strengthening the cooperation between the General Assembly and other organs, including the Security Council, must always be a priority. Only when we are at our best, working together in cohesion and being mutually accountable to one another, can we best serve our 8 billion constituents.

I welcome yesterday's debate on resolution 76/262 (see A/76/PV.77), which mandates that a meeting of the General Assembly be convened whenever a veto is cast in the Security Council. It is with good reason that the resolution has been coined as "revolutionary" by several world leaders with whom I have met recently. By mandating discussion and encouraging reflection on every veto that is cast, the resolution fosters the increased accountability of this great Organization.

I am committed to the idea that it is in our common interest to enhance our cooperation, coordination and collaboration. I look forward to hearing members' views on this year's annual report, as well as their suggestions

for improving the interaction among different organs of the United Nations.

I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Mr. Ferit Hoxha, to introduce the report of the Security Council.

**Mr. Hoxha** (Albania), President of the Security Council: Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, on behalf of all the members of the Security Council, for your service as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session and for having arranged today's meeting.

As President of the Security Council for the month of June 2022, the delegation of Albania has the honour to introduce the annual report of the Council (A/76/2), which covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2021.

I extend my thanks to the delegation of France for the timely preparation of the introduction to the report and to all the members of the Council for their contributions to it. I would also like to express our appreciation, on behalf of the members of the Security Council, to the Secretariat and all others involved in compiling and producing the report.

The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. With the support of the United Nations membership, the Security Council has sought to discharge its responsibilities actively, support peacekeeping efforts and urge the peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

Despite the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, both to its functioning and in respect of the crises of which it is seized, the Security Council remained fully mobilized in 2021. By progressively returning to a normal conduct of business, the Council took action to contribute to the resolution of conflicts under its consideration. It sought to strike the right balance between transparency and confidentiality, while endeavouring to be more inclusive and effective.

In 2021, the Council held a total of 150 public meetings, 90 open video-teleconferences, 14 private meetings and 124 consultations, as well as closed video-teleconferences. Twenty-nine high-level meetings and open video-teleconferences were held, as compared with just 19 in 2020 and 18 in 2019. In addition, the Council held seven informal interactive dialogues,

including four in a virtual format. While, during the first half of the year, most of the Council's discussions were held via video-teleconference, in the second half of the year the Council was able to regain normalcy and return to the Security Council Chamber to hold in-person meetings.

The Council adopted 57 resolutions and 24 presidential statements. It issued 60 statements to the press. Importantly, it conducted a mission to Mali and the Niger, which was co-led by France, Kenya and the Niger. The mission was the first to be conducted since 2019, which illustrates the progressive return to a normal conduct of business and the resolve of Council members to remain actively engaged in the resolution of conflicts.

In 2021, the Council continued to focus on situations that affected peace and security in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East. Last year, the Council continued to consider thematic, general and cross-cutting issues, including non-proliferation; threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts; the protection of civilians in armed conflict; children and armed conflict; peacekeeping and peacebuilding; women and peace and security; and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

At the outset of the year, in January 2021, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/1) marking the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1373 (2001), which established the Counter-Terrorism Committee. At the end of the year, on 30 December 2021, the Council adopted resolution 2617 (2021), which extended the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate until 31 December 2025 and decided to conduct an interim review by 31 December 2023.

The Council maintained its attention on the humanitarian consequences of the conflicts of which it is seized and their impact on civilians and children, as well as on the role of women in preventing and resolving conflict. It also held discussions and exchanged views on a range of emerging issues, including security in the use of information and communications technology, climate and security, maritime security and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council continued to receive briefings on the work of its subsidiary bodies, including its sanctions committees. It convened an annual open debate on its



working methods in June 2021 (see S/PV.8798) to look at the implementation of note S/2010/507 and focused on the theme: “Agility and innovation: lessons for the future from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”.

I am pleased to say that, consistent with presidential note S/2019/997, of December 2019, this is the second year in a row that the annual report has been adopted no later than 30 May. That is a collective achievement of the Council in response to the demands of the wider membership to ensure a timely discussion at the General Assembly.

The Assembly’s consideration of the submitted report of the Council is a very important aspect of transparency vis-à-vis the wider membership, and I look forward to the discussion of the report by the members of the General Assembly. As President of the Security Council and Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, I will make every effort to convey their views to the members of the Security Council.

**Mr. Espinosa Cañizares** (Ecuador): I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of the 27 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group — Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay and my own country, Ecuador.

We welcome the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/76/2), which was adopted by the Council on 20 May. We thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today’s meeting, and the Albanian presidency of the Council for the month of June for presenting the report for 2021.

The ACT group aims to promote a more transparent, effective and efficient United Nations. Promoting the meaningful interaction of the Security Council with the General Assembly and greater transparency and accountability regarding the work of the Council towards the wider United Nations membership is a priority of the group. Enhancing the Security Council’s working methods is in many ways key if we are to contribute to upholding the highest standards of transparency and inclusion at the United Nations. As such, we should not simply return to pre-pandemic business, but rather follow-up on the valuable best practices of the past two

years in order to support a modern United Nations that delivers on its core mandate and is open to people, civil society and multiple other stakeholders.

Once again, the ACT group would like to address both the process and the substance of the 2021 annual report of the Security Council.

First, the ACT group acknowledges the progress made in the timeline for the adoption of the report by the Security Council, as set out in note S/2019/997 by the President of the Security Council. We commend the adoption of the report by the Council 10 days prior to the 30 May deadline. We commend the delegation of France for its dedication in steering that process and coordinating the report’s introduction. The ACT group believes there is scope to improve the process of preparing the report. An open debate or consultations could be organized in preparation of the annual report in January, in line with paragraph 129 of note S/2017/507, in order to assess the work of the Council ahead of the drafting of the introduction of the report.

When an earlier adoption of the report is possible, the ACT group encourages the Council not to wait until the deadline, in the interest of facilitating the scheduling of the debate of the General Assembly. We would benefit from a shorter time frame between the end of the year in question and the General Assembly debate, which would allow for more active involvement on the part of all delegations and a more timely and relevant discussion. We also welcome the request addressed to the President of the General Assembly in resolution 75/325, specifically, to continue to schedule a plenary meeting to that effect in coordination with the President of the Security Council.

Secondly, the report provides a valuable and factual overview of the work of the Security Council during 2021, which continued to be impacted by the coronavirus disease pandemic. As mentioned in the report’s introduction, despite the challenges, the Council remained fully mobilized in 2021. Echoing its observations and recommendations transmitted to the members of the Security Council in 2021, the ACT group underlines the particular importance of preserving institutional memory in the working methods of the Council, especially in exceptional circumstances. We therefore encourage the codification of best practices and lessons learned in order to prepare for future contingencies and enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the Council’s work.

We welcome the efforts made in the last trimester of 2021 to restore direct in-person participation by the wider United Nations membership, including that of Member States and observers in open debates, which was previously limited to written submissions owing to the sanitary restrictions in place.

While we welcome the factual report of the work of the Security Council, we once again encourage the Council to provide a more complete, substantive and analytical accounting of its work to the General Assembly. In that regard, we suggest including further details on the draft resolutions that failed to be adopted by the Council, such as a brief description of the draft resolutions' purposes and main provisions and an indication of the grounds for rejection, including, where applicable, on the use of the veto, under the terms of resolution 76/262.

The Council's annual report should include, as appendices, each of its special reports. The report's introduction should also reflect the discussions held under the standing mandate for a debate in the General Assembly when a veto is cast in the Security Council. Furthermore, information could also be included on the implementation of Security Council resolutions and decisions, with an indication of the constraints and reasons behind any lack of implementation. In addition, we suggest including in the report information regarding the main deliberations of the Council's closed consultations, which would promote further transparency and help the wider membership assess the Council's performance.

The ACT group also wishes to encourage the timely compilation and use of the monthly assessments by Council presidencies. Those assessments constitute important reference documents to reflect the views of members and inform the work of the drafter of the annual report and the deliberations of the Council on the matter. Keeping that in mind, it is crucial that, even though the President is strongly encouraged to consult with other members of the Council, the assessment not be considered as representing the views of the Council as a whole but rather that of the presidency for the corresponding month, and therefore the substance of the assessments not be reduced to the lowest common denominator.

We would also like to commend the efforts to increase the transparency of the activities of the Security Council, with successive Presidents holding briefings

for all members at the beginning of their presidencies and wrap-up sessions at the end of their presidencies. We encourage all current and future Council members to continue and strengthen that practice. To that end, the ACT group recalls its non-paper on wrap-up sessions, which it presented in June 2021, and invites all Member States to contribute to interactive exchanges, including on working methods-related aspects.

Furthermore, we commend the initiative by elected members to form a women and peace and security "presidency trio", along with the continuation and expansion of shared commitments, as an innovative approach to making women and peace and security a top priority and ensuring its implementation in concrete and tangible ways, including in country-specific discussions.

As a complementary document, it is also worth mentioning the important work of the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs in preparing the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, which has provided the only official and comprehensive coverage of the Security Council's interpretation and application of the Charter of the United Nations and the Council's provisional rules of procedure since 1946.

Thirdly, the ACT group reiterates its calls on the Council to give due consideration, in the report's introduction, to the impact of the pandemic on international peace and security and the Council's working methods, including through a section in the introduction dedicated to an overall and cross-cutting analysis of the matter. We invite Council members to discuss that possibility, including in the framework of the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. We also trust that the Council will give due consideration in the 2022 annual report to all meetings that have taken place in a virtual format, notwithstanding the fact that they have been labelled as video-teleconferences or informal meetings in the programme of work of the Council.

The annual report should also better reflect discussions held under the rubric "Any other business", highlighting the content of such discussions, and incorporate information on Arria Formula meetings. The ACT group also encourages the President of the General Assembly to assess today's debate and consider the possibility of submitting a list of Member States'

proposals, as expressed during the debate, concerning the analytical nature and preparation of the report and the practices of the Security Council, in line with resolution 51/241, of 22 August 1997.

Finally, the ACT group looks forward to engaging with the Brazilian delegation, which will lead the drafting process for the 2022 report, and with other Council members throughout the process.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

Allow me now, in my national capacity, to briefly highlight that in the past year we have made progress both in strengthening the role and authority of the General Assembly and in the relationship between the Assembly and the Security Council. Such progress, which has been fostered by the revitalization process and various initiatives, including that which led to the adoption of resolution 76/262, are not a final objective but rather a milestone in continuing to bolster the United Nations system.

Finally, during this same debate exactly one year ago, I formally announced to the Assembly Ecuador's candidacy to the Security Council for the period 2023-2024 (see A/75/PV.78). The Assembly voted this morning to elect the five non-permanent members that will begin their mandate in January next year. As we await the results, I should like to thank all delegations for their support for Ecuador and assure them that, with their valuable support, we will continue to make every effort to contribute to the work of the Security Council and all United Nations organs with the permanent objective of overcoming the most pressing challenges facing humankind.

**Ms. Baptista Grade Zacarias** (Portugal): Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group and would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

We welcome the presentation of the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly (A/76/2) by the Albanian presidency of the Security Council, and we thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting to promote a more transparent and efficient United Nations. The working methods of the Council have been improving, including by allowing for effective business continuity during the pandemic. But there is certainly scope for progress in delivering

the Council's mandate with enhanced transparency and efficiency. In recognizing the timely adoption of the report, we echo the ACT group's suggestion to hold an open debate in January each year in preparation of the annual report, in line with note (S/2017/507, in order to assess the work of the Council shortly after the end of the year and ahead of the drafting of the report's introduction.

In terms of substance, we welcome the factual approach of the report and would like to encourage the codification of lessons learned during the coronavirus disease pandemic so as to prepare for future contingencies and preserve institutional memory in working methods. We also suggest including further analysis on the draft resolutions that fail to be adopted by the Council, including, where applicable, on the use of the veto. In that regard, we recall the important mechanism adopted by the General Assembly to ensure accountability on the use of veto, under the veto initiative, of which Portugal is a co-sponsor.

In conclusion, we would like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat, in particular the Security Council Affairs Division, in preparing the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, which provides essential coverage of the Council's interpretation and application of the Charter of the United Nations and the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

**Mr. Marschik** (Austria): I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for introducing the report of the Security Council earlier (A/76/2).

Austria fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, which we just heard. Most of our substantive points were covered in that statement. Let me add three short points.

First, we welcome the fact that, for the second year in a row, the annual report on the activities of the Security Council has been adopted in a timely manner, followed by today's debate in the General Assembly. That enables a discussion of the report while it is still fresh in our minds and is a sign of the Security Council's respect for the General Assembly, which deserves recognition.

Secondly, today's discussion is devoted to the Council's activities last year. However, the current dynamics in the Council following Russia's aggression against Ukraine are worrisome. The wider United

Nations membership has very specific expectations of the Security Council. We believe it should protect the most vulnerable, prevent atrocities and contribute to finding peaceful solutions to conflict. Lately, the Council has not always demonstrated resolute and ambitious action in those areas. The recurrent use of the veto has become worrisome, which is why we supported the adoption of the veto initiative by the General Assembly. But that initiative is a remedy to a problem. We would prefer that the Council do its work in a manner that means the initiative does not have to be triggered.

Thirdly, with regard its working methods, let me briefly touch on the monthly wrap-up sessions of the Security Council. Over the years, such meetings have become more and more regular, and we thank Council members for that. Last year, the ACT group submitted a non-paper on how to make those meetings more interactive. We understand, of course, that some Council members might be hesitant to open up to outsiders, but perhaps they could see it in another way. Enabling more interactive exchanges with non-Council members would allow its members to shape the public discourse at the United Nations and explain their position and point of view. For the many files on which there are no public meetings, it would help non-Council members to better understand the developments in the Council by hearing various positions. I therefore call on members of the Council to use the wrap-up sessions to convince us and listen to us, if they are interested in our views. I realize that we still have some way to go with respect to those wrap-up sessions, and we will keep pushing for more interactive meetings.

On a similar note, we would like to once again voice our support for a more analytical annual report by the Council. The current report represents a factual summary of its activity, but providing more insight into internal deliberations would help us greatly to understand the Council's decision-making processes and the underlying reasons for certain controversial decisions. Many of us Member States, as well as members of the public and academia, for example, would have a keen interest in understanding how the Council works, including behind the scenes. Better understanding the Council's working methods would also enhance the contribution of the 10 elected members. As a candidate for Security Council membership for the period 2027-2028, Austria very much values the insightful briefings and the possibility to engage

directly with Council members. We look forward to engaging in further positive and close cooperation with the Security Council and its members over the coming period and to discussing the Council's report on its 2022 activities next year.

**Mr. Aidid** (Malaysia): Let me begin by congratulating in advance all the newly elected members of the Security Council for 2023-2024.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's plenary meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council for 2021 (A/76/2). I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Albania for the presentation of the report.

The consideration of the annual report of the Security Council is an important obligation, as stipulated in Article 15 and Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. However, the preparation and consideration of the report appear to have become a ritual exercise. My delegation continues to call on the Security Council to provide an annual report that is more analytical, reflective and incisive, rather than a mere narrative of events. The report is also still far from being a substantive document that can allow Member States to satisfactorily assess the Council's deliberations during the reporting period. Moreover, the report could have offered an analysis of the Council's action and inaction and its polarization in addressing certain international peace and security threats, including by highlighting violations of the Security Council's resolutions.

Paragraph 14 of the report states that further information on the work of the Council and more detailed accounts of its meetings can be found in the monthly assessments of its work. However, at the time the report was issued, only six Council members had submitted their monthly assessments for 2021. In that connection, we continue to call on all Council members to make their monthly assessments available to the broader United Nations membership in a timely manner. While noting the challenges posed by the unanimity requirement, we continue to encourage Council members to pursue an innovative approach in presenting their presidency assessments.

My delegation commends the continuing efforts of the Security Council to improve accountability, transparency and coherence with the wider membership. We applaud the monthly presidency briefings and the increasing number of open debates and Arria Formula meetings with the wider membership. My



delegation also continues to support the strengthening of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council on matters concerning the maintenance of international peace and security. In that connection, we are pleased that that relationship was further strengthened by the General Assembly's recent adoption of resolution 76/262, which provides a standing mandate for the Assembly to hold a debate whenever a veto is cast in the Security Council.

Let me conclude by reiterating the importance that the Security Council improve its efficiency, transparency and accountability, which is crucial given that its deliberations and decisions on international peace and security matter profoundly.

**The President:** As the counting of the ballots has been completed for the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council, I will suspend the debate on the report of the Security Council in order to announce the result of the elections.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 31.

#### **Agenda item 115 (continued)**

#### **Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs**

##### **(a) Election of non-permanent members of the Security Council**

**The President:** The result of the voting is as follows:

##### *Group A — African and Asia-Pacific States (2 seats)*

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of ballot papers:              | 192 |
| Number of invalid ballots:            | 0   |
| Number of valid ballots:              | 192 |
| Abstentions:                          | 0   |
| Number of members present and voting: | 192 |
| Required two-thirds majority:         | 128 |
| Number of votes obtained:             |     |
| Mozambique:                           | 192 |
| Japan:                                | 184 |
| Mongolia:                             | 3   |

##### *Group B — Latin American and Caribbean States (1 seat)*

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of ballot papers:              | 192 |
| Number of invalid ballots:            | 0   |
| Number of valid ballots:              | 192 |
| Abstentions:                          | 2   |
| Number of members present and voting: | 190 |
| Required two-thirds majority:         | 127 |

Number of votes obtained:

Ecuador: 190

##### *Group C — Western European and other States (2 seats)*

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of ballot papers:              | 192 |
| Number of invalid ballots:            | 0   |
| Number of valid ballots:              | 192 |
| Abstentions:                          | 2   |
| Number of members present and voting: | 190 |
| Required two-thirds majority:         | 127 |
| Number of votes obtained:             |     |
| Switzerland:                          | 187 |
| Malta:                                | 185 |
| Mongolia:                             | 3   |

*Having obtained the required two-thirds majority and the largest number of votes, Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland were elected members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning on 1 January 2023 (decision 76/422).*

**The President:** I congratulate the States that have just been elected members of the Security Council. I thank the tellers for their assistance in that election.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115.

*The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 11.15 a.m.*

#### **Agenda item 31 (continued)**

#### **Report of the Security Council**

##### **Report of the Security Council (A/76/2)**

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by congratulating the delegations of Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland on their recent election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the period 2023-2024. I congratulate them and am sure that they will be worthy representatives of the General Assembly.

We are pleased to note that the report of the Security Council (A/76/2) has been submitted in a timely manner for the second year in a row. In 2021, the Council continued to face challenges arising from the pandemic, which constrained it to hold virtual meetings during the first few months of the year before gradually resuming in-person meetings. As a result, the participation of Member States that are not part of

the Council decreased in open debates. However, by building on the efforts of previous presidencies, during Mexico's presidency of the Council last November, all Member States had the opportunity to participate in person in the open debates. One of those debates fittingly addressed the dialogue between the main organs of the United Nations, with a special emphasis on preventive diplomacy (see S/PV.8906).

The year 2021 also witnessed important events that impacted international peace and security, including those relating to the breakdown of the constitutional order in countries such as Myanmar, Mali, Afghanistan and the Sudan. It must be said that the Council's response to those circumstances was inconsistent and insufficient given the magnitude of those challenges. I note some progress with regard to the Latin American and Caribbean region. The mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia included monitoring the sentences handed down within the framework of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. The mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti was also renewed, which Mexico believes requires ongoing support and strengthening.

*Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

We wish to highlight the adoption of resolution 2616 (2021), on the trafficking and diversion of arms, which was submitted by Mexico and co-sponsored by 70 countries. However, it was not possible to make progress in other areas that are also important for international peace and security, such as the impact of climate change. In that regard, the meeting held yesterday pursuant to resolution 76/262 (see A/76/PV.77) is a landmark, as the permanent members of the Security Council appeared before the General Assembly to explain their reasons for having used the veto, and, for the first time, the membership was able to speak out on a matter of interest to the international community. That takes on even greater relevance given that the vetoes are not fully reflected in the Council's annual report. We reiterate that the use of the veto is an act of power that does not resolve problems. It is a resource that is available only to a select few. That is why its use must be curtailed.

In order to strengthen the link between the Assembly and the Council, we reiterate our proposal that the President of the General Assembly convene

a mid-term dialogue at the end of each calendar year in order to analyse various aspects of the Security Council's activities and resolutions, without prejudice to this debate on the Council's report.

Finally, we reiterate that transparency must be improved with respect to the communications sent to the Council under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, which invokes legitimate self-defence, as they are not explicitly identified in the report either. As we have stated repeatedly, that Article is frequently abused.

In sum, we wish to take this opportunity to recognize that, although the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council has improved, there are still outstanding issues in terms of transparency and accountability.

**Mr. Gafoor (Singapore):** Allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate the newly elected members of the Security Council. I thank the President of the General Assembly very much for having convened the debate on this important agenda item today. I would also like to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of June, the Permanent Representative of Albania, His Excellency Mr. Ferit Hoxha, for presenting the report of the Security Council (A/76/2) on behalf of all members of the Council earlier this morning.

The annual debate on the report of the Security Council is an extremely important one, because fundamentally it is an exercise in transparency and accountability, and greater transparency and accountability lends itself to the enhanced credibility and legitimacy of the Council and its work. We need to always keep in mind that the Council acts on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations and has a duty and an obligation under the Charter of the United Nations to report back to the General Assembly. As members of the General Assembly, it is our collective duty to seriously consider the annual report and offer constructive feedback on the activities and performance of the Council. That process not only benefits members of the Council, but it also allows members of the General Assembly to contribute to improving its effectiveness.

I will comment briefly on two aspects regarding process before addressing the content of the report.

First, we welcome the Council's adoption of the report on 20 May, well ahead of the 30 May deadline, as stipulated in presidential note S/2019/997. The convening of the debate today is also the earliest in

recent years that the General Assembly has met to consider the report. We hope that the trend of the timely adoption of the report by the Security Council and its consideration by the General Assembly will continue in that positive direction.

Secondly, it is unfortunate to note that there was backsliding with regard to the submission of monthly reports in 2021. We note from the annual report that only seven monthly assessment reports were submitted last year — slightly more than half of the reports that were due. Monthly reports should not be seen as a routine box-checking exercise that can be ignored. They are an important means of allowing the General Assembly to monitor the progress and performance of the Council on a more regular basis, and they form a key part of the Council's accountability to Member States. I would urge Council members, including those that have been newly elected today, to take the responsibility of submitting monthly reports more seriously. We are certainly keeping track of those who submit them and those who are yet to do so, although I do not wish to mention any names this morning.

Let me now turn to the substance of the report. I would like to start by commending the Security Council for its important achievements in 2021, despite the fact that it faced many impediments caused by the pandemic. Some notable achievements include the unanimous adoption of resolution 2565 (2021), on international cooperation to facilitate equitable and affordable access to coronavirus disease vaccines in conflict areas, and conducting a mission to the Sahel in October 2021, which represented a return to normalcy in the Council's work. We also very much appreciate the continuing good work carried out by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, led last year by the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which sought to increase the Council's transparency and the engagement of non-members and other bodies, as well as to continually adapt the Council's working methods as the pandemic evolved throughout the year.

We would like the annual report to contain a greater level of analysis of the challenges facing the Council and of the objectives it has been unable to achieve or the matters on which it has encountered difficulties in finding consensus. Such an assessment is important in providing a comprehensive picture of the performance of the Council and the conflicts or issues affecting international peace and security that it has been unable

to address. Central to that and of particular concern to many of us is the use and threat of the use of the veto. It has always been the position of my delegation that permanent membership of the Council is a privilege that comes with special responsibilities, which must be discharged fully and responsibly in support of international peace and security and with a view to strengthening the multilateral system.

Last year, the Security Council failed to adopt an important draft resolution (S/2021/990) that was co-sponsored by 113 Member States, which focused on climate-related security risks as an important component of the conflict-prevention strategies of the United Nations. The large number of co-sponsors of the draft resolution clearly demonstrates that there is an urgent and increasing need to address climate-related security risks around the world. The failure of the Council to adopt the draft resolution is deeply disappointing. We are particularly disappointed that the veto was used to block its adoption. The reality is that climate change is a critical concern for many Member States, particularly small island developing States and many other vulnerable countries.

The Council cannot continue to ignore that issue without posing a risk to its relevance and credibility. Yet the outcome of the draft resolution has been recorded in the annual report simply as having received 12 votes in favour and 2 against, with 1 abstention, and therefore it having not been adopted. I believe it would be more useful for the annual report to go beyond cataloguing basic details, of which we are all already aware, and to provide an accounting of the efforts undertaken to find consensus and an analysis of the impact of the failure of the Council to reach an agreement on the situation or issue at hand.

The Council's decisions and non-decisions have serious implications that affect the wider United Nations membership. There must therefore be greater transparency and accountability each time a veto is cast, which is precisely why Singapore co-sponsored resolution 76/262, on the creation of a standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council. We welcome yesterday's debate in the General Assembly on strengthening the United Nations system (see A/76/PV.77), which was the first debate convened under the veto initiative.

In addition to providing an analysis of the use of the veto by the permanent members of the Council, it

would also be useful for the annual report to provide an analysis of the role played by its elected members. Singapore has been a long-standing advocate of greater equity in the distribution of the chairmanship of the Council's subsidiary bodies and penholderships. It would be useful for the annual report to analyse the elected members' role as penholders on various issues and how they contribute to the functioning of the Council in a more effective and inclusive fashion.

We would also like to see a greater number of interactive dialogues and open meetings convened by the Security Council. We believe there is a need to increase the opportunities afforded to members of the General Assembly to participate in the work of the Council and to make contributions to the discussions during the course of its deliberations. We hope that Council members, including those newly elected, will endeavour to enhance the number of open debates and interactive dialogues convened by the Council.

I should also like to make a suggestion. I think it is good that this debate is now held earlier in the year, which is a change from the practice of past years. But I think we need to review whether we should continue to hold this annual debate on the day of the voting to elect new members of the Security Council. Specifically, I think it is worth reflecting on whether we should bring forward the date of the debate. I submit that it would be useful to hold this debate before new members of the Council are elected, so that they can be present at the debate and to enable a thorough discussion on the Council's work before new members are elected for the following year.

We have also seen this morning that it is customary practice for States Members of the United Nations to congratulate newly elected members of the Council, which is part of our tradition. I feel it would be better if the debate were held a day or two prior to the election in order to allow that important practice and tradition to continue and to avoid disrupting this important debate, which results in it being treated as a secondary item to the voting process that took place earlier this morning. It is my hope that the Office of the President of the General Assembly will reflect on that suggestion, invite comments from other members and convey the views on that issue to next year's President of the General Assembly, in the hope of making some improvements to this important annual debate.

The final point I would like to make is that far fewer delegations have inscribed themselves on the list of speakers for this agenda item than in previous years. Why is that so? Is this not an important debate? Is the responsibility of the members of the General Assembly confined to casting a ballot to elect the new members of the Security Council? I think it is important that all members of the General Assembly take the opportunity to take stock of the annual report and treat the debate as an important opportunity to provide feedback and views on the work and performance of the Council. I would therefore once again encourage all delegations that have not yet inscribed themselves on the list of speakers to reflect on the opportunity to express their views later today, or on any other day when the debate is resumed. I hope that in future years there will be many more delegations inscribed on the list to speak at this debate, because it is very important and the only opportunity for those of us that are not members of the Security Council to comment on its work.

**Mr. Hadjichrysanthou (Cyprus):** I should like to begin by congratulating the newly elected members of the Security Council. We support them as they prepare to take on that great responsibility.

I wish to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of June, Ambassador Hoxha, for presenting the annual report of the Council (A/76/2). Let me also reiterate the importance my delegation attaches to the report as one of the few tools at our disposal that reflect the fact that the Council exercises its functions on behalf of the United Nations membership as a whole. We continue to advocate increased synergy in fulfilling the distinct but complementary roles of the General Assembly and the Security Council in pursuit of the overarching goals of the Organization.

We also remain steadfast in our conviction that the report needs to look less like a compilation of records concerning the meetings and documents of the Council and instead provide the following: first, a substantive depiction of where the consideration of each agenda item stands; secondly, an analysis of the state of each conflict being dealt with by the Council, including on the impact that Council action has had on the conflict; thirdly, an assessment concerning the implementation of Council decisions and the compliance of relevant actors with them; fourthly, an assessment of the Council's performance in fulfilling core aspects of its mandate, such as upholding the prohibition of the use of force; and finally, a forward-looking evaluation of how



the Council will ensure the peaceful settlement of each dispute before it.

In addition, we believe the report could include the following: first, strategic insight concerning overall conflict trends and patterns, including in relation to root causes, and possible ways of making the Council's approach more comprehensive; secondly, solutions to the habitual consequences of conflict, such as the displacement of populations, including of a protracted nature, and the consequent violations of rights and demographic engineering in conflict-affected areas; and thirdly, a special chapter on peace and justice aimed at ensuring clarity with respect to the levels of impunity for atrocity crimes in armed conflict, including sexual violence, and at developing strategies to eliminate them.

Turning to the content of the report, my delegation welcomes the two resolutions on Cyprus that were adopted by the Council during the reporting cycle, which renewed the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, in accordance with Security Council resolution 186 (1964). As one of the oldest conflicts on the United Nations agenda, the Cyprus question remains unresolved because the numerous relevant Council resolutions and decisions have not been complied with, without any consequence. For that reason, it is imperative that the Security Council show leadership in demonstrating that its own resolutions cannot be ignored and must be implemented. Allowing the effects of the unlawful use of force against Cyprus to become solidified would set a dangerous precedent for the credibility of the Council. The ability of the Council to uphold its decisions on Varosha is a case in point. It is the responsibility of the Council to shield Member States, in particular small States, from the fate of being subjugated to the will of a mighty adversary.

Lastly, going beyond the annual report, and as my delegation has stated repeatedly, the Council needs to improve the way it relates to Member States directly concerned or affected by the items on its agenda, as well as those hosting United Nations peacekeeping operations.

**Mr. Maes** (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): We thank the President of the General Assembly for having convened this debate on the report of the Security Council.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate the delegations of Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique

and Switzerland on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the term 2023-2024. We wish them every success in fulfilling that important responsibility.

Luxembourg fully endorses the statement made by the delegation of Ecuador on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. Allow me to add a few considerations in my national capacity.

We welcome the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/76/2), which was adopted by the Council on 20 May. We thank the delegation of Albania for presenting the report, as President of the Security Council for the month of June, and we thank the delegation of France for drafting the introduction to the report on the activities of the Security Council in 2021.

In view of the multiple challenges we face, it is crucial to strengthen cooperation and communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly in order to ensure the transparency of the Council's work and strengthen its accountability to all Members of the United Nations. We welcome the recent efforts made in that direction, including, in particular, the adoption by consensus of resolution 76/262, which established a standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council. That mandate was put into practice for the first time yesterday, with the participation of a significant number of Member States (see A/76/PV.77).

Improving the working methods of the Security Council remains essential. We strongly encourage the Council to keep at its heart the inclusion of all Member States and all relevant stakeholders, with a particular emphasis on the participation of male and female civil society representatives in Council meetings. Only an inclusive approach will enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Council. The in-person participation of Member and Observer States in the public debates of the Council is of particular importance in that context.

We welcome the considerable efforts undertaken to increase the transparency of the Council's activities, including through convening briefings for all Member States and wrap-up sessions organized by Council presidencies. We encourage all current and future members of the Council to continue and strengthen that practice. Moreover, it is crucial to strengthen the institutional memory of the Council's working methods by incorporating the lessons learned during

the coronavirus disease pandemic, with the aim of enhancing the agility and effectiveness of the Council and better anticipating challenges in the future.

We commend the fact that the Council managed to implement its mandate to maintain international peace and security, despite the ongoing challenges related to the pandemic. We particularly welcome the fact that the Council was able to conduct a mission to the Sahel, specifically to Mali and the Niger, last autumn. The Council's report for 2021 draws a very factual assessment of its work. In order to enhance the relevance of the report, we encourage the Council to include more analytical and substantive elements and reflections and, in that regard, to refer to the draft resolutions that the Council failed to adopt. Although the veto was used only once in 2021, on 13 December, it prevented the adoption of a draft resolution addressing the crucial link between climate and security (S/2021/990), despite the fact that, as recalled by my colleague the Permanent Representative of Singapore, the draft resolution in question, submitted by Ireland and the Niger, was supported by a large majority of Member States.

As part of its feminist foreign policy, Luxembourg pays particular attention to the women and peace and security agenda. We would like to commend the elected members of the Council that committed in 2021 to strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions, by ensuring the full participation of women in Council meetings and activities. We encourage all members of the Security Council to embark on that path. The road to gender parity remains long.

In order to ensure the prompt and effective action of the United Nations, its States Members conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In carrying out the duties emanating from that responsibility, the Council acts on behalf of all of us. In the spirit of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, which I just quoted, Luxembourg encourages the members of the Security Council to take into consideration the suggestions made during today's debate in order to improve the interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly. That is in the interest of us all and in the interest of international peace and security.

**Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein): We wish to join others in extending our congratulations to the five

newly elected members of the Security Council. We very much look forward to working with them over the next two years.

We welcome the submission of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/76/2). We appreciate the convening of this meeting before the summer break, although we would also be interested in exploring the possibility of further improving the scheduling of this debate along the lines of the suggestion made by our colleague from Singapore. We believe it is very important to have strong participation in this discussion, and the scheduling of the debate is a relevant aspect in that regard.

As previous speakers have done, we will make a few short remarks concerning the situations in which we believe the Council has been unable to fulfil its mandate and address the fact that that is not sufficiently reflected in the report.

In Syria, the decision to restrict the cross-border delivery of humanitarian aid to a bare minimum was a political compromise wholly incommensurate with the humanitarian needs on the ground. We hope the Council will do better in the upcoming discussion on the renewal of cross-border access.

In Myanmar, the Council continues to be unable to agree to a public meeting or to provide any statement, even by way of elements for the press, having failed to adopt a draft resolution since the outbreak of the military coup in the country.

In Ethiopia and other countries, ongoing catastrophes have seen no action taken by the Council.

More recently, of course, the Council has been unable to address the aggression committed against Ukraine, although we commend it for triggering the Uniting for Peace mechanism, thereby entrusting the General Assembly with the responsibility to address that matter.

There is also little in the Council's report on the ongoing crisis in the area of the protection of civilians, as documented in the reports of the Secretary-General and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Most telling are the many instances in which the Council disregards the ongoing and serious violations of its own resolutions. In that respect, we wish to once again commend the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, which is

now supported by 123 States — we thank Mozambique for joining it yesterday. We encourage all States to join the code of conduct and urge consistent efforts to work towards its implementation.

This debate provides a crucial opportunity to reflect on how the Security Council and the General Assembly can work together to uphold peace and security. In that regard, the General Assembly has shouldered its responsibility in past years, in particular by adopting a resolution on the situation in Myanmar and, more recently, meeting in an emergency special session to address the aggression committed against Ukraine by Russia, following a veto being cast in the Security Council on a similar text.

The use of the veto continues to hinder the effectiveness of the Council. Like previous speakers, we wish to highlight the veto that was cast on a very important draft resolution on climate change (S/2021/990), which was endorsed and co-sponsored by an unprecedented number of members of the General Assembly. The Assembly has since adopted resolution 76/262 by consensus, otherwise known as the veto initiative, which means that permanent members of the Security Council that veto a draft resolution will no longer have the last word. We hope that the prospect of accountability to the General Assembly will lead to more Security Council action and fewer vetoes being cast.

Yesterday marked the first meeting of the General Assembly triggered by the veto initiative (see A/76/PV.77). That debate will continue tomorrow, and we are very encouraged by the strong interest of the membership in participating in it. We commend the Council for producing a special report (A/76/853) — the first of its kind in many years — in accordance with the terms of the veto initiative and the Charter of the United Nations. We will evaluate the lessons learned after the debate has concluded and make suggestions for further improvements with respect to the working methods of the Council, which will remain a priority for us on the whole. We will work within the framework of the ACT group and with others on issues such as co-penholdership, burden-sharing and the implementation of presidential note S/2017/507, including by participating in the open debate of the Security Council later this year.

We commend all members of the Assembly that participate in the wrap-up sessions of the Security

Council, which constitute a very important platform for exchanging views and an exercise in accountability. We also continue to encourage the highly interactive nature of those discussions.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has not gone away, and we must remain vigilant. At the same time, we should strive to uphold high standards of inclusiveness and transparency. There should be timely and regular opportunities for Member States to address the Council under rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure. Decisions to permit States to speak and participate in debates should take place on a transparent and open basis. In the same way, we encourage the participation of civil society in the Council's work, both by ensuring that its representatives are able to attend Council meetings on an equal footing with the membership, but also that their regular briefings can inform the Council's consideration of the situations before it.

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): This debate is taking place on a historic day for Switzerland. Member States have entrusted us with a mandate to serve on the Security Council for the first time, and therefore to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. We warmly thank the members of the General Assembly for their trust and stand ready to assume that responsibility along with the other elected members, whom we congratulate.

The annual report of the Security Council (A/76/2) bears witness to a Council that is fully mobilized to fulfil its mandate in a world still marked by the pandemic. We have seen some positive developments, such as a return to in-person meetings and the direct participation of non-members of the Council in open debates. We welcome the positive trend with respect to the participation of civil society. Elected members of the Council have pioneered an innovative approach, including by establishing a “presidency trio” to urge the Council to advance the women and peace and security agenda in concrete ways.

The Council's visit to the Sahel region has reinforced the feeling of a gradual return to normality, even though other missions are yet to follow. “In the midst of every crisis lies great opportunity”, said Albert Einstein. A recent presidential note on the working methods of the Council (S/2021/1074) draws lessons from the experience of the pandemic and commits the Council to exercising its mandate under all circumstances. The annual report illustrates that determination in the

face of ongoing challenges, while demonstrating the potential for improvement. We reiterate the importance of the transparency, inclusiveness and accountability of the Council. Switzerland remains committed to its objectives and endorses the statement made on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. Allow me to underscore three points.

First, the Council's work to protect the civilian population, preserve the humanitarian space and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, by all parties and under all circumstances, remains urgent. Civilians pay a high price in armed conflicts, including in Ukraine, Myanmar, Yemen, Ethiopia and too many other contexts on the Council's agenda. The Council adopted important resolutions in 2021 on critical civilian infrastructure, safeguarding the right to education and protecting civilians during peacekeeping operations. We call for their full implementation. In the immediate term, it is imperative to renew the resolution on cross-border aid in Syria to ensure that it reaches those who need it.

Secondly, we welcome the inclusion of non-traditional challenges to peace and security in the deliberations of the Council, including the effects of climate change, new technologies and pandemics. Several open debates have clarified the expectations of a large number of Member States and civil society regarding the role of the Council with respect to the impact of climate change on security. We regret that the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Ireland and the Niger (S/2021/990) was not adopted. Given the urgency of the matter, the Council should integrate climate risks more systematically into its work.

Thirdly, the Council should make conflict prevention not just a priority, but a reality. The Council underscored the importance of a comprehensive approach and regular exchanges with other United Nations bodies in various presidential statements in 2021. It is up to all Member States, and particularly the Security Council, to implement the instruments provided for by the Charter of the United Nations in order to prevent conflicts and tackle the root causes that fuel the vicious circle of violence. We wish to recall the importance of ensuring respect for human rights and accountability in order to prevent atrocities and promote peace.

The report of the Council's work in 2021 demonstrates that all members have a role to play

if we are to meet the global challenges we face. Only together can we achieve that in the spirit of enhanced multilateralism.

**Mr. Szczerski** (Poland): Let me start by congratulating the newly elected members of the Security Council. We assure them of our support and trust in performing their duties as non-permanent members of the Council.

We are pleased to join this annual debate, which testifies to the fact that the workings of the Security Council are vital to the wider United Nations membership represented here in the General Assembly. We firmly believe that the close link between these two organs should be strengthened in order to enhance the effectiveness of the entire United Nations system. And it would seem that we are on the right path towards achieving that goal. Only yesterday (see A/76/PV.77), and still to be resumed, we met in this very Hall to exchange views on the situation created by the use of the veto in the Security Council. Our meeting today is yet another tool that can be used to break down the entrenched silos. It also serves to highlight our expectation that the Council properly carry out its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

We welcome the adoption of the annual report of the Security Council (A/76/2) ahead of the deadline. It offers a relevant and factual account of the Council's proceedings during the 2021 reporting cycle. Despite being affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, 2021 was still relatively stable in terms of the geopolitical situation. However, that would soon change dramatically. The second report of the United Nations Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, which was published yesterday and is entitled *Global impact of the war in Ukraine: Billions of people face the greatest cost-of-living crisis in a generation*, clearly indicates the dire situation of today.

Poland has always been a keen supporter of broader and more inclusive dialogue within the United Nations system. Over the course of 2021, we took part in 20 open meetings of the Security Council on various topics, including, but not limited to, food security, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and the protection of civilians. All our statements were based on one fundamental principle, namely, upholding international law and respecting the international rules-based order.



That was the motto of our tenure on the Council and continues to be so now.

We commend the significant efforts made by both the Secretariat and the respective presidencies of the Council to allow the in-person participation of non-members in open debates, which had been previously restricted to written submissions owing to the sanitary measures in place. We are fully convinced that the active engagement of non-members of the Council not only underpins the legitimacy of the Council itself, but it also safeguards the very foundations of multilateralism. We also welcome the continuing commitment to enhancing the transparency of the Council's work. In that regard, I would like to highlight the relevance of the open sessions held at the beginning and end of each monthly presidency, which have proven to be reliable channels of communication between the Council and its non-members.

There appears to have been a significant increase in the number of informal meetings of the Security Council in recent years. We would therefore like to suggest that information on Arria Formula meetings be included in future annual reports, which would provide an even more thorough overview of the Council's work and the dynamics of the respective files on its agenda. Moreover, I already mentioned the newly established practice of convening a General Assembly plenary meeting after the use of the veto in the Security Council. We believe the annual report should also take note of the content of such proceedings.

In conclusion, let me once again reiterate that close ties between the main United Nations organs are essential to ensuring multilateral approaches to global challenges. In the next reporting cycle, given the various long-term effects of COVID-19 that are still unknown and the gloomy prospect of an iron curtain being redrawn at the heart of Europe, that appears more relevant than ever before.

**Mr. Ghadirkhomi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to start by congratulating the newly elected members of the Security Council.

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the submission of the latest report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/76/2). In that regard, I would like to make the following observations.

The annual reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly should contribute to the requisite

transparency and accountability regarding the decisions and measures taken to maintain international peace and security. We regret that, as in previous years, this year's report is a mere descriptive account of the meetings, activities and communications of the Council, which does not conform with the requirement of the report as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations. At the same time, the vast majority of the States Members of the United Nations have reiterated the need for an analytical annual report of the work of the Security Council that covers the overarching trends of international peace and security. As a result, the General Assembly has been unable to substantively and comprehensively assess the Council's performance.

While the Council has partly focused on the humanitarian repercussions of conflicts and their impact on civilians, we are nonetheless concerned about the humanitarian consequences of the sanctions it has imposed. Unfortunately, the Security Council's authority and power have at times been abused by certain States that regard sanctions as their preferred tool to apply maximum pressure on countries in order to pursue their political goals. Full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations is critical in preventing the Council from resorting increasingly, excessively and expeditiously to its functions under Chapter VII of the Charter.

Member States have always underlined the importance of the Council's efficacy and legitimacy. Promoting transparency and the rule of law in the working methods of the Council is therefore a shared demand of the entire membership. We wish to express our concern about the attempts by certain members of the Council to use thematic issues to expand its mandate into areas that do not pose a threat to international peace and security. The same is true when the Council considers situations that do not constitute a threat to international peace and security or issues that relate to the internal affairs of States. We urge the Council to stick to its mandate, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

Throughout its history, the Security Council has on occasions failed to discharge its responsibilities. A case in point is the question of Palestine, which is the main source of conflict in the Middle East, where the Council has failed to act properly and in a timely manner. As reflected in part V of the report of the Security Council, my country continues to highlight the Israeli regime's threat to peace and security in the

region. It is unfortunate to note that the Israeli regime commits atrocities despite the full knowledge of the Security Council and without being concerned about the consequences of its criminal actions.

Finally, we strongly believe that the Council is responsible to all Member States, on whose behalf it acts, and must therefore remain accountable to them. Members of the Council should make decisions based not on their own national interests or those of the geopolitical or geographical groups to which they belong, but rather on the common interests of the entire membership of the United Nations.

**Mr. Kuymizakis (Malta):** I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's meeting to discuss the 2021 annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/76/2). We also thank the Permanent Representative of Albania, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of June, for presenting the report. We also thank the delegation of France for drafting the introductory paragraphs of the report.

Malta strongly believes that interaction between the two principal organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly and the Security Council — must continue to be strengthened wherever possible. As the only United Nations body with universal representation, the General Assembly has a crucial role to play in ensuring that the Security Council is transparent and accountable to the wider membership.

The Council carries out its mandate on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations and must remain accessible. We understand that 2021 was a particularly difficult year owing to the coronavirus disease pandemic. Nevertheless, accessibility remains a crucial element given today's global environment, in which the core values and principles of the Charter of the United Nations are being challenged, violated and undermined. Discussions such as the ones we are having today and those in yesterday's meeting (see A/76/PV.77), which was convened following the use of the veto in a meeting of the Security Council, reflect the wish of the wider United Nations membership to engage on such issues.

While the annual report provides a thorough and factual outline of the Council's work, considerations, communications and outcomes, we feel that more could be done to provide a more analytical assessment of its work. Such an analysis would allow the wider membership to have a more comprehensive overview

of the Council's successes and failures. In the long term, that exercise could also contribute to making the Council a more effective and efficient body.

Earlier in this meeting, Malta was entrusted by the General Assembly to serve as an elected member of the Security Council in 2023 and 2024. Serving on the Security Council — the primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security — is a responsibility we will not shirk, and we welcome the role of the General Assembly in assessing whether or not the Council has been effective in that task. That is one measure that seeks to ensure that maintaining international peace and security remains the core focus of the Security Council.

**Mr. Pedrosa Cuesta (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by congratulating all those delegations that have been elected as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the period 2023-2024. We are grateful for the convening of this meeting to discuss the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly for 2021 (A/76/2).

We regret to note that, once again this year, the report is limited to presenting a list of the meetings, activities and resolutions of the Security Council, despite the repeated calls by the majority of Member States for the reports of that organ to be exhaustive and analytical, to facilitate an assessment of the causes and implications of its decisions and to contribute to a genuine exercise of accountability before the General Assembly.

The 2021 report continues to overlook, for example, the stagnation in the response to the Palestinian question and the prolongation of the suffering of its people. The report also fails to analyse the violations of the Council's own resolutions by Israel, in particular resolution 2334 (2016), while the expansion of the illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories continues with impunity. At the same time, punitive demolitions, the forced displacement of hundreds of civilians, the blockade of the Gaza Strip and threats to annex the Palestinian territories in the Jordan Valley and other parts of the West Bank and East Jerusalem all continue.

The report also fails to assess the impact of the extraordinary working methods used by the Council since the middle of March 2020 and extended throughout much of 2021, on the participation of non-members of the Council in its meetings and the general fulfilment of its functions.

The presentation of the annual reports of the Council should cease to be a merely descriptive, formal and uncritical exercise. Greater transparency in the work of the Council will facilitate its effective action on behalf of all Member States in the maintenance of international peace and security, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. Even though the number of public meetings of the Council, including open debates, has increased, and although all States are informed about its activities at the beginning and end of each month, it continues to work fundamentally in closed formats, to take decisions without addressing the concerns of Member States and to force decisions on draft resolutions even when there are significant disagreements over their content.

A comprehensive reform of the Council is needed, including of its working methods, in order to make it a transparent, democratic and representative organ. Such reform envisages that the Council's rules of procedure be adopted, that transparent informal consultations be held, that meeting records be issued for informal consultations and that such meetings be the exception, not the rule. The selective manipulation of the Council's methods and practices as a tool to exert pressure on sovereign States must cease, as must its interference in matters beyond its remit, in particular those that fall under the mandate of the General Assembly.

The Security Council must represent the interests of all Member States in order to preserve multilateralism and the credibility of the United Nations.

**Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa): At the outset, we congratulate the delegations of Mozambique, Malta, Ecuador, Japan and Switzerland on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the period 2023-2024.

We would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for providing Member States with an opportunity today to consider the annual report of the Security Council for the year 2021 (A/76/2). The report under consideration has been presented in accordance with the Council's obligation under Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations and with the understanding that the Council acts on behalf of, and is accountable to, the broader membership of the United Nations. The General Assembly has demonstrated that understanding today by voting to elect non-permanent members of the Council.

We are pleased to note that, despite the challenges related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the normal functioning of the Council has resumed. We welcome the resumption of in-person participation by the wider United Nations membership in the Council's open debates, which has provided a platform to contribute to its thematic debates in a meaningful and visible manner. South Africa welcomes the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2565 (2021), which called for the strengthening of international cooperation in order to facilitate equitable and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines in situations of armed conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian emergencies.

We believe the report submitted by the Council serves merely as a record of its activities during the reporting period. In that regard, we join others in requesting that a more analytical report be submitted by the Council in the future, which would provide a more complete understanding of its efforts undertaken to execute its mandate. Such insight would allow for a realistic view of the Council and necessitate reforms that could improve its work. We are also concerned that only 84 per cent of the Council's decisions were adopted unanimously during the reporting period. In that regard, we would like to emphasize the utmost importance of the Council being united in fulfilling its mandate.

South Africa remains concerned that the Council was not able to make progress during the reporting period on important and long-standing matters, such as the question of Palestine, which continues to illustrate its failure to act decisively and in unison, especially at a time when tensions were heightened in the occupied Palestinian territories. That once again reminds us of the urgent need for reform. However, we look forward to the Council being more accountable to the General Assembly on the Palestinian question and other long-standing conflict issues that do not yet have sustainable solutions, in particular following the Assembly's adoption by consensus of resolution 76/262 in April.

South Africa firmly believes that the United Nations must reflect contemporary realities by ensuring that it is equipped to address the challenges of the present, not those of the past. Consequently, we believe that genuine text-based negotiations on Council reform should commence without delay, as that is the only way to achieve the commitments made in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, almost 17 years ago.

We believe that the elected members of the Council have a more vital role to play, as has been demonstrated in the dynamism shown in addressing fundamental issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, such as the women and peace and security agenda. The elected members have also made strides in the codification and clarification of the working methods of the Council, thereby making tangible gains in increasing its effectiveness, transparency and accountability.

South Africa notes the observation made in the report that the situation in Africa continued to occupy an important place in the work of the Council, having accounted for the majority of country-specific meetings. In that regard, we believe that the Council's efforts should reinforce close cooperation with the African Union, including through annual consultations between the members of the Security Council and those of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

In conclusion, South Africa commends the efforts of all Council members to endure the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are pleased that the Council was able to resume its field missions, starting on the African continent, in Mali and the Niger. However, we must promote more immediate and effective action, in accordance with the Council's mandate, and make reforming the Council our top priority so as to enable it to respond to the needs of a changing world by being more representative and accountable.

**Mr. Mainero** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we thank the Albanian delegation for presenting the annual report of the Security Council for 2021 (A/76/2), as well as the delegation of France for drafting the introduction of the report. The presentation and consideration of the Council's annual report is a responsibility derived from the Charter of the United Nations. Today's discussion is critical, as it allows the entire membership to take stock of the work that the Council is carrying out on its behalf and gives us an opportunity to hold the Council accountable for its actions and, more important, for the occasions when it has failed to act.

We welcome the fact that Council members once again submitted the annual report in a timely manner. That is a positive step towards improving the transparency and accountability of the Council before the entire membership. We hope that practice will continue so as to ensure greater predictability, and

therefore a more in-depth consideration of the report by the General Assembly.

As documented in the report, the year 2021 was characterized by many crises and conflicts around the world that required immediate action by the Council. However, we regret to note that on several occasions the Council was divided and incapable of providing solutions, thereby failing to fulfil its mandate to maintain international peace and security, with devastating consequences and untold human suffering. For millions of people around the world, the Council is the face and personification of the United Nations. Its success or failure in fulfilling its mandate is seen as akin to the success or failure of the United Nations. In that regard, it is crucial that the Council's efforts be efficient and effective and commensurate with the purposes of the Charter.

For my delegation, transparency is one of the central principles that should guide the Council's work. We therefore wish to highlight the fact that the practice of holding briefings for the entire membership at the beginning and end of their mandate was maintained by successive Council presidencies during 2021. We also encourage the presidencies of the Council to carry out their monthly assessments. We regret that the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly continues to be a mere general accounting of the meetings and documents of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, without any analytical development that would enable the entire membership to undertake a proper assessment of the Council's work. We therefore encourage members of the Council to review that practice.

In conclusion, my delegation reiterates its commitment to achieving a reform of the Security Council in order to bring about a more democratic, transparent, inclusive and representative body.

**Mr. Inashvili** (Georgia): Let me start by congratulating the newly elected non-permanent members of the Security Council. I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's meeting. We highly appreciate his efforts to give the Assembly sufficient time to discuss the annual report of the Council, which is critical to the functioning of the Organization, particularly with respect to increasing transparency and accountability in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.



Georgia welcomes the adoption of the Security Council's report for 2021 (A/76/2). That is an important and necessary practice, which provides an opportunity to reflect on the most pressing issues of peace and security under the Council's consideration. However, the agendas of the Security Council and the General Assembly changed radically in 2021 owing to the coronavirus disease pandemic, which revealed significant shortfalls in our collective response to address pressing global challenges in a sustainable and well-organized manner. A further challenge is the brutal aggression that has been launched by a permanent member of the Security Council — Russia — against another Member of the United Nations — Ukraine — in violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

Today as never before, it has become clear that the reform of the Security Council is vitally important, as it is failing to live up to its *raison d'être*, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. The reform of the Council is particularly urgent with regard to the use of the veto power. The failure of the Council to adopt a draft resolution to stop Russia's aggression against Ukraine clearly attests to that.

More than a decade ago, my country experienced the detrimental impact of the abuse of the veto right. We therefore reiterate that a permanent member of the Council should have its veto right restricted when it is involved in the conflict or situation under consideration, in line with Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, which clearly stipulates that the party to a dispute shall abstain from voting. In that context, we welcome the Assembly's adoption by consensus of the resolution on a standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council (resolution 76/262), of which Georgia is one of the main co-sponsors.

From my national perspective, I wish to recall that the Council was briefed about the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case concerning the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008, and that we provided the Council with the press release issued by the Registrar of the Court and the statement by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the that judgment. We also briefed the Council about the provocative decision by the Russian occupying regime in Tskhinvali to prolong the illegal detention of Georgian citizen Zaza Gakheladze for more than 12 years and provided it with the 2020 compilation report

regarding human rights violations in the Russian-occupied territories of Georgia.

Given the grave human rights situation in the Russian-occupied regions of Georgia, as well as the ongoing militarization of those territories by the Russian Federation, we deem it of the utmost importance that the Council remain seized of the matter, including, first and foremost, through a dedicated agenda item entitled "The situation in Georgia". At the same time, more in-depth discussions on the situation of protracted conflicts should continue to be held in various formats of the Security Council, including open debates.

In conclusion, let me once again express our appreciation for the report. In the same vein, we would like to encourage the Council to explore new ways to enrich the report with more analytical content and to make it more in-depth and relevant to the key challenges it faces in the various situations under its consideration.

**Mr. Nasir (Indonesia):** I thank the President of the Security Council for the month of June, the Permanent Representative of Albania, Ambassador Ferit Hoxha, for presenting the annual report of the Council (A/76/2). We also thank the delegation of France for its leadership in preparing the introductory section of the report. We welcome the timely issuing of the report, which was well ahead of schedule. In response to the annual report, the delegation of Indonesia would like to highlight the following points.

First, there is merit in enhancing the effective interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Given today's dynamic and multidimensional challenges, there is often overlap in the discussions and actions undertaken by the Council and the Assembly. Good communication between those two organs is therefore important. While the report under consideration is an embodiment of the Council's transparency before the wider membership, we see merit in ensuring a more regular practice of transparency. In that context, we encourage more regular interaction between the members of the Assembly and those of the Council, including through holding discussions during the preparation of the annual report. That could also be used as an avenue for more detailed and substantive discussions, given that agreeing on a more analytical and detailed annual report could be difficult and time-consuming for the Council.

Secondly, enhancing the interaction between regional organizations and the Security Council is

important. During the reporting period, we observed the growing regionalization of conflicts across the globe. We also witnessed fractured relationships between the mandated missions of the Council and the respective host countries. Indonesia encourages the Council to better engage with regional and subregional organizations by discussing issues in the respective region. Regional organizations could help facilitate interaction between the United Nations and the relevant host country, and thereby help it respond constructively to the situation on the ground. In our view, that would enhance the Council's capacity to respond to the current challenges.

Thirdly, the Assembly held a discussion yesterday under resolution 76/262 (see A/76/PV.77) because the Council was unable to fulfil its duties. While the discussion was good in terms of ensuring greater transparency, it is regrettable to note that the differences in the Council often could not be bridged on important global issues. Moving forward, we hope that all members of the Council will exercise political wisdom and dialogue and seek unity in exercising its mandate.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the delegations of Japan, Mozambique, Ecuador, Switzerland and Malta on their election as non-permanent members of the Council for the period of 2023-2024. We look forward to their contributions.

**Mr. Massari (Italy):** We welcome the opportunity to discuss the annual report on the activity of the Security Council (A/76/2) and its adoption ahead of time. I also take this opportunity to convey, on behalf of my Government, our most sincere congratulations to all the newly elected non-permanent members of the Council.

We see this as an important moment in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations states that the Security Council acts on behalf of Member States. It is therefore essential that the Council remain accountable to the wider United Nations membership. Enhanced interaction between the two main organs of the Organization is ultimately beneficial for the Council itself, as it makes its activity better understood and more transparent. Through such interaction, the Assembly and the Council can reinforce each other's decision-making, in full conformity with the provisions of the Charter.

This year, the report seems quite comprehensive in its scope, having listed all the main activities conducted by the Council in 2021. However, as in the past, the report does not seem to address the underlying reasons for which the Council has become increasingly held hostage by polarization, inaction and, often, paralysis. The report also does not address, and perhaps cannot address, the central issue of the increasing inability of the Council to deliver on many urgent matters in the maintenance of international peace and security.

During this year's intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council, which were dedicated to its working methods, many Member States highlighted the need for increased quality and enhanced analytical content in the Council's annual report. A more analytical approach in the report would indeed allow for a more substantial debate on the root causes of the Council's inaction, which, in our opinion, are directly and closely linked to the power of the veto, irrespective of whether it is actually used or simply threatened. Even that could not be reflected in the 2021 report.

The vetoes cast in the Council over the past month in relation to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and, more recently, with regard to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have provided further confirmation of the paralyzing effect of the veto power on the Council's ability to act. That is why Italy supports all initiatives aimed at restricting the exercise of the veto, such as the French-Mexican initiative and the code of conduct put forward by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

Italy was also happy to be among the co-sponsors of resolution 76/262, which established the automatic convening of a meeting of the General Assembly every time a veto is cast in the Security Council. Yesterday's meeting of the Assembly (see A/76/PV.77) marked the first operationalization of the resolution and, in our opinion, confirmed the usefulness and added value of holding a discussion with the entire membership on the reasons for which the Council had been unable to deliberate on a very important issue concerning the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Mr. Malovrh (Slovenia):** Let me start by congratulating, on behalf of the Republic of Slovenia, the newly elected members of the Security Council.

Slovenia welcomes the presentation of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly (A/76/2),

which the Council adopted on 20 May, and we thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's discussion to take stock of the work of the Security Council in 2021.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement that was delivered by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. We wish to make some additional remarks in our national capacity.

First, we welcome the progress made on the timely adoption of the report by the Security Council in the past couple of years, in line with presidential note S/2019/997. We commend the delegation of France for leading the process of drafting the report's introduction. However, we would like to encourage the Council to consider further improvements to the process of preparing this important annual report, including with regard to the timeline for its adoption. Adopting the report earlier would allow for a timelier discussion in the General Assembly, when our memories of the reporting period are fresher and have greater relevance to the ongoing discussions of the Council and the Assembly.

Secondly, while we welcome the usefulness of having a comprehensive factual overview of the meetings, discussions and products of the Council for the reporting period, we would welcome a more substantial and analytical insight into its work and the fulfilment of its mandate to maintain international peace and security, which should undoubtedly include providing more details on the draft resolutions that failed to be adopted, as well as information on the implementation of the Council's decisions.

Slovenia supported the recently adopted resolution on a standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council (resolution 76/262), under which the first-ever debate started yesterday (see A/76/PV.77) and will continue tomorrow. The active participation by the wider membership demonstrates the importance of that mandate. We therefore believe that the next annual report should include any special reports of the Council and find a way to reflect the discussions held under that mandate.

Thirdly, we welcome the efforts undertaken to resume in-person participation in open debates by the wider United Nations membership in the latter part of 2021. That was an important step to ensure inclusivity, not only for non-members of the Council but also for

other stakeholders, thereby contributing to the richness of discussions in the Council.

Fourthly and finally, the full, equal and meaningful participation of women must be at the centre of all peace-related activities. In that regard, we welcome the increased participation of women briefers in Council meetings and encourage the continuation of that trend. We believe the initiative launched by the delegations of Ireland, Kenya and Mexico — three elected members of the Council — to form a women and peace and security “presidency trio” is an important and innovative step towards enhancing the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We hope that approach will be considered a useful way to advance other issues on the Council's agenda as well.

**Mr. Dvornyk (Ukraine):** The delegation of Ukraine would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to discuss the report of the Security Council on its activities in 2021 (A/76/2). We also thank Ambassador Hoxha for adjusting his busy schedule, as President of the Security Council for the month of June, in order to present the report to the General Assembly. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend him for the outstanding work that the delegation of Albania has done so far in steering the Council's activities in June.

At the same time, I must say that Ambassador Hoxha would seem to be a luckier person than his successor who will be mandated to present next year's report on the Council's activities for 2022 — a year marked by the Council's failure, at least as of June, to prevent and effectively address the worst security crisis since the end of the Second World War, namely, Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine. That person will have to report to the Assembly that the Russian Federation, which succeeded to the Soviet Union's permanent seat on the Council, attacked its peaceful neighbour, Ukraine, at the very moment that the Council met in a last-ditch effort to prevent a war. It is ironic that the Council met under the presidency of that very same aggressor State just one week after the Deputy Foreign Minister of that country had presided over another Council meeting and sought to assure participants of the absence of any aggressive plans.

That sounds like a verdict of the Council's long-lasting inefficiency, which has a well-known reason and clear explanation that is still missing from the Council's report. Let me therefore reiterate that enhancing the

analytical perspective of those documents remains long overdue. The reports should not be confined to mere compilations that provide very limited insight into the substantive nature of the Council's work. We remain convinced that the lack of substance, notably, the absence of conclusions and of strategic perspectives for the subsequent reporting period, affects the report's relevance and practical nature.

We would like to note that the concerns we expressed last year (see A/75/PV.79) with regard to the language used in relation to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict have been partly addressed and that the unacceptable phrasing "the crisis in eastern Ukraine" has been deleted and replaced by more neutral language, specifically, "the situation in eastern Ukraine and the implementation of the Minsk agreements". However, that step can hardly be considered sufficient, as it still provided the aggressor with the room to promote a false narrative about the internal nature of the conflict in Donbas between 2014 and 2022, in an attempt to hide its role as an instigator.

Moreover, the report was submitted more than three months since the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and its authors seem to have had enough time to adjust the language to portray the realities on the ground — realities that Ukraine had persistently explained and that are now clear to everyone, specifically, that the conflict in Donbas served as the first stage of Russia's aggression and a testing ground for Russia to prepare for a full-fledged war against our country. In that regard, we encourage Council members to continue to explore new ways and approaches to further improve the preparation of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly, as well as to upgrade its overall working methods.

We would also like to reiterate that, despite the destructive role of Russia, the occupying State, on the Security Council, there is a healthy cross-regional majority that is committed to ensuring that the Council take meaningful steps throughout its agenda in order to implement the primary task of maintaining international peace and security. We deeply appreciate the efforts undertaken and express our confidence that the newly elected members, whom we wholeheartedly congratulate and wish every success during their tenure, will also be active contributors to strengthening the health of the Council.

**Mr. Carazo (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*):** Costa Rica congratulates the newly elected members of the Security Council and invites them to participate in next year's debate when we will discuss the Council's annual report for 2022. We are gathered here today in an act of accountability. The Council has presented its report (A/76/2), and the General Assembly is discussing it at a time when transparency and accountability are more urgent than ever.

Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement made by the delegation of Ecuador on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

We encourage the effective codification of best practices and lessons learned during these extraordinary times in order to expedite the efficiency and transparency of the Council in the future. The presentation of the Council's annual report represents an opportunity to address the most pressing issues of international peace and security, especially those yet to be resolved and, in some cases, yet to be taken up. However, the total lack of evaluation and substantive content in the report precludes the possibility of a robust debate on the internal working methods of the Council, including with regard to conflict resolution and the efforts being made and not being made in that area.

Let us be clear: the document before the Assembly today is not a report but a simple and long list of documents, activities and even meeting agendas, which is of little use. The report contains little or no substantive or analytical content. It contains no information pertaining to voting results, disagreements, opinions or even the list of vetoes that may have been cast during the year in question — they are simply not mentioned. And neither does it mention the instances when the threat of the veto prevented a discussion on, and better understanding of, certain issues. Costa Rica once again calls for a more discerning and forward-looking annual report, not simply a compilation. As we have said before, the report submitted does nothing to support the achievement of the purposes of the Organization.

Costa Rica requests an analysis of the Council's decision-making processes in order to ensure transparency with regard to points of agreement and disagreement. Such analysis should explain in greater detail the obstacles that lead to the Council's inaction on certain issues. The omission of those details in the current report highlights the unyielding barriers to genuine accountability, given that it undermines



Member States' access to the discussions held on the most salient issues.

In sum, despite its important functions on behalf of the entire international community, the Council keeps it in the dark about the way it acts. In my country, we say that the Council retains its mandate and makes it its own without being accountable to the membership, but that is where the Council errs, as it does not act in a vacuum but is part of an interconnected system. For instance, the Council continues to hold closed meetings, even though they should take place only in exceptional circumstances and when the reason for doing so is duly justified. In order for it to function transparently, the Council should guarantee that its meetings are open as a rule.

Opacity and exclusion in the Council are the frustrating continuation of a hegemonic structure that enables certain States to submit and adopt draft resolutions that reflect their own views but do not incorporate those of the other members. The Council acts on behalf of the entire membership, as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, and we have to repeatedly recall that fact because it often falls on deaf ears.

It is clear from this year's report that the Council has failed to adapt its practices in line with the significant criticisms and requests that several States have raised at this debate in recent years. It fails to even mention those criticisms and requests, neither does it acknowledge that they have been received, never mind acting on them or incorporating them into its work. We may as well be talking to the wall in that regard. It is regrettable that the members of the Council are not present in this Hall throughout the debate. It is essential that they acknowledge the essential feedback from States that have taken the time to analyse the report in earnest, which, I must say, contains little to analyse.

For years, Costa Rica has encouraged the Office of the President of the General Assembly to institutionalize the practice of summarizing the interactions of Member States during the presentation of the annual report, as was done by former Presidents of the General Assembly Mr. Sam Kutesa of Uganda in 2014 and Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria in 2020. We encourage this year's President of the General Assembly to prepare a document containing the observations and questions that the General Assembly has put to the Security Council today. We also encourage him to share that report with the Council and request a response from

it before concluding the agenda item entitled "Report of the Security Council". The institutionalization of that good practice will undoubtedly strengthen the interaction between the Assembly and the Council.

In conclusion, Costa Rica expresses its deepest concern over the current division in the Council, which hampers its ability to act as a united front. In a world as conflictive as the present, there is no time to waste in confronting the most serious threats facing the international community. However, as stated earlier by the representative of Italy, the Council is less and less able to meet its obligations. As we heard in previous years, and as articulated today by the representative of Mexico, the Council's responses to the circumstances in Mali, Afghanistan and the Sudan were inconsistent and insufficient given the magnitude of those challenges. Those are clear and worrisome signs in terms of the Council fulfilling its mandate. While the Council continues to act in such a reactive, inadequate and inconsistent manner, the members of the General Assembly have found solutions. We remain ready to act in times of crisis, as we have done already in the cases of Myanmar and Ukraine.

It is time for the Security Council to take seriously the questions and requests it has heard in this morning's debate and to work towards the necessary and urgent reforms of its working methods. Otherwise, the Council will be entrenched as an inefficient, sterile and slow-to-act organ. We hope that does not come to pass.

**Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council for 2021 (A/76/2). Like others, I also wish to extend our congratulations to the newly elected members of the Council.

The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations are fundamental constituents of the international legal order and remain as important as ever. The objectives of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international law, justice, human rights and sustainable development are hardly achievable if those universal purposes and principles are disregarded or misinterpreted in order to whitewash illegal actions.

More specifically, regarding Chapter 4 of part V of the annual report, as members are aware, in response to the territorial claims, aggression and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law

by Armenia against Azerbaijan in the early 1990s, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993). In those resolutions, the Council explicitly condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan and the resulting occupation of its territories; expressly reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory; and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying Armenian forces from all of the occupied territories.

However, those condemnations and binding demands were simply ignored by Armenia. On the contrary, during that period, Armenia spared no effort to consolidate and cement the results of its aggression, colonize the occupied territories and erase Azerbaijani cultural heritage there, in clear violation of international law and the resolutions of the Security Council. In addition, Armenia gradually toughened its rhetoric at the highest level, threatening to unleash new wars on new territories and declaring the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan as part of Armenia.

Moreover, despite the ceasefire, Armenian forces repeatedly shelled Azerbaijani settlements along the so-called line of contact, resulting in dozens of civilians being killed and wounded. From 2015, there was a re-escalation in and around the occupied territories and on the border between the two countries. In April 2016 and July 2020, Armenia provoked large-scale hostilities, which caused numerous casualties among Azerbaijani civilians and servicemen and extensive material damage. Another act of aggression by Armenia in the fall of 2020 became a logical consequence of its decades-long impunity. Direct and indiscriminate missile attacks that struck Azerbaijani cities and districts, including with the use of internationally banned cluster bombs, killed and wounded hundreds of civilians and destroyed numerous civilian objects.

Azerbaijan resolutely responded in order to protect its people and restore its territorial integrity, acting exclusively on its sovereign soil and in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In the course of the hostilities, which lasted 44 days, the armed forces of Azerbaijan liberated more than 300 cities, towns and villages from occupation, thereby putting an end to the 30-year aggression and conflict. That was a long-overdue development demanded by the Charter of the United

Nations, international law, justice and the resolutions of the Security Council. To hold Armenia to account for its egregious violations of international law, Azerbaijan has instituted legal proceedings, including at the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. Additionally, several individuals have been prosecuted and punished for war crimes and terrorist and mercenary activities.

At the same time, Azerbaijan initiated the process of normalizing inter-State relations with Armenia based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders. We look forward to the early commencement of negotiations on a bilateral peace treaty and tangible results within a reasonable time frame, along with the early reopening of transit routes and the delimitation and demarcation of the State border between the two countries.

However, the communications circulated by Armenia during the reporting period and listed in the annual report of the Security Council demonstrate that it is far from complying with its international obligations and engaging faithfully in the promotion of the peace agenda in the region. Therefore, the references in its communications to localities within Azerbaijan under various fabricated titles and the circulation of worthless papers on behalf of a fake entity evidently contradict the objectives of peace and law. Those papers per se have no validity whatsoever, as we have consistently and continuously stated in our relevant correspondence addressed to the Secretary-General and circulated among Member States.

Furthermore, the drafters of the Council's annual report unfortunately relied on outdated terminology, erroneously referring to the non-existent "Nagorny Karabakh". By his decree of 7 July 2021, the President of Azerbaijan established the Karabakh and East Zangezur economic regions. In that context, it is essential to recall that, in accordance with the principle of the exclusive competence of the State with regard to its own territory and the ensuing principles of the international standardization of geographical names established within the United Nations, only geographical names standardized by the competent national authorities must be recognized and used within the United Nations. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States is an absolute imperative.

Domestically, Azerbaijan has prioritized the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the liberated territories and their reintegration into the country's economy in order to ensure the safe return of the displaced population and a high standard of living. Impressive large-scale work is now under way. However, challenges remain. The most pressing among them is a complex mine threat, which is impeding our reconstruction efforts and the safe return of internally displaced persons. There were around 3,300 mine victims over the past 30 years. In the post-conflict period, since 10 November 2020, more than 220 Azerbaijani civilians and military personnel have been killed or injured by mine explosions, as Armenia fails to share accurate and comprehensive information about the hundreds of thousands of landmines it indiscriminately laid on Azerbaijan's territory. The accountability of Armenia, along with targeted and sustainable international technical and financial assistance to further strengthen and increase national mine-action capacities and efforts in Azerbaijan, are critically important if we are to save lives and strengthen peace.

There are also around 4,000 Azerbaijani citizens, both civilians and military, who remain missing in connection with the conflict. Armenia fails to clarify the whereabouts of those persons, who fell into its hands but have not been seen since. It is worth mentioning that both the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted resolutions on missing persons, which, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the obligations of States under international humanitarian law to account for missing persons. The rights of the victims and their families require that those obligations be translated into immediate action.

In conclusion, Azerbaijan is determined to strengthen security and stability, promote accountability and advance post-conflict peacebuilding, reconciliation, reintegration, peaceful coexistence and development in the region.

**Mr. Pieris** (Sri Lanka): It was observed during the opening plenary of the founding Conference of the United Nations in San Francisco that what existed at the time betrayed the hopes of those who believed in it. It is obvious that no one wishes for a United Nations that has no rights or power, that does not interfere with aggressors preparing for war against peace-loving nations and that sometimes even lulls the vigilance of nations with regard to impending aggression. We must guard against traversing down that road.

The Security Council is not an independent actor. According to Article 1, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, the primary purpose of the United Nations is clear. I should like to posit the question: Are we living up to that mandate? Is there genuine consultation among Member States? On the other hand, we have an enthusiastic response to the workings of the Council almost by way of a review, ignoring the provisions of the Charter, which clearly defines the separation of powers to ensure that the principal organs work with mutual respect for one another in their own spheres of activity. Can we personalize the mechanisms of the Assembly? Should we, then, proceed with caution?

It has been said that policymakers, diplomats and scholars have long sought a middle way between words and war in order to influence those who disturb peace. Prior to the World Wars, it was widely believed that growing economic interdependence would make it financially and commercially suicidal for any of the major Western Powers to resort to war. The threat of economic sanctions was therefore seen as a uniquely persuasive tool to backup non-coercive techniques of arbitration and judicial settlement in order to resolve international disputes. Do we truly review those mechanisms to see whether they are effective, whether they affect the citizens of the country in question or whether they are designed to punish political leaders whose purposes ostensibly contradict the world order? Are we even-handed in adopting those measures, or do we adopt double standards? Those are questions that the Council must ask of itself, no matter how unpalatable they may be.

It has also been observed that humanitarian concerns are rarely at the top of the action agendas of major capitals. They are, however, anything but new to the Council. They are listed among the third or fourth set of purposes of the United Nations, as laid out in Article 1 of the Charter. The stirring opening words of the Preamble to the Charter, namely, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" — war that has brought untold sorrow to humankind twice in our lifetime — invoked humanitarian imperatives that spurred the creation of this world body as an alternative to the carnage and horrors of unrestricted warfare. As former Secretary-General Kofi Annan put it,

"[U]nless the Security Council can unite around the aim of confronting massive human rights violations and crimes against humanity, then we will betray

the very ideals that inspired the founding of the United Nations”.

As related in Chapter III of the Charter of the United Nations, during the deliberations in San Francisco, the founders of the Organization were determined to preserve for the Council as much flexibility as possible in order to determine what might constitute a threat to international peace and security. Moreover, Article 34 of the Charter gives the Council wide latitude to investigate any dispute or situation that could endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. They understood that any attempt to list the proximate causes of conflict could be a fruitless and controversial exercise subject to misinterpretation, debate and delay at a time when collective action would be most urgently needed. With due modesty, they also realized that geopolitical and technological conditions were likely to change in unpredictable ways in the years ahead.

The Council has been controversial from its inception. In part, that has stemmed from the prevalent perception that the Council is the one place that really matters in the United Nations system. Equally, it has derived from the pervasive frustration that the Council has never fulfilled the overly high expectations that many people and Governments had of it. And importantly, it reflects an unresolved tension between the sharply but somewhat narrowly defined concept that the convening powers had for how the Council should function and the inclusive and participatory model favoured by the wider United Nations membership.

Finally, many political scientists have said that few institutions are as well-known or as little understood as the Security Council. I am not sure whether that critique can be attributed to academic overreach. Without attempting to venture an answer to that, as a classic enigma hiding in plain sight, it has been perpetually shrouded by layers of divergent and even internally contradictory expectations and fantasies. It habitually disappoints, regroups and then surprises. One day it is heralded; the next it is disdained, or worse, dismissed. Each action it takes is celebrated by some and despaired by others. It squanders obvious opportunities, only to manufacture something out of nothing the next time around. As it triumphs in one arena, it turns its back, so they say, on several others. However, we repose great hope that the Council has the capacity and the potential to deliver the expectations of Member States and ensure that we, the Member States and our people, can live in dignity, peace and prosperity.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/76/2?

*It was so decided (decision 76/567).*

**The Acting President:** Before giving the floor to speakers in the exercise of the right of reply, may I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Knyazyan (Armenia):** I take the floor in the exercise of the right of reply to respond to the delegation of Azerbaijan.

We reject the attempts by the delegation of Azerbaijan to hijack the agenda of today's meeting by propagating its distorted narratives and customary falsifications with regard to the underlying causes, essence and principles of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in order to conceal its responsibility for the barbarism, aggression and numerous atrocity crimes committed against the people of the region.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict began with the barbaric pogroms of the Armenian population in Sumgait in February 1988, when Azerbaijan responded to the peaceful appeal of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh for self-determination by perpetrating mass violence and atrocities against it. Those atrocities are known to have been the first identity-based mass crimes committed in Europe since the end of the Second World War. They were soon followed by new, methodically planned massacres of a wider scale in Baku, Kirovabad and the occupied territories of the Nagorno-Karabakh republic. The massacres of the Armenian population clearly demonstrated that the Azerbaijani authorities pursue the goal of the total extermination of Armenians and that the people of Nagorno-Karabakh face an existential threat. The legitimacy of the peaceful demands of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh in the face of that threat was increasingly acknowledged by the international community, including by the European Parliament in 1988.

Equally deceptive are the arguments of the Azerbaijani side with regard to the legal aspects of the conflict. The proclamation of the Nagorno-Karabakh



republic took place in the context of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and was strictly in line with the norms of international law and the legislation of the Soviet Union. The attempts by the delegation of Azerbaijan to misrepresent Nagorno-Karabakh as a “fake entity” by referring to internal decrees of its leadership are null and void. Nagorno-Karabakh is an internationally agreed term, as reflected in numerous international documents of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and official documents of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship, including those endorsed by Azerbaijan itself.

The desperate attempts to misrepresent the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as an inter-State conflict by selectively invoking or distorting certain provisions of the relevant resolutions adopted by the Security Council in 1993 do not withstand any scrutiny. The reality is that, for many years, Azerbaijan has been ignoring the requests of the Council to refrain from the use of force, restore transport, communications and energy links in the region, ensure unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts and commit to a political settlement within the framework of the Minsk process of the OSCE.

Contrary to the demands of the international community, Azerbaijan continuously failed to honour its obligations under the ceasefire agreements of 1994 and 1995 and repeatedly rejected the proposals for a diplomatic settlement, including the multiple proposals made by the co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group. Instead of committing in good faith to the peace process, for decades the authorities of Azerbaijan resorted to an uncontrolled and unabated military build-up, in violation of their international obligations, as well as warmongering and military provocations, while using the negotiations process as a smokescreen.

Last year, the Armenian delegation brought to the attention of the Security Council a number of communications regarding the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone. Notably, in his letters, the Permanent Representative of Armenia reflected on the consequences of Azerbaijan’s pre-planned large-scale military aggression, including with the involvement of foreign terrorist fighters, against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh in the fall of 2020, in contradiction of the Secretary-General’s appeal for an immediate global ceasefire and in violation of the country’s obligations under international law, which

prohibits the use of force to resolve disputes. Launched amid the unprecedented global health crisis, the aggression led to thousands of lives being lost, massive destruction, displacement, war crimes and atrocities, in gross violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

In the aftermath of its aggression, Azerbaijan continues to engage in persistent belligerent action, accompanied by violent rhetoric and open military threats, distorted interpretations of history and incessant territorial claims. The armed forces of Azerbaijan have systematically resorted to various forms of violent acts and provocations that seek to disrupt the normalcy of life in the border areas and deprive the civilian population of its livelihoods. In his letters addressed to the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of Armenia outlined the aggressive actions perpetrated by Azerbaijan against the territorial integrity of Armenia since May 2021, which were aimed at the Syunik and Gegharkunik regions in our country, in flagrant violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and their negative implications for regional and international peace and security. Those armed provocations took place against the backdrop of the extensive use of hate speech, an example of which we heard earlier, and the promotion of racist ideology, which continues to dominate the public discourse in Azerbaijan through various forms of dehumanizing Armenians, open threats to use force, justifications of its continuing military provocations and the incitement of territorial claims against the Republic of Armenia.

Azerbaijan continues to ignore the calls of the international community for the immediate return of prisoners of war and other detainees, while denying the captivity of dozens of Armenian servicemen and civilian hostages and introducing bogus charges in an effort to instrumentalize the issue of detained persons, in violation of the Geneva Conventions and to the detriment of the full and effective implementation of the provisions of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, on the establishment of a complete ceasefire and the termination of all hostilities in the area of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In that regard, the delegation of Armenia brought to the attention of the Security Council the reports of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Nagorno-Karabakh, which documented the illegal prosecutions and trials of Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages, as well as the killing and

extrajudicial execution of the civilian population by the Azerbaijani armed forces.

In a similar vein, Azerbaijan obstructs and denies the humanitarian access of the international community to Nagorno-Karabakh to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the humanitarian needs of the affected population. The delegation of Armenia also brought to the attention of the Council a report containing documented evidence of the deliberate destruction, desecration and misappropriation of Armenian cultural and religious heritage, including churches, shrines and cultural monuments. Azerbaijan's refusal to provide access to the UNESCO independent fact-finding mission to conduct an inventory of the vast cultural and religious heritage of the region clearly indicates the imminent threat of destruction of any evidence of Armenia's civilizational presence in Nagorno-Karabakh, which the delegation of Azerbaijan tried to portray as "reconstruction efforts".

On a final note, we would like to stress the imperative of acting consistently in support of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group co-Chairs, which could pave the way for sustainable peace in the region.

**The Acting President:** Before giving the floor to the next speaker in the exercise of the right of reply, let me thank the interpreters for their understanding and for staying late.

**Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan):** It is ironic that Armenia — which unleashed aggression against Azerbaijan, carried out ethnic cleansing on a massive scale and held the sovereign territories of my country under occupation for almost 30 years — is now enthusiastically talking about the norms and principles of international law. However, such attempts are incapable of whitewashing the well-known and true image of Armenia as a persistent violator of international law and human rights.

With regard to the fake entity and fabricated titles to which the delegation of Armenia referred, the corresponding localities are situated in Azerbaijan. I am compelled to remind the Armenian delegation that Nagorno-Karabakh long ago ceased to exist as an administrative and territorial unit. It was established by Azerbaijan in 1923 and abolished by Azerbaijan 68 years later, on 26 November 1991. That area is the integral territory of Azerbaijan and was under

Armenia's unlawful occupation for nearly 30 years. The unlawfulness of the attempted unilateral secession of that area from Azerbaijan was confirmed at the highest constitutional level and consistently reaffirmed at the international level, including in the Security Council.

Armenia's claims in respect of self-determination are ill-founded, first and foremost because they were never peaceful and have nothing in common with that principle, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international documents. Aside from the legal context, it is curious that, having cleansed its own territory of all ethnic groups, including, in particular, the once-largest national minority of Azerbaijan, Armenia is now advocating the self-determination of persons belonging to an Armenian ethnic minority in Azerbaijan.

We resolutely reject Armenia's allegations about so-called anti-Armenian hatred and the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage. The purpose of such allegations is evidently to mislead the international community and disguise that country's own hate crimes and long-standing and deep-rooted racist policy. As for Armenia itself, the relevant United Nations bodies and other international organizations have expressed, on more than one occasion, their serious concern about the spirit of intolerance prevailing in Armenia and the discriminatory policies and practices being pursued in that country. It is by no accident that, in its decision of 7 December 2021, the International Court of Justice ordered Armenia, in connection with Azerbaijan's request for provisional measures to be taken under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,

"[to] take all necessary measures to prevent the incitement and promotion of racial hatred, including by organizations and private persons in its territory, targeted at persons of Azerbaijani national or ethnic origin".

Turning to the resolutions of the Security Council, it was precisely Armenia's armed attacks against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories that elicited those resolutions, as well as seven presidential statements. Most important, the resolutions acknowledged that acts of military force were committed against Azerbaijan, that the territories of Azerbaijan were occupied and that those acts and their

military outcomes constituted a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The resumption of hostilities in the fall of 2020 was the result of Armenia's continuing disregard for international law, obstruction of the peace process, numerous armed provocations on the ground and inflammatory and warmongering statements. Azerbaijan did not unleash aggression against anyone — any assertion to the opposite effect runs contrary not only to international law and the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council, but also to elementary logic. The legality of Azerbaijan's recourse to force is indisputable.

In conclusion, it is important that Armenia, first and foremost, fully comply with its international obligations, redress the harm caused to Azerbaijan and its people, faithfully commit to the normalization of inter-State relations based on international law and implement the relevant trilateral statements in their entirety.

**Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia): In view of the time constraints and the lack of arguments presented by the representative of Azerbaijan, I am not going to grace him by responding to his poor propaganda and emotional outburst, which is aimed at whitewashing the aggressive war against Nagorno-Karabakh. I will simply confine myself to two points.

The fact that Azerbaijan denies the very existence of Nagorno-Karabakh and its people is further testimony to the genocidal intent of Azerbaijan towards the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Secondly, when we refer to the anti-Armenian hate speech in Azerbaijan and the racist ideology propagated at the highest level and by the highest public officials in that country, our point of

reference is the reports of international organizations, including those of the Council of Europe, which testify to the systemic hate speech prevailing in Azerbaijani public discourse that targets Armenians. The point of reference for the delegate of Azerbaijan in referring to Armenia's purported hate speech against his country is merely a fabrication of his fantasies and insinuations and is not reflected in any international document.

**Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan): I apologize for taking the floor again. I will be brief this time. Unfortunately, the representative of Armenia has used today's debate on the annual report of the Security Council (A/76/2) to make groundless and propagandistic statements. It would seem that Armenia has still not become accustomed to the fact that its policy of aggression and occupation has been put to an end.

I sometimes regret that the rules of procedure limit the number and length of statements, thereby preventing the delegation of Armenia from speaking even more. It is difficult to imagine any arguments and claims more shameful, deceitful, preposterous and hateful than those shared by the representative of Armenia. Instead of wasting time and energy by lecturing others about the principles, values and norms that it has consistently opposed and violated, Armenia must realize that the goal of a peaceful, developing and sustainable region cannot be achieved by endlessly replicating wholly false narratives, misinterpreting international law and pursuing a policy of hatred, animosity and territorial claims.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 31.

*The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.*