



Security Council

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Letter dated 29 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith copies of the briefings provided by the Secretary-General of the United Nations; Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth; Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf, Project Coordinator for Youth Without Borders Organization for Development, Yemen; and Mr. Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth, Founder of the Young Adult Empowerment Initiative, South Sudan/Uganda; as well as copies of the statements delivered by the representatives of Security Council members Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Niger, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam, in connection with the video-teleconference convened on 27 April 2020 regarding the maintenance of international peace and security: youth, peace and security.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members in relation to this video-teleconference, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are also enclosed: Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, the European Union, Fiji, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Ukraine and Uruguay.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 2 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/273), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) José Singer Weisinger
President of the Security Council

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Annex 1**Statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres**

I welcome this opportunity to present my first report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167).

Since the report was issued, our world has been shaken by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Young people are feeling the impact acutely, from lost jobs to family stress, mental health and other hardships. More than 1.54 billion children and youth are out of school. Young refugees, displaced persons and others caught up in conflict or disaster now face even more vulnerability. Persons with disabilities may face new hindrances in accessing the services and support to which they have a right.

Even before the current crisis, young people were facing enormous challenges. The numbers are startling: one of every five young people was already not in education, training or employment; one of every four is affected by violence or conflict; and every year 12 million girls become mothers while they themselves are still children.

Those frustrations and, frankly, the failure of those in power today to address them fuel declining confidence in political establishments and institutions. When such a cycle takes hold, it is all too easy for extremist groups to exploit the anger and despair, and the risk of radicalization climbs. We can already see such groups taking advantage of the COVID-19 lockdowns, intensifying their efforts on social media to spread hatred and recruit young people who may be spending more time at home and online.

Yet, despite those hurdles and risks, young people are still finding ways to engage, to support each other and to demand and drive change. We see it in our battle against COVID-19. In Colombia, Ghana, Iraq and several other countries, young peacebuilders and humanitarians are delivering supplies to front-line health workers and people in need. They are keeping communication open within communities to maintain social cohesion despite physical distancing. They are supporting my call for a global ceasefire. We see it every week in our battle against climate change. The Fridays for Future movement continues because young people know that their prospects and aspirations are at stake. And, as illustrated in the report, we see youth engagement in their efforts to bring about lasting peace and security.

Just five years after the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), encouraging steps are being taken to enable young people to play their essential role in building peaceful and just societies. From prevention to mediation and from humanitarian assistance to post-conflict healing and reconciliation, young people are stepping up through formal and informal mechanisms and by using traditional platforms and new technologies.

Many of Member States have taken steps to facilitate that. In Colombia, young leaders played a critical role throughout the peace process and had a direct impact on the content of the 2016 peace agreement. In the Philippines, young women peacebuilders organized interreligious dialogues to strengthen local ownership of the Bangsamoro Organic Law. In South Sudan, young people used the online campaign #SouthSudanIsWatching to assert their rights as observers of the High-level Revitalization Forum. In Syria, young medical students are supporting engineers to build medical supplies and are teaching others with special needs through online messaging. Finally, in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of

the Congo, Mali and the Sudan, more than 6,500 former combatants, mostly young people, have benefited from programmes supported by peacekeeping missions.

I am encouraged to see that global networks have emerged to support young peacebuilders. The African Union has begun to develop a Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security. The Security Council meets often with young people during its country visits. The Peacebuilding Commission has provided young peacebuilders a platform to present their work and policy recommendations. Young refugees helped shape the Global Compact on Refugees, and countries including Finland, the Gambia and Nigeria are developing national road maps for youth and peace and security.

The United Nations, for its part, is striving to integrate that agenda across the Organization, guided by the United Nations Youth Strategy. Notwithstanding that progress, the youth, peace and security agenda still faces formidable challenges. Participation opportunities remain inadequate. Many young peacebuilders report that their participation is not welcomed by the public or those in positions of power. That is especially evident for young women. Exclusion from political decision-making further increases their vulnerability to discrimination, sexual violence and exploitation, trafficking and child marriage. Only 2.2 per cent of the world's parliamentarians are under 30 years of age, so it is not surprising to see declining turnout on the part of young voters in the world, reflecting growing dissatisfaction with political establishments. Young women and men forced from their homes owing to conflict and violence remain highly vulnerable. Reports of threats and human rights violations against young peacebuilders and human rights defenders are also of grave concern. Behind all of that lies insufficient investment in prevention and in ensuring that young people have opportunities to advance in life.

Even before COVID-19, a global learning crisis already threatened to undermine long-term prospects for development and social cohesion, particularly in conflict-affected settings. Now this crisis is multiplying, coupled with massive increases in poverty and unemployment. It is in that context that I am issuing a call to action on youth, peace and security.

First, we must do more to address those challenges, guided by the findings of "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (see S/2018/86). Secondly, we must invest in young people's participation, organizations and initiatives. The Peacebuilding Fund is an invaluable tool, and I urge the Council to ensure it has the resources it needs. Thirdly, we must strengthen human rights protections and protect the civic space on which youth participation depends. Fourthly, we must emerge from the COVID-19 crisis with a determination to recover better by massively increasing our investment in young people's capacities as we deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Across that work, our efforts must reflect a fundamental understanding: young people are not subjects to be protected, but should be seen as citizens with equal rights, as full members of our societies and as powerful agents for change. The world cannot afford a lost generation of youth, their lives set back by COVID-19 and their voices stifled by a lack of participation. Let us do far more to tap their talents as we tackle the pandemic and chart a recovery that leads to a more peaceful, sustainable and equitable future for all.

Annex 2**Statement by the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake**

We are in the midst of an unprecedented global challenge. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has swept through our world, leaving everyday life as we know it at a standstill, schools, businesses, markets and bus stations deserted and entire cities transformed into ghost towns overnight.

While decision-makers are trying to navigate uncharted waters, we have seen an image grow from the media of the worlds' young people acting irresponsibly and recklessly, not understanding the gravity of the situation, putting the lives of others' in danger by going to beaches, pubs and parties. As usual, we have seen a focus on the small minority of young people who disregard guidelines and instructions, risking their own health and the safety of others, while the thousands of young people who were already fighting on the front lines of the crisis have been completely sidelined. Nowhere in the news did we hear about young peacebuilders in Kenya and Cameroon who immediately adapted their peacebuilding organizations and networks to prepare their communities to face COVID-19. The news did not focus on the many young health workers and medical students attending to patients in China and Italy. The news did not tell us about the Scouts, Girl Guides and Red Cross volunteers running awareness and handwashing campaigns in Haiti and Jordan. The headlines did not recognize young people 3D-printing face masks and fundraising in support of charities here in the United States.

Therefore, allow me to dedicate my statement today to all the young people who are putting their communities ahead of themselves in war zones, refugee camps, favelas and settlements, showing grit and leadership that we sometimes fail to see in our own political leaders.

Public discourse often portrays young people as an irresponsible, self-interested group. We quickly categorize young men as easily attracted to violence and as part of gangs and extremist groups, and young women always as victims in such scenarios. But contrary to those popular narratives, if we care to take a closer look at the communities most affected, what conflicts, disasters and crises teach us over and over again is that young people are not only the most resilient but also the most innovative and resourceful during turbulent times. Born into and growing up in an exceedingly interconnected world, young people understand very well that solidarity is the name of the game. They understand that, just like the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, violence, inequality and climate change do not stop at national boundaries. They understand that none of us is safe unless we all are.

This year, we mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution 2250 (2015). We are also marking the 20 years of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. With unprecedented global challenges surrounding us all, the United Nations is getting ready to celebrate its seventy-fifth birthday, reflecting on its past but, most important, looking to its future. This is an opportune moment to take stock of the youth, peace and security agenda, its progress and successes, its challenges and gaps. I am sure we all agree that the future of our communities, countries and the entire world depend on building peaceful and resilient generations.

This is also a strategic moment to further increase synergies among those various agendas so that young people in all their diversity can contribute as equal partners and stakeholders in deciding what kind of a future they will inherit. Therefore, allow me to thank the Government of the Dominican Republic for its leadership in convening this Security Council briefing. I am pleased to join the Secretary-General and two young peacebuilders, Olla from Yemen and Gatwal from

South Sudan, as we reflect on the key messages and recommendations of the first-ever Secretary-General's report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167).

The report was published at a vital time when the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic were emerging. In order to adjust to the current realities, innovative and new approaches to translate youth, peace and security policy into practice are needed. While the report documents important practices, lessons and commitments that have emerged from the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda, a clear strategy co-led by young people and Member States, especially at the country level, is needed.

Since 2015, the Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council have increasingly discussed the situation of young people, from 21 per cent of reports in 2016 to 39 per cent in 2019. However, we still have a lot to do to mainstream and embed youth, peace and security across United Nations efforts. For example, of the 253 resolutions adopted by the Security Council since 2015, only 16 per cent include meaningful references to youth.

I am pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report on youth, peace and security is grounded in the five pillars of resolution 2250 (2015) and draws on the comprehensive strategic recommendations formulated in "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (see S/2018/86), presented to the Council in April 2018. Therefore, my key recommendations today echo the voices of the young people I have interacted with during my country missions around the world and of those who participated in the survey I carried out online just before this briefing. They also echo the wider consultations carried out by United Nations partners, Member States and civil society in preparation of the Secretary-General's report.

First, young people believe that there is a need to create more meaningful partnerships among youth, civil society organizations and Government institutions that work on the youth, peace and security agenda. To date, there are no national action plans on youth, peace and security, but I am pleased to note that they are being developed in some countries. For a national road map to be successful, a participatory, transparent and youth-led process and adequate resources are needed.

Since resolution 2250 (2015) was adopted, we have seen an increase in the creation of national coalitions on youth, peace and security. I encourage all Member States to establish multi-stakeholder mechanisms to meaningfully engage young people in the planning and decision-making on peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as in discussions on resource allocations.

Secondly, the meaningful participation of all young people towards building sustainable peace should be ensured. Participation is recognized as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All young people have the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs, and therefore are entitled to rights and freedoms.

Such participation encompasses a wide range of actions, from formal participation in political, electoral or peace processes to informal participation at the community level and in digital spaces. Enabling spaces where they are seen and respected as citizens with equal rights, equal voices and equal influence should be created for young people.

Although inclusion has shown to positively impact the sustainability of peace agreements, young people continue to be excluded from decisions that directly impact their present and future prospects for peace. The key outcome of the first International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes, hosted in

Helsinki in March 2019, demonstrated that young people will inherit either the long-term benefits or the long-term consequences of a peace agreement.

I therefore call on all Member States to create meaningful opportunities for young people to participate in peace processes both informally and formally. As acknowledged by the policy paper *We Are Here: An integrated approach to youth-inclusive peace processes*, which I presented to the Security Council last year (see S/PV.8577), that can be inside, around and beyond negotiation rooms.

Finally, young people believe that strong mechanisms should be developed to protect young activists and peacebuilders. Young activists face various threats from State and non-State actors for building peace in their communities, and reprisals for cooperating with the United Nations. Those threats include physical, legal, political, sociocultural, digital and financial threats. In the times of COVID-19, with lockdowns, curfews and increased surveillance offline and online, civic space has continued to shrink worldwide, risking stalling progress.

To date, no data are systematically collected on human rights violations against young peacebuilders and human rights defenders throughout the world and, in most cases, such violations remain undocumented or uninvestigated. I therefore call on the support of Member States to facilitate an inclusive, safe, enabling and gender-responsive environment in which young peacebuilders and young human rights defenders are recognized and provided with adequate support and protection to carry out their work independently and without undue interference.

What do we see as the collective way forward? As Security Council members are aware, operationalizing the youth, peace and security agenda requires coordination, coherence and integration, as well as political will and commitment. These recommendations cannot be implemented without sufficient funding and accountability from the United Nations system and its Member States. Flexible and easily accessible funding for youth-led and youth-focused organizations and for the United Nations and other civil society partners is urgently needed to further advance the youth, peace and security agenda.

I strongly recommend the Security Council to consider regular and systematic reporting on the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) in order to ensure the sustainability and continuity of these important agendas. Tracking progress is vital to ensuring accountability. Shifting to a meaningful, partnership-based approach, especially with civil society and youth-led organizations, is critical not only for this agenda but for youth engagement and participation in all aspects of life, as outlined in Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth.

In conclusion, if the United Nations, including the Security Council, fails to translate agreed resolutions into action, in a nutshell, if this agenda is not brought down from a global policy level to a regional and country level with programmatic action, young people will lose opportunities to meaningfully participate and their trust in institutions and multilateralism will further erode. We cannot afford to lose the trust of young people, who are the greatest asset and greatest hope that we have for a better future. I therefore urge the Council to put young people at the heart of its efforts to bring about global peace and security. Young people are ready and up for the challenge. The question is whether national, regional and international actors are ready to bridge the intergenerational divide.

Annex 3**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve**

I take the floor today on behalf of Belgian youth. Exceptionally, our intervention has been drafted by the Belgian United Nations youth delegates. This programme not only helps to raise young people's voices within the United Nations but also serves as a channel to get them involved in our national decision-making. We can only recommend it.

As youth delegates, we welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2020/167), especially its call for continuous and meaningful youth participation. The fact that we have the opportunity to address the Security Council shows what shape participation can take.

Young people are faced with multiple challenges. For our contribution, we have opted to focus on climate change and hate speech.

To start, we would like to echo our Government's commitment to putting the topic of climate and security on the Security Council's agenda. The climate crisis, just like the coronavirus disease pandemic, is not only a direct threat to the livelihoods of billions of people; it also aggravates factors that contribute to conflict. Given that fragile States frequently have younger demographics, young people are particularly vulnerable and, sadly, often the first victims of conflict. United Nations Member States need to address this issue, especially since the youth population across the world is set to increase drastically.

Our generation will be the first to be heavily impacted by global warming. As such, should we not be the first group to be consulted? It is only natural for the younger population, especially those most affected, to have a seat at the table when far-reaching adaptation and mitigation policies are being detailed. Our worldwide actions of 2019 have proved that we are a considerable and positive force for change. Young people stand ready to be structurally involved through frequent invitations to relevant thematic and country-specific Security Council briefings.

Secondly, social exclusion, intolerance and racism all contribute to hate speech, which often addresses the young as victims or as the subjects of indoctrination. Extremism and violent acts following from such discourse could be prevented by more inclusive societies. Young people should be offered opportunities to fulfil their aspirations. In addition, we point to the effectiveness of campaigns such as the Council of Europe's project "No hate speech movement" and its dedicated national activities.

To us, the Internet is a double-edged sword. Wisely used, it allows free access to information and serves as a tool of empowerment. However, without adequate governance, it allows fake news to spread, contributes to radicalization and heightens the risk of the misuse of personal data. We appeal to Governments, at all levels, to cherish individual freedom while ensuring the safety of young users. That requires a coalition among Governments, private businesses and civil society. Platforms gathering relevant material for young people and the attribution of labels that testify to the quality of information are potential tools. The Internet's global nature requires a global approach. We think that the United Nations constitutes the right forum.

Allow us to conclude by repeating our call for continuous and meaningful youth participation. The vital role of young people in the making and maintenance of peace has been acknowledged. We note the progress made on the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), but challenges remain. We urge Member States and donors to support the work of young peacebuilders and to protect their

human rights. We hope that adequate attention will be paid to how climate change and hate speech affect our future security and that Member States stand ready to create, jointly with younger generations, a society that guarantees sustainable peace and security. The challenges that we face require now more than ever a strong and efficient multilateralism. Let us turn 2020 — the year when we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations — into an example in that regard.

Finally, we thank the Dominican presidency for its leadership, and the briefers for their personal engagement.

Annex 4**Statement by the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Mr. Zhang Jun**

China is grateful to the Dominican Republic for its initiative to convene this meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General and his Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, for their briefings. We listened attentively to the remarks of the briefers. We thank them for sharing their thoughts with us.

Young people account for 16 per cent of the world population, and they play an important role in promoting sustainable development, maintaining international peace and security and strengthening global solidarity and partnership.

China attaches great importance to the youth, peace and security agenda. We are pleased to note the progress made in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

Meanwhile, it is also worrisome that young people in a number of countries and regions still suffer from armed conflicts. As a result, they face the hardships of poverty, unemployment and marginalization, et cetera. Some of them even fall prey to terrorism. Currently, the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic also poses great challenges, putting the health, education and employment of young people at risk. The impact should not be overlooked.

The international community should fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions, remain attentive to the development of young people, help them to tackle the challenges arising from the pandemic and support them in playing a bigger role in advancing world peace and development.

First, we must step up our efforts to protect young people by preventing conflicts and by shielding them from the harm of terrorism and extremism. To that end, the Security Council should uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, promote the political settlement of hot-spot issues and work towards conflict prevention and resolution through peaceful means.

Moreover, the international community should resolutely fight against all forms of terrorism and violent extremism on the basis of unified standards, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. In particular, we need to combat the terrorism and extremism ideologies that corrode the minds of young people, take the necessary de-radicalization measures and crack down on the infiltration of terrorist and radical groups among young people through the Internet.

Secondly, we should acknowledge and support the important role of young people in advancing peace and security, and further unleash their potential in that regard. It is important to fully take into consideration youth-related factors in the political settlement of hot-spot issues, ensure the constructive participation of young people in the peace processes of their home countries, draw on young people's strengths and listen to their views.

Young people should also be enabled to participate in conflict prevention and resolution, contribute to social stability and development and take an active part in post-conflict reconstruction.

The United Nations should enhance exchange and coordination on youth-related agendas and achieve synergy with the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and other regional and subregional organizations.

Thirdly, we should promote inclusive development, create a favourable environment for youth development and strive for lasting peace. The international community should make young people a key driver in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and pursue peace through development. As the Secretary-General points out in his report on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a cornerstone of long-term prevention. Investing in young people and transforming systems of exclusion into those of inclusion represent a central component of the 2030 Agenda commitment.

Countries also need to invest more in education and vocational training for young people, create more employment opportunities, support entrepreneurship, lift young populations out of poverty and help them to achieve all-round development so as to lay a solid foundation for peace.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, we must take the possible disruption in education, employment and accessibility of health services for young people very seriously and address the risks with concrete measures. Meanwhile, we should also call on young people to join the pandemic response efforts, help the most vulnerable and contribute to social prosperity.

China has been actively engaged in international youth programmes. We are carrying out youth exchanges and cooperation with many countries and international organizations, including establishing the China-Africa Innovation Cooperation Centre to promote youth innovation and entrepreneurship, helping the Arab League with the training of young professionals and launching the China-Latin American Young Scientist Exchange Programme, among other things. Besides, we have been providing Government scholarships to young students from all over the world to study in China. We have also deployed excellent young peacekeepers, including female peacekeepers, to various United Nations missions.

It is China's sincere hope that, with our joint efforts, we can shape a brighter shared future for all, including our younger generations.

Annex 5

Statement by the Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic, José Singer Weisinger

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing, and the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth for sharing her perspectives and challenges in the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

Our deep appreciation goes to Mr. Gatwal Gatkuoth and Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf. We listened carefully to their views and recommendations, and I must say that they are both an inspiration. We had envisioned holding a ministerial open debate, with the participation of young people from all over the world, but the circumstances did not allow that.

I want to thank all youth organizations and young peacebuilders and activists that have been actively supporting this debate and are watching us through the United Nations Web TV and social media. This is for them.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015). We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167), and we echo his demand for an accelerated implementation of resolutions 2419 (2018) and 2250 (2015) and the statement by the President of the Security Council adopted last year (S/PRST/2019/15).

Those documents, along with the progress study "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (see S/2018/86), lead us to concrete action at the national, regional and international levels. The 2030 United Nations Youth Strategy and initiatives by the African Union, as highlighted by Mr. Gatkuoth, are important examples of that course of action. However, much more is needed to institutionalize and increase the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda.

First, the creation of a regional young mediators network and a focal point network within the United Nations system, including in peacekeeping and political missions, is essential. Annual reporting by the Secretary-General on youth, peace and security, backed by a global set of indicators to track progress on its implementation, is crucial.

The strategies and active engagement on youth, peace and security by United Nations missions in Colombia, Kosovo, Somalia and Iraq are inspiring examples. We encourage other peacekeeping and political missions to emulate such efforts. More mandate renewals and reports must include specific references pertaining to the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

We concur with today's briefers. An increasing number of young people are proactively combating the coronavirus disease pandemic. But we must recognize its specific impact on young people, who must be included in the development and implementation of its response and whose specific needs must be addressed.

Now and always, the protection of young people's lives and human rights must be a priority, including those of young peacebuilders and human rights defenders, who sometimes face reprisals for their work.

The policy paper *We Are Here: An integrated approach to youth-inclusive peace processes* concludes that young people continue to be excluded from peace processes, inheriting peace agreements. But when agreements do not prosper, young people bear the burden of doing damage control. Is that fair? Their meaningful participation in peacebuilding and sustaining peace and security is essential to achieving just, inclusive and peaceful societies. It is also their right.

The report emphasizes that “the participation of young people requires unrestricted civic space and breaking with practices of tokenism”. To that end, the Dominican Republic launched its National Youth Plan to guarantee young people’s participation in all stages of decision-making, including on access to justice and citizen security, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

The Secretary-General’s report also makes more evident the need for complementarity between the women and peace and security and youth and peace and security agendas, in particular with regard to the importance of the participation of young women in building and sustaining peace. Hence, it is vital to invest in young people’s initiatives, capacities and agency, as well as youth organizations, especially at the grass-roots level, through substantial financial support.

In this regard, I would like to applaud the Peacebuilding Fund for its support to youth-led projects, and the Peacebuilding Commission for strengthening youth engagement in its work, including discussions on developing a youth and peace and security strategy.

Efforts to open communication channels with young people must continue. There are thousands of young people such as Santiago, who briefed the Security Council on Colombia on 14 April (see S/2020/305), and Olla and Gatwal with us today, who are working tirelessly on building and sustaining peace and in support of Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire. We must continue to invite such young people to brief the Council.

I wish to recognize the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth and her Office, as well as the United Nations Population Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office, for their tenacious work in promoting this agenda.

I would also like to thank the permanent and observer missions that have submitted their statements for this meeting and encourage others not yet having done so to do likewise. This is an important moment for all States to speak with one voice and take unified action to accelerate implementation.

Finally, I wish formally to announce that, together with France, we will present a draft resolution that we hope will have the support of all Council members. As the report of the Secretary-General highlights, and as we mark the fifth anniversary of the youth and peace and security agenda, it is time to accelerate the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

Annex 6**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson**

I thank today's briefers for their excellent presentations, and the Dominican Republic for its leadership in taking this topic forward in the Council.

We note with appreciation that, for the first time ever, we have a report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167). We hope such reports can be provided as a regular occurrence to ensure a consistent focus on this topic by the Security Council.

It is very simple: we cannot help build peaceful societies if we do not include young people. The right to participate in public life is a human right. Meaningful youth participation remains a challenge throughout the world, and those in power do not always welcome it. As the Secretary-General's report points out, in 2020 there are 1.85 billion young women and men aged between 10 to 24 in the world, 90 per cent of them living in developing countries and many in areas of conflict. Providing young people of various backgrounds with meaningful and genuine ways to participate in and shape their societies is one way to reduce tension and conflict and, instead, ensure peace. If we fail to do that, we risk alienating the very people it is who will take our societies and our world forward. We must all do more to create an enabling environment for young people.

It is important that we recognize the growing role young people play in peace and security. There are still visible barriers to youth participation in decision-making. Youth activists continue to be subject to human rights violations and abuses. Any threats, attacks or acts of intimidation against youth peacebuilders and human-rights defenders, especially women activists, are unacceptable. Young women often face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization. In addition to harassment and acts of violence, the young women participating in political and public life often suffer due to frequent limitation of their economic and educational opportunities, which also leaves them more vulnerable in the long run.

We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation for the meaningful participation of young people in peace and security efforts as well as for greater interaction with youth representatives, young peacebuilders and young human-rights defenders, including on its Security Council country visits.

Young people are a huge source of new ideas, solutions and innovation. During the current pandemic, however, they could be among the worst victims. According to estimates, an additional 42-66 million children could fall into extreme poverty. UNESCO analysis shows that 91 per cent of the world's students are affected by school closures, and more than 1.5 billion students in 191 countries have trouble continuing their studies normally. This will lead to increased educational gaps and serious damage to their prospects for a better future, and could potentially sow the seeds of radicalization among young people, constituting a threat to peace and security.

Utilizing digital solutions and distance-learning platforms is one way to alleviate the effects of school closures. Today, during the pandemic, such e-education capacities have helped us avoid the paralysis of our educational system. Children and young people being able to stay connected and carrying on studies is essential. Broader implementation of digital learning would make education more accessible for all groups and help limit the risk of increased social inequality. Bridging a digital gender divide in this regard is crucial.

We are glad to note that the European Union (EU) has been a frontrunner in implementing the youth and peace and security agenda, and remains strongly committed to implementing resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), on youth and peace and security. The EU was among the first multilateral organizations to partner with the United Nations in the implementation of the agenda. It is currently supporting close to 30 youth-oriented conflict-prevention and crisis-response actions on four continents.

Young people are there to remind us that we need to take a long-term and forward-looking approach on peace and security, as well as on climate and human rights. It is their right. I am convinced that multilateralism has a lot to gain from encouraging and supporting youth.

Annex 7

Statement by Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Anne Gueguen

I first wish to join others in thanking the Dominican Republic for organizing this timely meeting. I am grateful to the Secretary-General for briefing us on the youth and peace and security agenda. France supports his recommendations and his call in this regard. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth as well as the young peacebuilders who are with us today virtually for sharing their views and recommendations.

Young leaders are already mobilized and active in all parts of the world to address major global issues. They did not wait for us to act. We see it in the unique role they play in strengthening the response to climate change and to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Last Friday, I had the opportunity to participate in a lively and substantive exchange of views with seven young Mediterranean peacebuilders from the Young Mediterranean Voices initiative, who shared innovative and dynamic proposals and showed their technological proficiency. The question is not whether but how we in the United Nations, at Headquarters and in the field, can better engage with youth in a mutually enriching manner.

As the Secretary-General rightly pointed out, our awareness of young people's role is growing, but challenges remain. Young people continue to be victims of stereotypes and discrimination. The COVID-19 crisis has also exacerbated the vulnerability of young people, especially those least protected. They remain largely excluded from decision-making processes, political institutions and the labour market. Stereotypes are too often used as pretexts to ignore their demands and violate their rights.

If their rights are not respected, if civic space is not protected, young people cannot fully express their potential or be actively engaged in the establishment of lasting peace. France has called for, as it will continue to do so, respect for the freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly everywhere and for everyone, in particular by supporting young human-rights defenders.

Young people need to be involved effectively and meaningfully in the discussions and decisions on today's challenges. In that regard, the European Union's cross-regional networks and initiatives that allow young peacebuilders to influence decision-making are examples of best practices that can inspire others.

To strengthen the empowerment of young people, especially young women, France invests in quality education. A total of €200 million have been channelled through the Global Partnership for Education. For young leaders to emerge, we must offer everyone the intellectual and moral tools that only quality education can provide.

France will also put youth at the heart of the Generation Equality Forum, organized jointly with Mexico and UN-Women, now scheduled to take place in 2021. This will allow young people — and especially young women — to contribute meaningfully to the discussions. Their voices will be heard.

Five years after the landmark resolution 2250 (2015), we must continue to mobilize to guarantee a central place for young people and harness their full potential in restoring peace and security, and building just, peaceful and inclusive societies. France will remain engaged so that young people and young women are involved in our work at the United Nations, including, of course, at the Security Council. We view both agendas — youth and peace and security, and women and

peace and security — as essential to the Council's work. You, Sir, can count on France's support to keep this issue on the Security Council's agenda.

Following the leadership of the Dominican Republic, we will therefore promote the adoption of a draft resolution on this agenda. I will conclude by expressing our full support for the call just launched by the Secretary-General for massive investment in young people in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to make sure we rebuild back better with them.

Annex 8**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Christoph Heusgen**

The report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167) paints a mixed picture. On the one hand, we see some encouraging developments. In many countries, the political participation of young people is greater than it was five years ago. Young voices are taken more seriously, especially in conflict-prevention and peacebuilding processes. That is very good. Building perspectives for young people is crucial, especially in conflict and post-conflict situations. We would like to encourage all United Nations missions, peacekeeping and political alike, to adopt a mission-wide youth and peace and security strategy, establish focal points for this issue and regularly report on it. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia is exemplary in this respect.

The fact that Governments are stepping up projects involving young peacebuilders acknowledges the role that youth needs to play in building and sustaining peace. In this vein, we very much welcome the written advice on youth and peace and security submitted to the Security Council today, which encouraged the Peacebuilding Commission to continue youth and peace and security work in its respective considerations with a view to complementing and supporting efforts undertaken in the Security Council.

When it comes to building and sustaining peace, Germany is funding a wide range of projects for youth in many countries, for example, in the Sahel region, particularly Mali. Let me cite just a few examples.

In Burundi, we support a project strengthening trust and positive relationships between youth and the police. In Colombia, we support the United Nations Institute for Training and Research in their youth-led peace and reconciliation approach. In the Palestinian territories, we support efforts to create safe spaces for youth to initiate and run their own projects, while enabling them to constructively engage with their communities — for example, by establishing a community clinic for elderly persons with disabilities, by revitalizing community gardens or by developing and running awareness campaigns in their own communities.

Let me also say in this context that Germany is currently the strongest supporter of the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, which has a proven track record of engaging in projects that advance the inclusion of women and young people. Moreover, when it comes to humanitarian assistance, we attach particular importance to projects that involve young people and take their specific needs into account, for example, one in the Lake Chad region addressing psychological support, or another, which built an educational centre for Rohingya children living as refugees in Bangladesh.

Still, the Secretary-General's report paints a mixed picture. On the one hand are these very positive developments, but on the other hand huge challenges and injustices clearly persist, which can be real obstacles to sustainable peace. Let me refer to just a few. One in four young people are still affected by violence or armed conflict. They lack educational and economic opportunities, and their human rights are often violated and curtailed. Young women, especially, experience patterns of intimidation and harassment when exercising their political rights and participation in peace processes. These are attempts to silence their activism. In post-conflict as well as conflict settings, young women are particularly affected by sexual violence. All barriers to the political participation of young women need to be brought down.

Conflict-prevention and peacebuilding must therefore include diverse perspectives and involve youth from all backgrounds, including young women; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons; and young persons with disabilities.

Let me say a few words on youth and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). With schools closed and families confined to their homes, young people are being assigned additional tasks, providing for their communities, often based on the impression that they can bear increased health risks. In addition, with schools closed, young people in all parts of the world are being deprived of education, and young women and girls, in particular, are taking up care work at home, which often interferes with their education. The Secretary-General called for “an aggressive back-to-school strategy” in his report on the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19. We can only underline and emphasize the need to heed that call.

Before concluding, I would like to mention three very short sets of thoughts.

First, young people are a decisive pillar — as beneficiaries and as agents of change — in numerous projects in the context of our crisis-prevention and stabilization work. Across countries and continents, our world is witnessing a rise in youth engagement and even a so-called youthquake. We look at the young climate activists, for example, who are taking their activism from the streets to the digital world. This is very encouraging.

Secondly, we look forward to the Dominican Republic’s draft resolution on youth and peace and security, with the aim of institutionalizing this agenda.

Thirdly, and lastly, I would like to pick up a few of the recommendations of German youth delegates Eva Croon and Paul Klahre regarding the advancement of the youth, peace and security agenda.

The role of young people as meaningful stakeholders in building peace must be recognized and promoted. The German youth delegates ask for youth participation to be diverse, inclusive, democratic, meaningful, timely and trusted.

To conclude my statement, I would like to quote Eva Croon and Paul Klahre:

“Encourage, promote and institutionalize the meaningful participation of young people in matters of peace and security”

in the United Nations as well as in Member States.

Annex 9

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani

Let me begin by thanking the Dominican Republic for bringing the youth, peace and security agenda forward, even at this difficult moment.

I wish a happy Freedom Day to South Africa and would like to say to Jerry, in batik, he is truly free.

We also thank the Secretary-General and all briefers — Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth; Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf; and Mr. Gatwal Gatkuoth — for updating us on the important progress made on and the gaps pertaining to the youth, peace and security agenda.

I would like to highlight the importance of unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation in addressing the current coronavirus disease (COVID-19) global pandemic. This crisis requires the active participation of multi-stakeholders, including youth. We commend all young persons who work courageously as health workers, refugee workers, young citizens and Samaritans on the front lines to fight the pandemic.

Resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) both clearly highlight the invaluable role of young people in preventing conflicts and sustaining peace. Unfortunately, violence has wrecked the future of a quarter of the global youth population. We believe that their aspirations should be heard, particularly in the context of a series of dialogues, so as to strengthen their meaningful participation. Young people should not simply be subjects but also decision-makers. Youth from Taiz, Yemen, to Juba, South Sudan, and from all parts of the world should be supported by the international community. In that regard, allow me to highlight several pertinent points on this matter.

First, the participation of young people can increase the legitimacy and sustainability of peace efforts. Their voices matter in promoting mutual trust and understanding. Leaving them out of the equation leads to an imbalanced approach to peace and may create a perception of injustice and deepen existing challenges to peace. A greater role in sustaining peace gives them a sense of belonging and a place to engage in a constructive manner.

Secondly, it will enhance their social awareness and opportunities. Indonesia's current democratic system would have never been possible without youth participation and movements. Youth drive our social progress and inspire political changes in a democratic direction. Many members of our national Parliament for the period 2019-2024 are under the age of 30. Last year the President of Indonesia also appointed several young people to prominent positions within the Government to provide fresh and innovative ideas as well as sound advice. They are not only the beneficiaries of development but also movers, influencers and drivers of development in Indonesia. When they are provided with opportunities, capacity-building and quality education, youth can become an engine for powerful social changes and peace.

Thirdly, youth can be agents of change in their local communities. Engaging youth within their communities is vital in building sustainable peace and countering violent extremist narratives that may incite terrorist acts. In 2019, we hosted a regional workshop on establishing youth ambassadors for peace against terrorism and violent extremism so as to build networks and spread positive messages through social media. The more engaged young people are, the less vulnerable they are to extremism. Thus, we believe in the importance of meaningful dialogue between youth and local religious leaders. Last year Indonesia organized Santri for Peace,

which brought together young religious actors to promote dialogue and foster understanding in a diverse community.

We would like to echo the Secretary-General's call for action on youth, peace and security, on the need to do more for youth and on the need to invest in and take into account the human rights perspective. For the sake of peace, we cannot afford to exclude youth, now or in future. Together with youth, we will find a way to make great strides towards future advancement. By engaging youth, including young women, we can better understand the situation on the ground and gain their trust, and we will be stronger in terms of preventing conflict and more likely to find solutions with a view to sustaining peace.

Lastly, in this time of COVID-19, the need for young people to be involved in the development process has become more apparent and pertinent, since they, too, will be severely affected. Data reported by the United Nations Population Fund in March 2020 show that more than 860 million children and young people are affected by COVID-19 globally. And, as youth will inherit the world, it is their right and solemn duty to be part and parcel of creating a new world post-COVID-19. By investing in youth, we will have peace, we will have development and we will rebound from COVID-19 hand in hand with our youth. They are not only influencers but actors in shaping the future.

I should like to close with a famous quote by the first President of Indonesia, Sukarno:

“Give me 1,000 old men, I will undoubtedly rip Mount Semeru from its roots; give me 10 youths, I will undoubtedly shake the world.”

Annex 10**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry**

Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General, António Guterres, for his participation, and today's briefers Jayathma Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth; Olla Al-Sakkaf; and Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth for their remarkable contributions.

The late Secretary-General Kofi Annan once said, "Have confidence in the young people, give them a chance and they will surprise you". Many of the world's major changes were ushered in by the dynamism, fearlessness and undying optimism of young people.

Africa is the world's youngest continent. It also has the fastest-growing population in the world. While this is an unprecedented opportunity, it also presents our African countries with a difficult task: to create the conditions for a secure future in an interconnected world where the pace of change is accelerating. A fully empowered youth population could allow African countries to harness the benefits of the demographic dividend. However, if its potential is left untapped, a large unemployed youth population could become a hotbed of social discontent, turmoil and conflict. Unlocking the potential of the millions of African youth would be a game-changer for Africa and for the world.

Last month, the Secretary-General published the first report (S/2020/167) on youth, peace and security, specifically on the implementation of resolutions 2419 (2018) and 2250 (2015). One in four young people is affected by conflict and violence. In the Sahel region, the security situation is having a disproportionate effect on the youth. The majority of Boko Haram combatants are young people. Young men disillusioned by high levels of unemployment and lured by easy gain join terrorist groups such as Boko Haram. Young women are kidnapped into the ranks as prisoners of war and used as sex slaves or as human bombs. Their future is compromised, and so is that of our countries.

Young people, including young women, face multifaceted challenges and inequality in access to education, and severe human rights violations such as child marriage and various forms of violence. Those challenges limit their full participation in the socioeconomic development of their communities and countries. This translates into a cycle of systemic exclusion that creates deep generational divides and grievances that ill-intentioned groups often exploit to indoctrinate and recruit young people into their ranks.

We in the Niger recognize the necessity of disengagement and reintegration, one of the five pillars outlined in resolution 2250 (2015). Since 2017, 240 ex-combatants of the terrorist organization Boko Haram who had voluntarily surrendered to the authorities joined a reintegration centre in the Diffa region. Through this centre and the humane treatment that they receive there, the Niger intends to send a strong signal to encourage those young people to lay down their arms and lead a new constructive life in society.

Youth, particularly young women, play a critical role in peace processes. Studies have shown that the most sustainable way to preserve and secure peace is to involve women: they are the pillars of the consolidation of peace, and, above all, of conflict prevention. Therefore, my delegation reiterates the need to continue to protect and strengthen the full participation of women in peace and security. Young women such as Captain Ouma Laouali, the first female pilot in the Niger's air force, who has just completed her training as a Herk pilot, is debunking stereotypes about

youth and young women in particular. We must continue to reinforce the type of partnerships that have allowed Captain Ouma Laouali and many others to hone their skills, which will be essential to regional peacekeeping operations.

The latest Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security (S/2019/800) has established that young women human rights defenders face serious levels of intimidation because of their essential work and service. Yet a report on development finance notes that only 0.2 per cent of total bilateral aid for interventions in precarious and conflict areas went directly to women's organizations.

We recognize the essential role of young women in peace processes but regret that only 20 per cent of peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2018 contain special provisions for women. A gender-based approach to conflict prevention would be a step in the right direction to enlarge and consolidate the civic space for young women's participation. Measures must account for the gendered dimensions of conflicts and how they amplify existing inequalities.

Unless we tackle the structural barriers to youth representation in political processes, we will continue to face a poor presence of young people in decision-making bodies. In the Niger, the Youth Parliament and the Youth National Council are two platforms that have successfully ensured that the voices of youth are heard at the highest levels of decision-making in national policies and at the local level.

When we do not involve young people, we silence them, and when we silence young people, we silence our future and overlook new ways of tackling seemingly intractable challenges. That is why my delegation would make the following recommendations.

First, with regard to the disengagement and reintegration pillar of the youth, peace and security agenda, we recommend the establishment of programmes to support the reintegration of children and youth rescued from armed conflicts and the adoption of a handover protocol for the transfer of children from military custody to civilian child-protection authorities. We would like to stress the need for such programmes to be gender- and age-sensitive and to be inclusive of those groups in the process of building more resilient and sustainable communities.

Secondly, my delegation calls for increased funding and technical support for the vital efforts of youth, especially young women, working in conflict areas, in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolutions 2250 (2015) and 1325 (2000).

Thirdly, as the Envoy on Youth stated last July (see S/PV.8577), we support the designation of a youth focal point in each peacekeeping mission to ensure and consolidate the participation of young people in peace processes.

Lastly, we call on all Member States to set up bodies that allow for the systematic participation of the youth in various national, regional and international decision-making processes.

To conclude, at a time when the world is facing a common enemy and a global pandemic, we are reminded of the importance of partnerships. We welcome the institutionalization of the youth, peace and security agenda by the African Union in its Peace and Security Council since 2018. This has created a unique platform for reinforcing the role of African youth in the African Union Silencing the Guns initiative.

The words of Wangari Maathai, "There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments", find greater resonance today in the African youth's resolve to silence the guns and as the world battles the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Annex 11**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vassily Nebenzia**

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his presentation of the youth, peace and security report (S/2020/167). We are also grateful to the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms. Wickramanayake, as well as to the other briefers, Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf and Mr. Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth, for sharing their views.

It goes without saying that youth have a great potential and an important role to play in the development of society, inter alia, through meaningful participation in a wide range of peace-related tasks such as conflict resolution, peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The need for the constructive engagement of youth in activities aimed at maintaining peace and security in situations of armed conflict is also reflected in Security Council resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

At the same time, the involvement of young people in any political activity should be meaningful and based on their professional knowledge and skills, rather than driven by the desire to produce beautiful statistics or to fill certain quotas pertaining to age or gender. Moreover, young people should not be drawn into any political activities until they reach the legal age to do so.

The task of promoting a positive image of youth should not overshadow the real challenges we have to address as members of the Security Council. It is well known that, unfortunately, young people are especially vulnerable to radical ideologies. Their search for self-identification against the backdrop of a lack of life wisdom, experience or education, as well as their efforts to find their place in society, are often exploited by extremist and terrorist groups in order to involve youth in illegal activities.

In this regard, United Nations anti-terrorism mechanisms could and should be useful in helping young people by promoting stronger cooperation on the part of the international community in shielding young people from the influence of terrorist and radical ideologies, cutting off the channels through which such groups incite young people and combating the use of the Internet by terrorist groups for the recruitment of young people.

Special attention should be also paid to the phenomenon of external stakeholders meddling in the internal affairs of sovereign States by indoctrinating and brainwashing young people, in particular with the aim of shaping the domestic political landscape or overthrowing legitimate authorities under the guise of promoting democracy or human rights. External support for youth should not trigger unrest or protests.

We are convinced of the importance of promoting a culture of peace and tolerance among young people. To that end, each State has to create favourable conditions to help young people realize their full potential and be well-integrated into society and its social, economic and political activities. Providing youth with high-quality education and employment opportunities are important steps in that regard. It is also vital to encourage young people to participate in socially meaningful activities, help them improve their skills and talents, boost their self-confidence and self-esteem and teach them the value of peaceful coexistence.

In Russia we prioritize support for youth organizations and the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue among youth. The Russian Federation is doing a lot to help young people to achieve those aims. They are at the core of our national policy on youth until 2025, which was adopted by the Government in 2014 and has been implemented at the federal, regional and municipal levels. We

also focus on preventing the spread of radical and terrorist ideology among the younger generation.

We are holding numerous seminars and forums on this topic at the national and international levels. In particular, in October 2017, we were pleased to host the nineteenth World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi, which assembled more than 20,000 people from over 180 countries.

Annex 12

Statement by the Second Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Halimah DeShong

We join Council members in thanking the Dominican Republic for arranging this timely open debate via video-teleconference with a focus on accelerating the youth, peace and security agenda. We also thank Secretary-General Guterres, Ms. Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, and Mr. Gatkuoth for their insightful briefings, and we look forward to the upcoming briefing by Ms. Al-Sakkaf.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines regards the participation and leadership of youth as a key pillar of the whole-of-society approach that is necessary for achieving lasting peace, security and sustainable development worldwide.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is encouraged by the continued evolution of the youth, peace and security infrastructure in the Caribbean and Latin America. We take note of initiatives to promote peace among Haitian youth through the use of sports in neighbourhoods gravely affected by violence, and of the many contributions of young people to the peace process in Colombia.

The youth, peace and security agenda is particularly relevant for Africa, the continent with the largest youth population. It is heartening to see that young leaders such as Mr. Gatkuoth remain committed to building a fairer, more peaceful future on the continent by tackling a range of issues from terrorism and unemployment to climate change.

National and regional progress notwithstanding, sufficiently funded, focused and strategic action is required to accelerate this agenda all over the world, especially in the light of enduring legacies of anti-youth ideologies and the increased threat posed by the coronavirus disease. With that in mind, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines wishes to reiterate the following strategic interventions.

We must continue to fund the Peacebuilding Commission and to support even greater policy coherence within the wider peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations system. In particular, young people from diverse groups must continue to be engaged as crafters of policies rather than simply as policy recipients. Funding must target the high levels of unemployment and the barriers to education and training that render youth vulnerable to recruitment, criminality and violence. That is even more urgent considering the almost-universal drastic increase in unemployment and overall despair occasioned by the pandemic. With the pandemic amplifying existing inequalities, we call for responses that engage and account for the intersections of the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas in order to ensure young women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding and to address the escalating levels of sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would welcome further reporting and focus on the youth, peace and security agenda.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is inextricably linked to youth, peace and security programming. Future generations must be offered the freedom of a safe and secure world. That necessarily entails greater efforts from the international community to mobilize the necessary resources to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change — the greatest threat facing young people. Young people, in their diversity, have often been misunderstood and silenced, but they have always spoken. They have always had a voice. It is our responsibility to develop the apparatus with which to meaningfully engage youth and ensure their full participation in decision-making as we collectively reimagine and craft a future marked by social justice and social transformation.

Annex 13**Statement by the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Jerry Matjila**

At the outset, I would like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and our remarkable trio of youth activists and briefers for their comprehensive and enlightening briefings this morning. It is always encouraging to hear from the youth about their role in, and contribution to, peace processes in various conflict zones around the world.

South Africa welcomes the initiative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which, during its tenure in the Council in 2015, ushered in landmark resolution 2250 (2015). We also commend Peru for its important role in taking forward the youth, peace and security agenda, especially with regard to the adoption of resolution 2419 (2018), and we welcome the Dominican Republic's initiative to convene today's open debate in this uncertain environment resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and its impact on young people worldwide.

During South Africa's presidency of the Council, we sought to prioritize the role of young people and their contribution to the youth, peace and security agenda in our efforts to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020. That resulted in the adoption of a Council presidential statement (S/PRST/2019/15) containing six additional measures to be taken in order to mobilize our youth to accelerate the implementation of that initiative. That resonates with the Secretary-General's call this year for a global ceasefire.

The role of youth in relation to peace and security is of particular importance to the African continent, where 60 per cent of the population, according to some estimates, is under the age of 25. South Africa supports efforts to fully harness and promote innovation in young people's contribution to peace through investing in their capacities, redressing the structural barriers that limit youth participation in peace and security, and emphasizing partnerships and collaborative action where young people are viewed as equal and essential partners for peace.

Those aspects are highlighted in the 2018 "The missing piece: independent progress study on youth, peace and security" (see S/2018/86). They are also reflected in the challenges presented in the Secretary-General's report (S/2020/167), compounded by the additional challenge of youth human rights violations. We would like to share some thoughts on the five key pillars of action.

First, on participation, we acknowledge the role played by young people as agents of change. They were instrumental in advancing the goals of the broader struggle for liberation and democracy in our country. Young people who were often at the front lines of the battle for freedom are now also at the forefront of combating poverty, inequality and unemployment in South Africa. The South African Government has therefore made the empowerment of youth central to its development agenda and has set up programmes dedicated to job creation, development and youth education. Today, thanks to the heroic role played by our youth throughout the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles, we celebrate the twenty-sixth anniversary of our freedom in South Africa.

Secondly, on protection and prevention, South Africa supports ensuring a safe and enabling environment for youth in conflict situations, particularly young refugees and internally displaced persons. That is vital to creating a post-conflict environment for their participation in the economy and society in general, and can serve as a preventive measure for addressing inequality, discrimination, exclusion and human rights violations as drivers of conflict — as identified by the Secretary-General. In

that regard, investment in the meaningful participation of young people in politics and the socioeconomic sphere is therefore vital. The Council must also not forget the plight of millions of young migrants in various corners of the world.

Thirdly, with regard to partnerships, disengagement and reintegration, it is important to build on the active engagement of young people and youth organizations in multilateral processes in order to ensure long-term partnerships and to make sure that the voice of young people is reflected. Most important, we need to mainstream and institutionalize youth participation and partnerships in all peace and security processes.

In that regard, we would like to highlight the Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security, developed by the African Union's Peace and Security Council as part of the continent's peace and security architecture, as well as the study on the roles and contributions of youth towards peace and security in Africa. These serve as good frameworks to be replicated elsewhere. With regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, it remains essential to prioritize young people who have spent their formative years as participants in armed conflict and extremist groups, as they are particularly vulnerable.

Fourthly, society must pay particular attention to Security Council reforms as new Council organs are established for post-conflict situations.

Fifthly, with regard to the empowerment of young women, South Africa continues to be concerned about a trend of youth programmes prioritizing the societal role of young men over young women. That is further exacerbated by the disproportionate targeting of young women in the form of sexual and gender-based violence. Therefore, the outcomes of this meeting should advance the implementation of Council resolution 1325 (2000) — adopted during Namibia's presidency — the twentieth anniversary of which we celebrate today, and its subsequent resolutions, including resolution 2493 (2019), on women and peace and security, adopted in October 2019 during South Africa's presidency of the Council.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that South Africa believes that we must harness the dynamism and positivity of young people and build resilience in order to counter recourses to violence as means of pursuing misguided interests.

Annex 14**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, Kais Kabtani**

At the outset, I would like to thank the Dominican Republic for convening this debate on the important issue of youth, peace, and security. I also thank Secretary-General António Guterres for being with us today and for his valuable briefing, as well as the civil society briefers for their insights.

Young people represent the majority in the countries affected by conflict and violence or in post-conflict situations. They are one of the most vulnerable strata of those societies and endure the devastating impact of conflicts and violence at all levels and stages. Inaccurate perspectives and stereotypes portray them as a problem that needs to be solved, or identify them as either perpetrators or victims. The upsurge in terrorism and violent extremism also tends to be linked to the role of young people.

As we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda, we reiterate the crucial role of young people, as recognized by resolution 2250 (2015), for their contribution to efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, and to prevent and resolve conflicts.

We call for the global implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) in order to prioritize our youth in conflict- and post-conflict-related efforts. We consider the five pillars highlighted by resolution 2250 (2015) — participation, partnerships, prevention, protection, and disengagement and reintegration — essential to promoting young people's role and contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution.

In the same vein, we underscore the need for youth empowerment strategies to more effectively promote and enhance their role in conflict transformation by considering young people as dynamic forces capable of strengthening the foundation of societies and as key stakeholders in peacebuilding strategies and action plans. They must have access to economic opportunities, political participation, social services and security, and they must be protected from all forms of marginalization, hopelessness and stigmatization that may lead to radicalization and violent extremism.

The considerable efforts being made by the international community and within the United Nations system to recognize and promote the role of youth in peacebuilding processes must be continued and enhanced to further operationalize resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) and institutionalize the youth, peace and security agenda.

In that regard, additional measures can be taken, such as adding specific language to mission mandates to encourage the meaningful participation of youth in peace and security efforts, including in mediation and peace negotiations; monitoring ceasefires and the implementation of peace agreements; integrating a youth, peace and security analysis into thematic and country-specific reports and briefings to the Security Council, and increasing the participation of young briefers in the Council; and developing and adopting national road maps and action plans for the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

In conclusion, we reiterate the importance of youth in any society, and the pivotal role they can play, when they are successfully empowered and engaged in transformation programmes, in not only maintaining peace and security but also in combating terrorism and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Annex 15**Statement by the Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, James Roscoe**

I thank the President of the Council for calling this open debate today. We are also very grateful to the Secretary-General, his Envoy on Youth and our other briefers. We are particularly glad to hear those perspectives from the young briefers. They have provided a broader and more personal context for the youth, peace and security agenda, and have given us a great deal to reflect upon. I thank them all very much.

Today I want to focus on three points. First, as others have done, I wish to explore the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on youth and on this agenda. Secondly, I will talk about the critical role of education. Thirdly, I will stress the importance of protecting young human rights defenders and young peacebuilders.

Allow me to begin with a quick word on COVID-19. I think we all know that the world is experiencing an unprecedented challenge in the face of this global pandemic. And it is clear that we can defeat COVID-19 only if we work together to defeat it everywhere. That will require a global effort, but young people are going to be key to the global response. That means we must listen to them and ensure that their needs are taken into account and that they are involved in decisions about our handling of the crisis, as it affects their lives.

As others have noted, more than half of the world's population is under the age of 30, and these young people will be hard hit by the second-order effects of the virus. They will experience the uncertainty and hardship of the global economic slowdown, social disruption and, in some places, humanitarian and conflict impacts, if we do not respond quickly to the challenges that COVID-19 will mean for vulnerable societies. We therefore need youth to join our efforts aimed at fighting the virus, and we need to ensure that they do not bear the brunt of its impact.

The second point I wanted to address was education. It was really striking in Gatwal's story to hear of how his life pivoted when he was in Uganda and getting an education, freeing him from the cycle of violence that had trapped his father. While it is clear that shortcomings in education are not a new phenomenon in many parts of the world, the pandemic is also clearly having a profound impact on education systems, with over 1.5 billion children and youth out of school. More disruption will follow as the virus spreads. It is important to note that missing out on an education is a huge waste of young people's potential. More important, lack of education makes societies in which young people live less safe and less prosperous because, as Gatwal said, it was an education that gave him hope and prospects. It is without education that young people without hope and prospects turn to alternatives, including violence.

We also know that school closures have a disproportionate impact on girls' lives, with girls facing increased risks of child marriage, teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and the risk of dropping out of school permanently. It is therefore critical that, where we can, we get schools to open as quickly as possible. It is also worth noting that it is not just COVID-19 that is closing schools down. As we have heard in the Council over the last several months, in the Sahel, increased violence has forced the closure of hundreds of schools and pushed children out of education again, with a knock-on effect on the conflict there.

The United Kingdom is committed to standing up for the right of every girl to have 12 years of quality education. We have consistently provided funding to deliver on this promise, and we shall continue to do so. In fact, we have added an additional

\$6 million to the Education Cannot Wait programme in order to provide education to the world's most vulnerable children and youth, particularly as they are being affected by COVID-19.

Finally, my third point is that young people must have the freedom and rights to champion what they believe in. We have been gravely concerned by reprisals against young human rights defenders and peacebuilders. Young people face attacks and threats and restrictions on their freedom in attempts to stop them from doing their critical work, including, sadly, their work at the United Nations. Young women are at particular risk, especially when both age and gender can work against them. That is why in February this year we co-hosted an Arria Formula meeting on reprisals against women human rights defenders and women peacebuilders. Some of the women who briefed the Security Council at that meeting were young. We believe the Council must work together to foster an enabling environment for young people working on peace and security.

The representative of South Africa reminded us earlier that today is South Africa's Freedom Day. In truth, it is impossible to imagine South Africa winning that freedom without the energy and mobilization of its youth. It is important to note that youth paid a high price for that freedom, from the Soweto uprisings in 1976 right through the violence that occurred in the lead-up to democratic elections. As we reflect on that history, our job in the Council becomes clear: we must ensure that the voice for the youth of the world becomes a central part of the way we govern ourselves and decide on our future, but in a way that does not come at such a great cost.

Annex 16**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

I thank Mr. Singer Weisinger for hosting this important discussion today. I also thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing and for his report (S/2020/167) on such a critical issue. I know I am not alone in saying that our future truly does rest in the hands of our young people and that we must do everything in our power to remove the obstacles that limit their meaningful participation in public life.

One way we can include young people is by listening to their voices. I am therefore delighted that we were able to welcome to the Security Council today three amazing young leaders: Jayathma, Olla and Gatwal. I wish to acknowledge their courageous work in improving communities around the world.

Five years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 2250 (2015), the first resolution fully dedicated to the vital role that young people play in the maintenance of international peace and security. Two years ago, we adopted resolution 2419 (2018), which urged the Secretary-General and his special envoys to incorporate the views of young people and involve them at decision-making levels. Today we have come together to take stock of the progress made and to consider the steps required to improve youth participation and ensure the full implementation of these resolutions. There should be no doubt that the Security Council takes young people and their concerns seriously.

In so many conflicts, youth continue to be caught in the crosshairs. Ninety per cent of the 1.85 billion young women and men in the world today come from developing countries. Twenty-five per cent of them — more than 400 million people — are directly affected by violence or armed conflict. Surely this cannot continue to be the norm. When schools are shut down, hospitals are targeted or aid gets blocked, it is youth who are the most vulnerable. Now the imperative to protect them is even greater: on top of the social, education and health systems that have already been weakened by conflict or disaster, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is triggering multiple, interlinked crises affecting hundreds of millions of young people.

The United States has already emphasized that effective mitigation of COVID-19 requires Government transparency and accountability, the full participation of civil society and access to information. But as we heard from Ms. Al-Sakkaf today, the situation also demands the engagement of young people. Unfortunately, barriers to that engagement remain, including through intimidation and attacks violating young people's human rights and insufficient investments in systems that facilitate their inclusion, and most especially education.

As States Members of the United Nations, it is our responsibility to guarantee a safe environment for all human rights defenders, including young human rights defenders and peacebuilders. We remain concerned about attacks and limitations on young people's freedom of speech, movement, assembly and association. Neither they nor their family members should face retaliation or detention for speaking out. All young women and men have the fundamental right to take part in public life — a right they possess regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, caste, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation or political affiliation.

As we strive to include young people, the Council must recognize that leaders face a deficit of trust. Many young people do not have high levels of faith in Government institutions. Furthermore, when young people are marginalized or discriminated against, it becomes easier for terrorist groups to recruit and target

them. I will repeat that because I think it is important that we understand that young people, when marginalized or discriminated against, do become targets, and it becomes much easier for terrorist groups to recruit them.

As leaders, we have real work to do in this space; indeed, we have a responsibility. Thankfully, many young people are already showing us how to be a part of the solution, just as our three young briefers have done today. They have played an essential role in preventing violent extremism by reaching out to their peers in positive ways through friends and social media. For our part, the Trump Administration will continue to help young people acquire the skills they need to shape the governance and politics of their countries. Our efforts are aimed at building partnerships with promising young leaders around the world and across the United Nations system, so that the voices and perspectives of young people can be amplified.

In addition to the work undertaken by UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to protect and strengthen youth participation, United Nations field missions in the Central African Republic, Liberia and elsewhere are enabling young people to develop national security strategies. We encourage this kind of engagement in policymaking decisions, especially in post-conflict environments.

Just and peaceful societies are ones that listen to and incorporate the opinions and aspirations of all their people. I know these are the societies we wish to build. Accordingly, the voices of young women and men must be heard, their views must be valued and their participation must be ensured.

Annex 17**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

We thank the Dominican presidency for the opportunity to continue our engagement with this topic. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his first comprehensive report (S/2020/167), and to all briefers for their briefings today.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of resolution 2250 (2015), the landmark resolution on youth, peace and security. In the past five years, millions of children have become young men and women, and millions of young people have entered adulthood. But youth should not be simply defined as a transition from childhood to adulthood. Youth is a unique period of dreaming big and aiming high, full of potential, energy and creativity soon to be realized.

The report of the Secretary-General highlights many positive examples of youth participation in peace processes and youth-led peacebuilding initiatives, from the Philippines to Mali to Colombia. We are also encouraged to see the pioneering role that youth is playing to address today's challenges, including that of climate change and, more recently, the coronavirus disease pandemic. However, those examples are just a few of thousands of other untold examples, and many thousands more could have been a reality if they had received due recognition and support. The lack of awareness, the absence of a comprehensive youth framework and limited resources are among the biggest impediments to the enhancement of the role and participation of youth in many places around the world, especially conflict-affected areas.

To further promote the youth, peace and security agenda, we need to, first and foremost, redouble our efforts aimed at raising public awareness about the role of young people, particularly young women. At the national level, we dedicate the month of March to youth, in celebration of our youth's outstanding achievements and to inspire young generations.

At the regional level, the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) hold annual face-to-face dialogues with youth representatives to hear their thoughts and recommendations on issues of peace, security and development. Such activities show how much we trust our youth as important partners. These dialogues also serve to strengthen our young people's sense of responsibility as future leaders.

Investment in youth policies always yields great returns, both tangible and intangible. Viet Nam has enacted the Youth Law and, for 10 years, has implemented a youth-development strategy as an integral part of its national socioeconomic strategy. We believe that with a comprehensive framework for youth-related issues, including education, vocational training, employment and health care, we are on the right track to addressing the root causes of conflicts, violent extremism and radicalization. For youth affected by conflicts, in particular youth in phases of disengagement or reintegration, such a framework is key to helping them heal the scars left by conflicts, regain confidence and rebuild their lives.

It is also necessary to further underscore the crucial importance of education and a culture of peace. All initiatives on conflict prevention and resolution and national reconciliation come primarily from the understanding of the values of peace, tolerance and moderation. We welcome all efforts aimed at upholding and instilling these values, especially with the active participation of youth.

Last but not least, we call for strengthened cooperation with respect to youth. Regional and subregional organizations play an important role in this regard by connecting and coordinating efforts related to youth, peace and security at all levels. ASEAN has established youth-cooperation mechanisms at the ministerial and

senior-official levels and is now implementing the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth. ASEAN is also undertaking youth exchange programmes with external partners. We encourage further youth cooperation among regional organizations and between the United Nations and regional organizations in order to make meaningful progress in this agenda.

In conclusion, all our efforts today will be continued and led by our youth tomorrow. The value of their role, participation and contribution in issues of peace and security cannot be overemphasized. We reaffirm our support for the youth, peace and security agenda and its effective implementation, and believe that today's meeting is a meaningful commemoration of the anniversary of this agenda.

Annex 18

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations, Adela Raz

I want to thank the Dominican Republic, President of the Security Council for April, for hosting today's open video-teleconference debate on the topic of youth, peace, and security. This year coincides with the celebration of the fifth anniversary of resolution 2250 (2015), which, for the first time, included the consideration of young people in Security Council discussions on international peace and security.

The participation of youth is based on the five key pillars of participation, protection, prevention, disengagement and reintegration, and partnerships. This concept was strengthened in 2018 through the presentation of "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth, peace and security" (see S/2018/86), mandated by resolution 2250 (2015), through the Secretary-General's launch of the first United Nations youth strategy, entitled "Youth 2030", and through the adoption of resolution 2419 (2018), which reiterated and called for the increased role of youth in all levels of decision-making related to security, conflict and peace, including in peace agreements. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report issued on 2 March (S/2020/167), and for the recommendations included therein.

A sustainable peace and an end to modern conflicts cannot be achieved without the involvement of stakeholders from all segments of society. Recognizing the role and importance of meaningful participation by young men and women in preventing and resolving conflicts and sustaining peace must be a key factor in and principle of peacebuilding efforts and post-peace development. That is especially true in a country with a very young population like Afghanistan, where 63 per cent of our population is below the age of 25 and 46 per cent of those are children under the age of 15. Talking about the future of Afghanistan and its conflict resolution and economic development means talking about the needs of those 27.5 million people yearning for peace, education and opportunities in order to fulfil their dreams and aspirations.

With that in mind, promoting the participation of youth in key decision- and policymaking has been a priority in the agenda of the Government of Afghanistan, as reflected in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, the national priority programmes and the Afghanistan Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a result of our commitment to our national framework and SDGs, some of our young people have joined the ranks of high-ranking officials in the civil and security sectors. Afghanistan has worked diligently to equip the new generations with opportunities to become the leaders of our new Afghanistan.

As part of those efforts, the Government has instituted legislation to create fair access to education and subsequent employment opportunities for young men and women in our country. We have worked to eliminate child labour while instituting policies for the retention of students, especially girls, through the 2019 girls' education policy. Policies such as the Safe Schools Declaration have sought to improve education infrastructure and mitigate the threat of insecurity that would keep our children out of school. The Government has also continued its work to strengthen the country's tertiary education system and, through the second skills development project, has established and reinforced institutions that impart technical and vocation skills that can help our youth explore a diverse stream of employment opportunities.

As part of our peace efforts, we understand the importance of including youth in the intra-Afghan negotiations with the Taliban. In April 2019, the Government of Afghanistan convened the consultative *loya jirga* on peace that saw the participation

of 3,200 representatives from all parts of Afghanistan, including youth. The jirga adopted a road map for peace highlighting the participation of youth and women in peace talks. In line with that principle, the Afghan Government has stressed and reiterated not only that should young women and men be considered as part of the Government's inclusive negotiating team, but also that the constitutional rights and past advances secured for them should be preserved in any peace settlement. We remain steadfast in our dedication to ensuring that the outcome of those negotiations is an inclusive agreement that represents all segments of our society in keeping with the principles of a democratic and representative republic.

Ensuring the protection and well-being of our youth has also been an area of priority for the Government of Afghanistan. The Government has passed legislation, including a revised Penal Code in 2018 and the Child Rights Protection Law in 2019, to ensure Afghanistan's proper compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and relevant international obligations. That has been further accompanied by the institutionalization of zero-tolerance policies on such matters as the involvement of children at the level of the Afghan national and local police and the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

However, there is more to be done. Despite our continued efforts, youth remain one of the groups most harshly affected by the ongoing conflict. The rate of child casualties has risen yearly since 2013, and illegal armed groups, including the Taliban, continue to put children in harm's way, using them as human shields and child soldiers. That is an inexcusable and grave violation of international human rights law. The current climate in Afghanistan, resulting from decades of unrelenting conflict, has left generations disenfranchised and our youth vulnerable in ways that the Taliban and other illegal armed groups have exploited. We have consistently asked the Taliban to enter into a ceasefire with the Government so as to prevent further loss of life among our youth and Afghans as a whole, and now, with the arrival of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), we reiterate that call even more emphatically. Our country demands peace, and we need to be able to address the effects of the pandemic, including the precarious situation of many of our youth, who are facing the effects of school closures and the loss of economic activities on their well-being.

I would like to close by emphasizing that the aspirations of young Afghans to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan are the aspirations of Afghanistan as a whole. At a time when we are facing the challenge of COVID-19 as a common threat, there is a need for all citizens, including youth, to play a key role in addressing that challenge by raising awareness, following Government guidelines and, where possible, helping those most vulnerable to the effects of the threat. The first and most urgent step towards achieving that goal is to reach an immediate ceasefire with a view to ending the suffering in Afghanistan and creating a suitable environment for the delivery of humanitarian aid and assistance. As we start the holy month of Ramadan, we stress our call to the Taliban to see this time of peace and reflection as a time to institute the humanitarian ceasefire our people desperately need. We encourage our international partners and allies to join our calls for the future and well-being of Afghanistan and of the new generations who deserve peace and a future in which their hopes can become realities.

Annex 19

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations

Allow me first to express my delegation's gratitude for the initiative of the Government of the Dominican Republic to convene this video-teleconference on youth, peace and security. In addition, I would like to welcome the briefings submitted by the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres; the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake; the Project Coordinator of Youth Without Borders Organization for Development, Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf; and the founder of the Young Adult Empowerment Initiative for South Sudan and Uganda, Mr. Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth.

From the very beginning, Argentina has embraced the Secretary-General's new emphasis on conflict prevention and the development of the concept of sustainable peace or peacekeeping, a narrative in which youth and women have a fundamental role to play. Our country recognizes that peace and security are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. We recognize the essential role of youth in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as their involvement as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peace-building activities. Thus, we support the implementation of resolution 2250 (2015), which promotes, at the international level, young people as instruments of peace, dialogue, understanding and the fight against poverty, violence and intolerance.

Indeed, Argentina considers that armed conflicts are highly detrimental to the education and work opportunities of young people, who are vulnerable and often exposed to dangerous situations that hinder their development and affect their schooling. An estimated 300,000 armed children and youth live in conflict zones. They are victims, forced to live in constant violation of their rights, being subjected to situations such as recruitment, mutilation, kidnapping, sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals and the denial of humanitarian aid.

In addition to violating their most basic human rights, conflicts affect youth psychologically and socially, thus negatively impacting their development. They might lose access to education and other age-appropriate activities. They might have feelings of guilt or perceive violence as normal in the event that they have joined armed groups, voluntarily or forcibly, or have witnessed or committed acts of extreme violence. Furthermore, in many cases their suffering feelings of loss, uprooting, sexual violence or addiction to toxic substances has negative consequences on their mental health. Many young people in conflict contexts are involved in military service or war-based, illicit sub-economies. They are repeatedly forcibly recruited or, in other cases, are driven by cultural, social, economic and political pressures as the informal economy associated with conflict can sometimes offer them social and employment opportunities perceived as preferable to poverty and hunger.

It is essential to pay greater attention to the root causes of conflict and the importance of finding solutions starting with national involvement, in which young people can play a significant role in conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace if they are assured of an inclusive environment through the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In its participation in the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, Argentina has pointed out that the Peacebuilding Commission acts as a consultative mechanism and a bridge between the Organization's peace and security efforts and its efforts in the areas of development, human rights and humanitarian assistance. In line with that vision, we believe that the Commission can, through its active role supporting the Security Council, highlight the contribution of young people to the design

and evaluation of the mandates of peacekeeping operations, especially in its the peacebuilding phase. In that connection, Argentina supports UNICEF's request for urgent progress in efforts to protect children and youth affected by conflict through the development of legislation, policies and actions at the national level to protect all young people.

Education is key to peace, security, development and the full enjoyment of human rights, and continued access to safe education helps protect young people from the dangers of armed conflict. Education is not only a human right but also an essential protection mechanism for youth affected by armed conflict, helping them to reach their full potential and contribute to building stronger communities. In turn, safeguarding the security of young people allows them to become relevant actors in the post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction and reintegration processes.

Recognizing that young people constitute a large portion of civilians strongly affected by armed conflict and that the interruption of young people's access to education and economic opportunities has definite consequences for sustainable peace, Argentina led, together with Norway and Spain, the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, adopted in Oslo in May 2015. The initiative aimed to raise global awareness of the seriousness of attacks against students, teachers, schools and universities and of the military use of schools and universities and to universalize the Declaration. In that connection, Argentina, Spain and Norway held the third International Conference on Safe Schools in 2019.

Argentina believes that it is essential that young people, as the leaders of the future, increase their meaningful and inclusive participation for the consolidation of peace with transformative potential, rather than engage in violence. Young people certainly have an important role to play in shaping their own future and in building peace. They need to be involved in relief, recovery and reconstruction programmes and be a part of transition and national reconciliation processes. Governments and civil society, including in partnership with the private sector, must harness the energy, ideas and experiences of young people to create a new post-conflict society. Argentina reaffirms what was stated in the Ibero-American Pact for Youth with regard to encouraging the role of young people as promoters of a culture of peace through the creation of training programmes on the prevention of violence and conflict resolution.

The outbreak of an unprecedented worldwide crisis owing to the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and its shattering consequences, just as the United Nations commemorates its seventy-fifth anniversary, represents a turning point at a time when the world is demanding a paradigm shift in multilateralism in order to achieve the future we want and the United Nations we need. This milestone in the history of the Organization gives us the opportunity to bring the United Nations closer to youth, to listen to their voices, aspirations and concerns and to actively engage them in global dialogues on working together towards an inclusive, people-oriented United Nations with a view to shaping a better future for all.

At present, the younger generations face multifaceted and difficult challenges as the world fights relentlessly against COVID-19, and these challenges will be even harder in the aftermath of the pandemic, when its devastating effects will result in further lack of employment, training and education, violence and armed conflict, labour market transformation and impact of climate change. In that context, Argentina highlights the importance of "Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth", which clearly identifies peacebuilding and resilience as priorities in the work of the United Nations system by and for youth. In that regard, resolution 2250

(2015), on youth, peace and security, adopted in 2015, marks a significant shift towards recognizing the role of young people as agents of peace.

However, as the Secretary-General stresses in his latest report (S/2020/167), while progress on including young people in public life has been made, meaningful youth participation in the maintenance of peace and security remains a challenge. It is critical that the international community support young people in achieving their full potential as a positive driving force for building peaceful, sustainable and just societies. To address that challenge, all relevant stakeholders must work together to ensure channels for meaningful participation of young people in decision-making processes and foster inclusive institutions that fully represent and address their needs and expectations.

In the face of the unprecedented spread of COVID-19, the rapid use of knowledge and information is of utmost importance when it comes to developing effective responses to the pandemic. In that respect, young people can play a key role in mitigating risks and engaging in community outreach during the crisis by, for instance, using technology, such as mobile applications and social media platforms, to spread awareness messages on protection and prevention measures in order to help break the chain of infection, spot cases of violence and abuse and provide peer support and help to victims.

Moreover, it is important to highlight that young people are taking active, committed and leading roles in making their voices heard and in demanding a multilateral system that actively and meaningfully engages them. A new narrative is in the making — one that sees young people not only as beneficiaries but also as active agents in peacebuilding and conflict-prevention processes. They can also play a key role in working jointly with other main stakeholders by helping those facing different hardships as a result of long-standing conflicts, now intensified by the pandemic, and by actively engaging in peacebuilding dialogue to ensure that their rights and well-being are taken into account while building the foundations of sustainable peace.

Argentina welcomes and strongly supports the global call for peace made by the Secretary-General on 23 March, in which he stressed the urgent need “to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives”. In that regard, the effective implementation of ceasefires by parties to conflict will give us an opportunity to put the rights and well-being of young women and men at the centre of peacebuilding dialogues, fostering a humanitarian, development and peace approach to their reintegration into societies in order to carry out a process that is restorative, future-oriented and focused on their specific needs and build the foundations of sustainable peace.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the ideals and energy of young people, who are key agents of social change, economic development and technological innovation in their communities, constitute an essential potential to help prevent conflicts and participate in the shaping of lasting peace. That is why we consider it appropriate to continue dealing with this issue within the framework of the Security Council, as well as to continue to deepen our understanding of the interrelation between the role of young people and the maintenance and construction of peace and peacebuilding.

Annex 20**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations, Mher Margaryan**

I would like to thank the presidency of the Dominican Republic for convening this video-teleconference on the subject of youth, peace and security. Amid the challenging circumstances caused by the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the important anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda should not be overlooked.

Five years ago, in adopting resolution 2250 (2015), the Security Council recognized the essential role of young women and men in preventing and resolving conflicts and in sustaining peace. The landmark anniversary is an important opportunity to reflect on the progress of Member States and to scale up the efforts of the international community in promoting the meaningful participation of young people in advancing peace, justice, dialogue and reconciliation and in bringing the youth perspective to better respond to the multiple challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first-ever report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167), released in March, depicts numerous challenges that young people face, including the violation of their human rights, exclusion, inequality, deficiencies of education, unemployment and the shrinking civil space. It highlights the importance of the meaningful participation of young people in public and political life at all levels and the need to create an enabling environment for young people in which they are seen and respected as equal citizens with equal rights and equal voices. I commend the efforts of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, to advocate active youth engagement across all pillars of the Organization.

The Government of Armenia places considerable priority on the promotion of the inclusive participation of young people in political and public life, most importantly, at the decision-making levels. The young people in Armenia represent a very vibrant and active part of our society. Young men and women played a key role in the democratic transformation in Armenia throughout the peaceful velvet revolution in May 2018 by fully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in a non-violent manner. Remarkable progress has been achieved in terms of empowering young leaders, as reflected in the current composition of the Government, the Parliament as well as the regional authorities in Armenia.

Young people are important agents of change and social transformation. Attempts to restrict the fundamental freedoms of expression and movement of young people or to impede their dialogue and interaction, in particular in conflict situations, result in deepening the dividing lines and can further lead to the most serious manifestations of intolerance, such as hate crimes and atrocities on ethnic and religious grounds. Young people are especially prone to radicalization, in particular in an environment of a State-led policy of the promotion of hatred. Employing divisive narratives and ethnic profiling at educational institutions and the glorification of perpetrators of hate crimes as models for young people should be resolutely condemned by the international community. By contrast, education policies that aim to promote human rights, dialogue and inclusion represent an important tool for the prevention of the radicalization of young people, fostering an understanding of cultural diversity and tolerance towards different religions and cultures.

We firmly believe that young people can play a key role at all stages of conflict resolution, particularly in promoting dialogue and confidence-building

across the dividing lines. The young generation of the Armenians in Artsakh — Nagorno Karabakh — who have been raised free from outside oppression and foreign domination, are direct contributors to a conducive environment for the realization of their fundamental human rights and meaningful participation in public and political life, including through the exercise of the right to vote and to take part in the Government. The recently held free, competitive and democratic parliamentary and presidential elections are illustrative in that regard.

We acknowledge the important work of civil society and youth organizations in empowering young people to raise their voice for peace, non-violence and reconciliation. The inclusive and meaningful engagement of young people, in particular those residing in conflict areas, in peacebuilding initiatives, the promotion of dialogue, confidence and trust as well as the building youth partnerships are key to sustainable peace.

Armenia is committed to advancing the youth, peace and security agenda, harnessing the untapped potential of young people and amplifying their voices and aspirations in building a safer world.

Annex 21**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations**

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

At the outset, we would like to express our gratitude to the delegation of the Dominican Republic, a fellow country of the Non-Aligned Movement, for having organized this meeting on the theme “Towards the fifth anniversary of the youth and peace and security agenda: accelerating implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018)”, and for submitting the concept note on the topic (S/2020/302, annex).

We are also grateful to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres and other briefers for their statements.

The world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history — 1.8 billion. Close to 90 per cent of them live in developing countries, of which the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement constitute an absolute majority.

Among civilians, young people account for many of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons. The disruption of their access to education and economic opportunities has a negative impact on durable peace and reconciliation. As the Secretary-General points out in his report on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167), submitted pursuant to resolution 2419 (2018), one in four young people is affected by violence or armed conflict.

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its call on parties to armed conflict to comply with obligations applicable to them under international law relevant to the protection of civilians, including young people. NAM resolutely condemns all acts of violence, attacks and threats against civilian populations, which may amount to war crimes, and stresses the importance of ending impunity for such acts.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of resolution 2250 (2015), on youth and peace and security, which for the first time recognized the important and positive contribution of youth to efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, as well as in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. This was reaffirmed in 2419 (2018).

Promoting and sustaining international peace is a key issue to the Non-Aligned Movement. The Movement and its member States have historically opposed war and supported peace.

The Movement has consistently emphasized the need for the involvement of all segments of society in peace processes, including women and youth, who can play an important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts and in building peaceful and resilient societies. Inclusivity is key to advancing national peacebuilding processes and objectives in order to ensure that the needs of all segments of society are taken into account.

At their eighteenth Summit, held in Baku on 25 and 26 October 2019, under the theme “Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure a concerted and adequate response to the challenges of the contemporary world”, the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement considered ways to increase the meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in peacebuilding efforts by

creating policies, including in partnership with the private sector, where relevant, that would enhance youth capacities and skills and create youth employment to actively contribute to sustaining peace. The Heads of State and Government of the Movement also reaffirmed the importance of the inclusion of youth in the process of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

On the margins of the NAM Baku Summit, the first-ever NAM Youth Summit was organized upon the initiative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as an outcome of which the NAM Youth Network was established to enable the youth representatives of NAM member States to exchange ideas, visions and perspectives on current challenges that they face in ensuring sustainable progress and how these difficulties could be overcome through concerted and adequate responses of their States.

In conclusion, we would like once again to commend the initiative of the Dominican Republic in convening this meeting to review the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, share best practices and lessons learned and discuss further action on the role of young people in relation to peace and security.

Annex 22

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Rabab Fatima

I thank the Dominican Republic presidency of the Security Council for organizing this open video-teleconference. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing. I echo the sentiments of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the other young briefers. Their concerns and aspirations must be taken into due consideration by us.

Today's meeting comes at a time when the whole world is fighting against the dreadful coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Many young medical professionals, emergency personnel, peacekeepers and peacebuilders are at the forefront of this battle. Yet many others are stranded in their homes, passing through an uncertain time. The pandemic has far-reaching impacts on our young generation. We must therefore pay heed to their voices with regard to overcoming the crisis and reversing its potential adverse impacts on our peace and development gains. We need to invest more to help them to adapt to new situations and to be part of the solution.

Bangladesh welcomes the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015). We consider the subsequent progress study, entitled "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (see S/2018/86), and its follow-up resolution 2419 (2018) to be important contributions to the youth, peace and security discourse. They helped to put the youth, peace and security agenda on a truly multidimensional and forward-looking trajectory. We also welcome the first-ever report of the Secretary-General on the agenda (S/2020/167). Its recommendations provide a comprehensive framework for promoting the potential role of young people as active agents of building and sustaining peace. It is crucial that young people all over the world have the opportunity to unleash their positive energy and realize their potential to create a sustainable and peaceful world. To that end, peace and development actors must work hand in hand, building on the momentum of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As a fairly young country, Bangladesh will enjoy a demographic dividend from its large youth population until 2035. They carry forward the proud legacy of earlier generations of young people who played a leading role in our nation's independence and democratic struggles and now play in our strides towards peace and development through their participation in nation-building efforts. We are working to harness those historical and demographic dividends into development dividends. We are making policy interventions to tap into the immense source of transformative energy of our young women and men and to turn them into true agents of change. Our Honourable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, has launched the vision of an inclusive, knowledge-driven economy, under the slogan "Digital Bangladesh", where young people are the foot soldiers. Our Youth Development Policy 2017 exemplifies our efforts not to leave any young person behind. The policy upholds our constitutional provisions to ensure rights, justice and equity for all young people.

We actively encourage a whole-of-society approach to inculcate in young people the moral and ethical values of human dignity, pluralism, diversity and non-violence. We have been actively working towards greater inclusion of the voices of young people in major policy debates, as well as involving them in the planning and implementation of our national development plans, including the Sustainable Development Goals. The new generation of leadership occupies a greater space both in Government and the private sector.

We have already started receiving rich dividends from such multilayered initiatives. Our entrepreneurial young generation is leading in e-commerce and

e-business alleviating unemployment issues and social frustration. In crises and calamities, they have always been at the forefront through spontaneous engagements and left their mark. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, they have been contributing in many ways, starting from innovative digital tools and ideas for tracing infections to raising awareness at the community level.

Going forward, we wish to work more closely with the international community and the United Nations in implementing Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth in alignment with our national priorities. We also hope to spearhead further dialogue involving young people around implementing the youth, peace and security agenda. We look forward to drawing up a comprehensive national action plan on youth, peace and security.

Investment in the youth, peace and security agenda makes eminent sense from all considerations. The key challenges faced by our youth today are not necessarily unique to any particular context, but they have global ramifications. Keeping that in mind, we would like to underscore the following specific points.

First, the youth, peace and security agenda should be used to develop stronger narratives to change the general mindset about the youth's potential to contribute to peacebuilding, to support and recognize their role in preventing conflict and sustaining peace, and to restore their trust in Governments and multilateral systems. For that, we underscore the importance of adequate financing for national and local-level initiatives aimed at amplifying the participation of the youth in peace processes.

Second, we must institutionalize the involvement of young people in the promotion of a culture of peace, and thereby promote tolerance and intercultural and interreligious dialogue within and across societies. We also need to use them as agents to tackle stereotypes and to counter hate speech and xenophobia sweeping the globe.

Third, we must utilize the technical savviness of young people and provide them with some alternative spaces for engagement through youth associations and networks. That would allow them to guide decision-making and ensure their overall inclusion. For that, we need to empower young people through the promotion of media and information literacy, as well as through constructive social media engagement.

Fourth, young men and women remain vulnerable to violent extremist narratives that can lead them to the path of radicalization and terrorism. They are also easy prey to organized crime networks. That is particularly worrying in conflict situations and humanitarian crises, as we are experiencing around the world. We need to engage young role models to dissuade them. We also need to develop practical ways at the global, national and community levels to include the youth in the development of relevant programmes and initiatives aimed at preventing terrorism and violent extremism.

Fifth, quality, inclusive and transformative education can turn our youth into truly global citizens, help shape global discourses, foster their critical thinking and provide them with skill sets for building social cohesion as well as civic and economic engagement. We must ensure them affordable access to such type of education.

Sixth, with the right environment and tools, young people can indeed prove to be a force for conflict prevention and sustaining peace to reckon with, even in the most difficult situations. As a major troop- and police-contributing country, we have experienced how the young people among our troops and police continue to make a difference in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Seventh, the youth, peace and security and women, peace and security agendas have many essential common threads. They need to reinforce each other in

their efforts to overcome the traditional gender norms and practices, which have a disproportionate impact on the potential of young women in many contexts across the world. In that regard, the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund have demonstrated some useful precedents and results, such as the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative. We need more structured engagements for sharing good practices among United Nations agencies and national Governments in that respect.

Eighth, we need to collect and analyse age-disaggregated data to yield stronger evidence-based policy interventions, build institutional capacity for the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda and reduce structural barriers to youth participation.

Finally, the COVID-19 crisis has truly demonstrated the digital transformation that we have gone through during the past couple of decades. In developed parts of the world, the digital connectivity is helping immensely to maintain business continuity during this difficult time. Yet, in many other parts of the world, Internet connectivity and digital platforms still remain a faraway thing. We need to work together to eliminate this digital divide, particularly among the youth. We must ensure equal opportunities for the youth from every corner of the world so that they can thrive together.

Annex 23

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations

Canada welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this open debate on youth, peace and security. We strongly support the inclusion of this issue as a standing item on the Security Council's agenda. We welcome the Secretary-General's first report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167), his leadership in engaging young people in global governance and the call to action that he issued at today's meeting.

All of us were once young people and, hopefully, we can remember the challenges we experienced in terms of access, agency, inclusion and accountability.

The evidence is irrefutable. As noted in the 2018 reports entitled "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (see S/2018/86) and the *Pathways for Peace: inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict*, including the young and addressing their aspirations is critical to conflict prevention. Excluding young people from social, political and economic life deprives them of their human rights. Moreover, a lack of youth engagement leads to bad decisions and policies.

The coronavirus disease pandemic is not just a health crisis; it is a human crisis that has cast into sharp relief the inequalities that existed in all our societies. It has disproportionately affected women, girls, young people and those already vulnerable. Heeding the Secretary-General's call to build back better from this crisis will require investment in the capacities and resilience of young people, strengthening their human rights and protecting the civic space that makes their participation possible.

The inclusion of young people in decision-making is an issue Canada takes seriously. Last year, Canada launched a National Youth Policy after a broad set of consultations with thousands of young Canadians. The Policy commits the Government of Canada, starting in 2020 and every four years thereafter, to release a report highlighting the state of youth in Canada, covering six priorities, ranging from leadership, skills, health and employment to truth and reconciliation, and climate action.

The Youth Policy is grounded in three principles directly relevant to the implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda. First, young people have the right to be heard and respected and to influence decisions that affect them now and will affect them in the future. Secondly, young people have the right to equal access to opportunities and support. Canada will apply principles of equality, including Gender-based Analysis Plus, when creating engagement opportunities and support for young people. Gender-based Analysis Plus assesses how diverse groups of people experience Government initiatives and considers many identity factors, such as sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, education, income, culture, geography and age. We know that there are different outcomes depending on where in Canada you were born and we need to improve data so we can learn how to target such forms of exclusion through our policies.

When young reach their full potential, it benefits all Canadians. Supporting young people and amplifying their voices will help build a stronger and more inclusive Canada. Treating young people as equal members of society helps strengthen social cohesion and build stronger communities. Building on these principles, we would like to make the following recommendations to strengthen our collective implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda.

First, implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda should be grounded in a developmental and rights-based approach that treats youth as

an investment in our collective future and not a threat to be managed. We should prioritize the creation of opportunities for political, economic and social inclusion of the young in all aspects of public life. That means understanding drivers of exclusion and targeting them through policies that promote equality and equity.

Failure to invest in the capacities and resilience of young people can undermine trust in institutions and leave young people susceptible to recruitment by armed groups, violent extremists and gangs, and organized criminal groups. Moreover, societies where young people cannot reach their full potential will fall short of realizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

This point is particularly critical in areas such as Africa, where the number of young people joining the working-age population will exceed that of the rest of the world combined by 2035. In order to harness this demographic dividend, the region will need to create 20 million jobs per year and ensure that African young people are given the education, skills and training needed to join the workforce.

Secondly, we must hold ourselves accountable for encouraging, promoting and institutionalizing youth participation in conflict-prevention and sustaining peace. We encourage the Security Council to include youth and peace and security as a standing agenda item and support the preparation of an annual report by the Secretary-General on its implementation.

We encourage the Council to regularly consult young people and include their perspectives and advice in Security Council decisions to promote the creation of safer environments for young peacebuilders around the world, ensure that Council mandates encourage greater inclusion of youth representatives in coalitions and partnerships that aim to support peacebuilding initiatives and processes, and focus on ways of empowering local peacebuilders. We encourage all Member States to adopt national action plans on youth and peace and security and to link implementation with action plans on women and peace and security.

Thirdly, we must find concrete ways to support youth-led peacebuilding organizations and initiatives, both politically and financially. Lack of adequate funding for youth-led organizations and the challenge that such organizations face in meeting fiduciary requirements and accessing existing funding streams are major obstacles limiting opportunities for young people to contribute to building and sustaining peace. We welcome the efforts of the Peacebuilding Fund to support young people's contributions to peacebuilding, but more work is needed by all of us to find creative mechanisms to support youth-led organizations at the national and local levels.

Finally, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) has an important role to play in supporting the implementation of this agenda. As Chair of the PBC for 2020, Canada is committed to ensuring that the PBC consistently and systematically consults young people on their peacebuilding priorities as part of our ongoing country-specific, regional and thematic work. In its advice to the Security Council and other United Nations bodies, as well as its engagement with regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions, we will ensure that the PBC consistently advocates for the inclusion of youth perspectives and the creation of opportunities for youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding processes. We look forward to working with PBC members as we develop an action plan to strengthen the PBC's implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda.

It is fitting that today's debate is taking place on the anniversary of the adoption of the 2016 resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Engaging and empowering the participation of young people in peacebuilding is crucial to our overall success in preventing conflict and building and sustaining peace. Canada

looks forward to working with all Member States to ensure that we collectively deliver on this important agenda.

Annex 24**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, Guillermo Fernandez De Soto Valderrama**

[Original: Spanish]

I thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting, providing for an exchange of practical experience in implementing resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), as well as an exploration of recommendations on actions to strengthen the role of young people in strengthening peace and security.

Colombia has reiterated its commitment to young people by promoting the establishment of legal tools promoting their participation in conflict-resolution and peacebuilding processes. Moreover, these norms seek to prevent and protect against the violation of young people's rights, to promote the effective exercise of their rights, to provide access to the necessary resources for their full enjoyment of their rights, and to ensure their participation in society's various dialogue and decision-making mechanisms.

Established under the technical coordination of the "Young Colombia" National Youth System Directorate under the auspices of the presidency of the Republic, the *Sacúdete* programme is one of the national Government's principal tools for driving social transformation, highlighting the importance of young people as agents of change in the transition towards an inclusive society, based on the three principles of the Government of President Iván Duque: legality, equity and entrepreneurship.

Under this programme, there are currently 1,400 activity centres, such as conservatories; youth counsellors are being elected across the country; and there is a virtual marketplace, among other things. This tool equips young Colombians with the tools they need to overcome social, cultural and economic barriers to their potential.

Colombia recognizes that the only way to achieve stability in areas afflicted by violence is to create opportunities for the participation and empowerment of young people. That is why the implementation of projects designed by young people for young people is among the integral components of Government policy, especially the policy of peace with legality.

It is in the context of vulnerability and discrimination that phenomena such as forced recruitment by illegal groups most frequently occur. It is therefore necessary to tackle the lack of employment and recognition for this segment of the population in all regions of the country. Young people have potential and play a crucial role in conflict resolution, violence prevention and peacebuilding, thereby breaking cycles of violence.

The grave situation facing the world today due to the coronavirus disease outbreak is a matter with far-reaching consequences. We are all exposed and young people play a vital role in stopping its spread, primarily by ensuring that the most vulnerable do not fall sick. Young people should approach the pandemic crisis as an opportunity to show that by working together in solidarity, not only at the local level but also at the national and even international levels, we can overcome this crisis.

We are facing a new kind reality unlike any seen in our lifetimes. While we know that the outbreak affects everyone, its consequences are most acute in the most vulnerable areas. We must therefore devote attention to the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, such as pregnant and lactating young women and girls, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, refugees and displaced persons, and make use of relevant channels of communication to ensure that the years of hard-won progress in these communities do not fall by the wayside.

The Government of Colombia will continue making every possible effort to build a country and a world in which the human rights and fundamental freedoms of young people are protected and respected, including those relating to their freedoms of movement and of expression and their political and civic participation, and supporting the establishment of a safe environment so that they may work in peace and security.

Colombia will not stop at peacebuilding. This process with young people calls for commitment and support on all sides to continue forging ahead on the promising path we are on. I thank you, Sir, for providing a venue for a range of stakeholders to share their visions and understand those of others, for recalling the goals and for recognizing the achievements thanks to the Security Council's resolutions on youth and peace and security.

Annex 25**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations, Mohamed Siad Doualeh**

[Original: French]

At the outset, Djibouti would like to commend the Dominican Republic for convening this open debate on the theme of youth and peace and security, as well as for preparing the concept note (S/2020/302).

Issues surrounding young people and the challenges relating to their participation, their greater inclusion and the prevention of violence remain, for us, topics of concern and urgency.

The first report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/167) submitted pursuant to resolution 2419 (2018), on the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), provides valuable and informative analysis of and insights into the situation of young people around the world and articulates targeted recommendations.

We take this opportunity to commend the efforts of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in promoting this theme in the Security Council and for the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015). We thank South Africa for its initiative of December 2019, which led to the adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2019/15, on the crucial topic of youth mobilization in the context of the major continental initiative promoting peace and security in Africa, “Silencing the guns by 2020”.

The report entitled “The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security” (see S/2018/86) illustrated how young people had for too long been portrayed as a challenge or problem. While it is true that one’s youth is the period of life when rebellious potential is highest and there is a lack of trust in institutions, as well as a conscious effort to unmask them as illegitimate, we must also stress the vital importance of creating links, structures and institutions allowing for the full and robust participation of young people in building a peaceful and prosperous society. To achieve that goal, their motivations, expectations and aspirations must be taken into account.

Based on our belief that young people can make a significant contribution to transmitting the ideals of peace and help resolve conflicts, Djibouti incorporated a major youth pillar into its mediation strategy for the Somali crisis that began in 2000, better known as of the Arta peace process. In a conscious effort to link generations, young people, women and traditional leaders have comprised what we refer to as the “forces of peace”, as opposed to the warlords and cynical actors who have dominated the Somali political stage since the collapse of the Somali State in 1991.

Numerous studies show that the lack of sufficient attention to material and economic issues or to mechanisms of exclusion highlights the disturbing phenomenon of the recruitment of young people into terrorist networks and transnational organized crime. The radicalization and recruitment strategy of Al-Shabaab militants — a group whose name means “young people” in Arabic — primarily targets this category of the population.

An analysis of the geography of terrorism, as highlighted in national plans to combat and prevent violent extremism, further illustrates the importance of creating space for the inclusion of young people, in particular, but not only, in large, densely populated metropolitan areas.

The global COVID-19 crisis and this shared historical experience could represent an opportunity to create a global civic awareness among young people.

Experience shows that young people have acted and can still act selflessly while demonstrating unfailing solidarity in the face of challenges.

In conclusion, Djibouti reiterates its support for your efforts, Mr. President, and supports the concrete recommendations of the Secretary-General concerning the four Ps — participation, prevention, partnership and protection — formulated with regard to the Security Council, Member States and the United Nations.

Annex 26**Statement by the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations, Egriselda González López**

[Original: Spanish]

We thank the presidency of the Dominican Republic for having included this debate in its programme of work, in the framework of the fifth anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda. We thank it also for the efforts made to hold, within current constraints, a meeting that is open to the membership of the United Nations. At the same time, we thank the Secretary-General for the presentation of his report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167).

We welcome the progress set out in the report, and, concerning the inclusion of young people in peace processes, we would highlight the participation of young leaders and their crucial role in the peace process in Colombia and in the interreligious dialogue in the Philippines and in other countries and regions around the world.

We deplore the continuing serious human rights violations against young people, as reflected in the report, which we see as a call to continue working towards the fulfilment of the objectives of the agenda.

Young people represent a majority of the population in countries and regions in conflict, yet, regrettably, they continue to be excluded from political, economic and social decision-making processes that have direct implications for their lives; they also lack opportunities, as can be seen in societies with high youth unemployment rates and limited training and development options. Such marginalization fosters distrust of political systems and of those institutions that are aimed at ensuring their well-being. Hopelessness and mistrust provide fertile ground for criminal or extremist actors to very easily exploit and manipulate such frustration.

For example, in my country the phenomenon of criminal groups or gangs flows from a series of economic and social factors, including a peace agreement lacking measures for the reweaving of the social fabric. All those factors have created a breeding ground for gangs to establish themselves and expand. This phenomenon, which was ignored by various Government Administrations, over time has crystallized into organized criminal structures that feed on young people — the same segment of the population that suffers first-hand from the consequences of violence and the acts committed by gangs. Violence is a phenomenon and a social problem that does not spare young people; it represents a negative factor that limits their opportunities to achieve optimal sociocultural and economic development.

That is why the Government of El Salvador is committed to empowering young people through public policies that allow for their personal, social and cultural growth, maximizing their potential for integration into the productive sector.

The measures taken by the Government of El Salvador in the context of the commitment to make available alternatives for young people include the appointment of a presidential commissioner for youth, in addition to the already established National Institute for Youth, which will be in charge of implementing an integral programme aimed at addressing situations that affect and limit the development of young people. Its cross-cutting axis is its direct participation in the processes of transformation.

The Institute is also comprehensively engaged in assisting youth at social risk through the “Cosostenible” programme, which seeks to create an equitable social environment that is more dynamic and free of expressions of violence, thus strengthening the sense of belonging to the community as well as organizational

structures in order to prevent violence and promote community sports, urban art, culture and access to technology as tools to achieve that goal.

Keeping in mind the need to provide comprehensive health care to young people with an emphasis on mental health, the Institute, through the POSITIVELY programme, provides psychological treatment to young people who traditionally have not felt comfortable receiving care from an adult professional who might stigmatize or discriminate against them because of their age.

In addition, the Directorate for the Reconstruction of the Social Fabric was created, with the aim of reaching out to and assisting the territories most affected by crime and violence. Last October the “Young Government” programme was launched, which seeks to link the portfolios of various public institutions, international organizations, the Legislative Assembly, communities, non-governmental organizations and civil society, with the sole purpose of working for youth.

Lack of security is a concern not only for young people but also for Salvadoran society in general. The Government is therefore implementing the territorial control plan, a strategy aimed at ensuring security for, and the coexistence of, its citizens. One of the plan’s key aspects is prevention and the reweaving of the social fabric through programmes that offer opportunities for professional development and life options to young people at risk.

The President announced the second phase of the territorial control plan, “Opportunities”, an ambitious undertaking involving cooperative efforts on the part of institutions to assist municipalities throughout the country, providing basic education, health care, drinking water and recreation services, among other measures. The Salvadoran Government is also implementing a project to build 30 *cubos*, or youth development centres, mainly in communities that are stigmatized or at risk of violence. These development centres include, in a single location, libraries, early-childhood areas, play areas, areas for accessing new technologies and foreign-language courses, among other areas of development and learning. The CUBO project is a Government strategy that seeks to keep young people involved in productive activities and prevent them from joining gangs.

We recognize that it is urgent to help youth get jobs and to invest in them during the transition from education to employment, offer vocational training and work on formulating strategies in the area of youth employment and entrepreneurship, in order to increase development potential in the short term.

The “Empléate Joven” plan, which is part of the Young Government strategy, seeks to coordinate, along with various strategic partners including private companies, actors in the area of international cooperation, academia and civil society, a nationwide strategic effort aimed at benefiting youth at varying levels of intervention.

Ongoing work with young people is extremely important in order not only to strengthen their knowledge base and provide opportunities, but also to create and intensify their commitment to working for a culture of peace and improve their environment and that of their families in order to build a better country.

Given the urgent need to include consideration of this issue in a variety of multilateral forums, El Salvador promoted and sponsored General Assembly resolution 74/121, on policies and programmes involving youth, in recognition of the importance of realizing their human rights, addressing their needs and achieving their well-being, which is fundamental to achieving the common goals of the Organization.

In addition, El Salvador, during its tenure as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, proposed the holding of a meeting, which took place in November

2019, that was aimed at providing a platform for young peacebuilders to present their work and policy recommendations. El Salvador has promoted the holding of specialized meetings in various forums and multilateral bodies in order to achieve the meaningful participation of young people during and after armed conflict, with the goal of developing a youth, peace and security strategy.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, young people face various difficulties, including the short- and long-term effects of the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Furthermore, we deplore the fact that the response to the pandemic has exacerbated hate speech, inequality and restrictions on access to medical care, among other restrictions that undermine the human rights of all people and hamper the efforts of young people to make progress in the area of peace and security.

El Salvador welcomes, and has joined the Secretary-General's call for, a ceasefire, which would allow countries to provide a more effective humanitarian response on their territories. We hope that this response will soon be complemented by one from the Security Council in order that solutions may be provided in the context of peace processes around the world in the midst of this global emergency, principally to counter those threats that affect the most vulnerable groups, including youth.

The inclusion of young people in peace processes should be aimed not only at legitimizing our work but also at taking advantage of, and maximizing their potential in, the areas of peacekeeping, the creation and implementation of programmes that promote a culture of peace, and the strengthening of democracy and transparency, *inter alia*. We firmly believe that young people are the main authors of this story, and that as players therein, they have a key role in building a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous world.

We want to thank the Secretary-General and his Envoy for Youth for their work in creating spaces within the United Nations for youth organizations, youth representatives of various Governments, students and youth in general. Young people now can have access to and participate actively and purposefully in the United Nations, for instance in the Youth Forum and the Youth Climate Summit, among other forums that have provided specific recommendations for Governments around the world in fulfilling the commitments they have undertaken in various multilateral bodies.

Finally, we call for the youth, peace and security agenda to be strategically integrated into national, regional and global plans, policies and guidelines. At the same time, funding, in keeping with national capacity, should be increased for programmes that increase youth participation in peace, development and human rights protection processes.

Annex 27

Statement by the Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Olof Skoog

I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Partnering with young people is in the DNA of the European Union. Some of our most emblematic programmes are all about youth, such as Erasmus+ and, more recently, the European Solidarity Corps. These programmes have enriched the lives of more than 10 million young people from Europe and beyond over the past three decades. All young people have the greatest stake in getting our policies right, for the present and for the future. They are among our most important interlocutors, change agents and leaders in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, as well as in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Today's global youth population, the biggest in history, carries a unique potential for, and is at the forefront of, driving problem-solving. Together, we need to speed up significantly our collective actions to accomplish transformation towards a sustainable world. Our efforts on sustainable development and on addressing climate change go hand in hand with our efforts to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, based on gender equality and human rights. Each and every country and stakeholder must aim high. States, multilateral organizations and societal stakeholders, including young people, must strive for ever-closer partnership.

Reinforcing partnerships with young people and their organizations is central to our efforts to strengthen rules-based multilateralism. The year 2020 marks a special moment for multilateralism. The United Nations is celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary, and it is also the fifth anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda. And, through the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the year 2020 has also brought a stark reminder of the fact that strong multilateral cooperation and strong multilateral organizations are more important than ever. As COVID-19 has the entire global community in its grip, we are reminded of the importance of solidarity, across borders and across generations. Young people are playing a key role in fighting the virus, including in delivering an effective COVID-19 response within conflict-affected communities. They are already contributing substantially to the well-being of their families and communities, shouldering additional tasks. Young people can be an important force in efforts to answer the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire. As for the EU's contribution to fighting the pandemic, our global response to COVID-19, the Team Europe package, will amount to more than €20 billion and will prioritize regions and countries that are home to the youngest populations, including in Africa.

The EU welcomes the publication of the first-ever report of the Secretary-General on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167). We strongly support regular reporting to the Council and regular deliberations on this matter. We applaud the leadership of the Dominican Republic and of former Council presidencies on youth, peace and security. We urge future presidencies to keep the Council engaged on this issue, both as a thematic issue and mainstreamed into country-specific discussions.

Young people do not need institutions to give them a voice. They have a voice. However, institutions can work harder to amplify the already strong voices of youth. Institutions can also work to ensure that their voices are taken into account

in policies, decision-making and actions. That is central to the EU's approach to partnering with young people. And that is how we approached this open debate as well. We asked our United Nations youth delegates in the EU what they have to say to the Council on youth, peace and security.

This is the message of European youth to the Council:

“We call for a broader understanding of peace and security when solving security challenges, an understanding that incorporates all risks to human security. We urge Member States to boost financial support to youth-led peacebuilding initiatives, which contribute to peaceful societies. We ask that all United Nations bodies and States create an enabling environment for young people's meaningful and effective participation in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, post-conflict processes and humanitarian action. Young people must play a consultative role on security issues. The women and peace and security agenda is an inspiring role model in that regard. Activating the potential of young peacebuilders ultimately depends on the accessibility of knowledge and the sharing of information.”

Young people are making their voices heard. Youth-led civil society and environmental organizations, as well as young human rights defenders and peacebuilders — including indigenous youth — are playing a key role in calling out human rights violations and abuses, while demanding action to protect our people, planet and climate. It is our generational duty to deliver for them. Ensuring the full realization of human rights for young people and protecting and empowering young human rights defenders is part and parcel of the youth and peace and security agenda.

The European Commission adopted a new EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for 2020-2024, with specific actions to support the inclusion of young people — particularly young women — and their participation in all efforts to prevent conflict and to build and sustain peace. New age- and gender-responsive actions will be put in place in order to increase the meaningful participation of women and youth in all spheres of public life. We will focus on addressing challenges faced by youth with disabilities and those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The EU is particularly concerned about the rise of reprisals and attacks against young human rights defenders. The EU Human Rights Defenders mechanism, which has benefited 30,000 human rights defenders since 2015, is open to any young defender who is at risk.

From the outset, the EU has been a frontrunner in implementing the youth, peace and security agenda. The EU was the first multilateral organization to join the Champions of Youth, Peace and Security group at the United Nations. In May 2018, the EU hosted its first-ever Conference on Youth, Peace and Security, held in partnership with the United Nations, civil society and young people. The Conference brought together 70 young change makers from 27 EU member States and 29 partner countries in an interactive dialogue with the leaders of the EU and the United Nations.

Over the past years, we have been working with partner countries, multilateral institutions and young people and their organizations to jointly translate policy to practice in order to implement the youth, peace and security agenda on the ground. We have supported the creation of extended networks and initiatives with young people from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and elsewhere. We have established open channels of communication to discuss global, regional and local issues in order to connect young people and leaders from the EU and from our partner countries. Our Young Mediterranean Voices initiative connects civil society, educational institutions and policymakers across the Euro-Mediterranean region to

promote mutual understanding and foster youth engagement and leadership in order to shape solutions to common challenges.

Indeed, the EU delegation and the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations just hosted an exchange with young leaders from the Young Mediterranean Voices community in order to jointly prepare for this open debate. The discussion confirmed that young people are part of the solution and must be given the platforms and tools to deliver, including with regard to their economic and physical safety. As summed up by a youth leader from Libya: “Younger people are asked to fight wars, but when it comes to creating peace they are excluded.”

In the Sahel, our programme entitled *La voix des jeunes du Sahel* has offered thousands of young people a chance to exchange views with policymakers and to co-create development policies that impact them. Our Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange programme connects youth in Europe and the Southern Mediterranean in a meaningful intercultural online experience to enhance dialogue, media literacy and active citizenship. Our network of Young European Ambassadors fosters cooperation and sustainable links between young people and youth organizations from the EU and our eastern neighbours, focusing on people-to-people contacts and dialogue-driven activities. We support the One Young World Peace Ambassadors initiative, dedicated to preventing and countering violent extremism, promoting peacebuilding efforts and resolving conflict through youth-led initiatives in vulnerable communities. We also support the European Youth Forum, a platform of over 100 youth organizations in Europe.

Crucial to the success of the youth and peace and security agenda is our ability to make a difference on the ground for all young people and other generations. Presently, the EU spearheads nearly 30 crisis prevention and response initiatives on four continents in order to strengthen youth resilience and to promote youth-led peacebuilding. Many of them are run in cooperation with the United Nations. For instance, together with UNICEF, we are working with adolescents and youth in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh to enhance peaceful coexistence, empower young people as agents of change and help prevent negative and violent behaviours. Also in cooperation with UNICEF, we have strengthened the resilience and civic engagement of adolescents and youth in conflict-affected eastern Ukraine. Together with the United Nations Population Fund, we are contributing to the stabilization of the Far North region of Cameroon by increasing the resilience of the most vulnerable young people — especially women and girls — in the face of violent extremism. One global action initiative with UNESCO aims to increase equitable access to quality education for children and youth in crisis situations by supporting the education sector in fragile and crisis-affected countries.

Since last year, the EU has also been contributing to the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund and welcomes its increased focus on empowering women and youth through the allocation of 25 per cent of its total funding to this issue for the period 2020-2024. We particularly welcome the recent call for proposals under the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative 2020. The meaningful inclusion of young people is an important aspect of the 2020 comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. In that context, we echo the call of youth delegates for the creation of a youth, peace and security strategy in the Peacebuilding Commission.

We are inspired by the passion, conviction and energy of our millions of young people making their voice heard on our streets and in our hearts. It is young activists, young human rights defenders and young peacebuilders who bring the youth, peace and security agenda to life, including through their own initiatives. Working across countries and generations, we can achieve our ambitions for today and for tomorrow. We can win the fight against COVID-19, we can overcome the existential threats

of climate and environmental degradation and we can transform our societies and economies in a way that unlocks the potential of all people, including those left farthest behind. And together, we can fulfil the promise of the youth and peace and security agenda.

Annex 28**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations, Kaha Immadze**

I would like to begin by expressing my profound gratitude to the presidency of the Dominican Republic for convening today's important open debate via video-teleconference. I would also like to thank the speakers for their comprehensive briefings on the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), on youth and peace and security.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (EU), and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

First of all, let me avail myself of this opportunity to express solidarity with the Member States that are fighting the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. I offer my country's heartfelt condolences for their losses. Only through solidarity and multilateral cooperation can we turn the tide against COVID-19 in the world.

As essential partners for peace, youth represent a cornerstone in preventing violence, resolving conflict and building and sustaining peace. Addressing the needs and supporting the agency and leadership of young people is a critical lever to leave no one behind. We should therefore prioritize all forms of meaningful youth participation in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security.

With that in mind, we welcome the Secretary-General's first-ever report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167), and convey our appreciation for the work the Council has done over the past five years to promote youth inclusion in its agenda.

One of the report's key findings is that there is worldwide progress in acknowledging young people's indispensable role in peace and security. The report also provides ample evidence that young people around the world are striving for peace, justice, inclusion, gender equality and human rights. We must therefore not forget that persistent human rights violations and many structural barriers limiting young people's capacity to influence the decision-making process remain key challenges that must be addressed. In addition, more resources are needed to operationalize resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) at all levels and across diverse stakeholders, including youth-led and -focused civil society organizations.

Young people in Georgia enjoy growing recognition of their potential in sustaining peace, preventing conflict and transforming processes. In that light, the Government continues to facilitate the engagement of youth in public-diplomacy and confidence-building projects. One of the latest peace initiatives, Step to A Better Future, aims to enhance young people's educational opportunities and ease access to numerous State services. As a result, every year an increasing number of young people from Georgia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia have an opportunity to enrol in Georgia's higher education institutions. Free health care services is yet another success story of the Georgian Government's peacebuilding and engagement policy. The residents of the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions, including young people, are able to access various State health care programmes.

Georgia's commitment to promoting a culture of peace through youth empowerment has also been borne out by the Government's decision to include young people in identifying Georgia's priorities for the presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Strengthening democracy through education, culture and youth engagement is a core value of Georgia's presidency from November 2019 to May 2020.

Nevertheless, Georgia's capacity to ensure the full participation of young people in peace processes will remain limited as long as its regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia continue to be under illegal Russian military occupation. Russia's protracted occupation of those two regions continuously deprives ethnic Georgians of their basic human rights, including the right to the freedoms of movement and to be educated in their native language. Furthermore, they often fall victim to ethnically motivated violence and other forms of ethnic discrimination. On several occasions, such actions have resulted in the dreadful and regrettable deaths of young Georgian citizens.

To make matters worse, the provocative actions of the Russian Federation persist even amid the coronavirus pandemic and during religious holidays. In these extraordinary times for the whole world, when it is particularly important to care for this population living in conflict — a people who have long suffered from growing restrictions — the Russian Federation continues its illegal process of erecting so-called border signs along the occupation line of the Tskhinvali region, specifically in the vicinity of the village of Takhtisdziri, in Kareli municipality, in clear violation of international norms and principles and the EU-mediated ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008.

Against that bleak background, I would like to stress that Georgia remains committed to promoting the active engagement of youth in peace processes. Let me conclude by calling upon the Russian Federation to immediately cease its provocative and destructive actions and to implement its international obligations, including the EU-mediated ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008.

Annex 29

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations

Fiji congratulates the Dominican Republic on assuming the presidency of the Council during this particularly trying period for the whole world. Fiji thanks the President for continuing to schedule open debates via video-teleconference and for allowing non-members of the Council to contribute, particularly given the current restrictions.

As we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), we recognize that young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

Resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) stress the need for the equal and full participation of young people in peace and security. In the Secretary-General's first-ever report to the Council on youth, peace and security, he highlights that there is "growing recognition of young people's essential role in peace and security", but that "core challenges remain" (*S/2020/167, para. 10*).

Across so many conflicts, young people are among the first to suffer when livelihoods are destroyed. They suffer when their access to education is thwarted or denied. They suffer when merchants of conflict prey upon their uncertainties to radicalize and turn them into weapons of war and conflict. They suffer even more when we, the United Nations, are unable or unwilling to give this issue the urgency that it requires. That must change. When our young people suffer, so does our collective future, and so do we all — countries in conflict and countries not facing extreme conflict.

Fiji welcomes and supports the 2030 United Nations Youth Strategy. We fully support its call for increasing youth engagement in sustainable development, human rights, peace and security — both in forums and in humanitarian action. Effective youth partnerships take time, resources and skill. For many countries, adequately resourcing such action plans remains a challenge.

Fiji has established policies within our national development plan to empower young people. National youth exchange programmes, national youth conferences and national youth parliaments are some initiatives implemented by the Fijian Government to listen directly to youth voices.

Fiji has made a habit of ensuring that its young are able to participate in forums such as the United Nations Climate Change Conference and the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit, held during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, so that they can directly project their voices to the world. But our young people, like young people everywhere, face challenges and pressures of an intensity not seen since the Great Depression.

The report of the Secretary-General brings many of these challenges and pressures home to us. Nearly 1.9 billion of the world's young people live in or face the threat of extreme poverty. The Secretary-General's report indicates that young people are gravely underrepresented in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development interventions. The report also suggests that the world's young are facing an increasingly uncertain future. All these pressures are more intense and more widespread in poor, small island and landlocked developing States.

The President has drawn attention to another grave challenge before us: the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic is undoubtedly affecting young people around the world. The health, economic, social and eventual political pressures that this

pandemic will create will be far greater in the poorer and conflict-affected regions of the world, and they will be far greater in small island developing States like my own.

The United Nations system, and in particular the Security Council, should be called upon to assess the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the youth, peace and security agenda. An early discussion will be useful in framing a Security Council's response and, more broadly, a United Nations response, even though the tragedy is still unfolding.

We must take note that poorer countries, including small island and landlocked developing States, have woefully insufficient access to the scale of resources needed to cushion the impacts of COVID-19 on their communities. The livelihoods, opportunities and health of our young, and of especially girls and young women, are being destroyed, affecting the lives of tens of millions of people across many countries. This is a problem for countries making a transition out of conflict, a problem for countries torn by conflict, a problem for countries at high risk of conflict, a problem for small island developing States and for all poor countries.

Only last week, an Arria Formula meeting was held by members of the Security Council on climate change and security. Climate change is a threat multiplier that affects all regions of the world. We all know the numbers: for every 0.5°C in warming, the risk of conflict increases by around 20 per cent. The combined impacts of climate change and COVID-19 on young people are even more worrisome, which is why today's debate on the importance of youth in the areas of peace and security is so timely.

Allow me to address three issues in response to the questions the President has raised.

First, the Security Council will benefit from direct briefings by young people who are heroically leading efforts aimed at rebuilding and maintaining peace in many conflicted-affected regions, especially in countries where the United Nations has deployed political missions and peace operations. The Council does not hear their voices directly or often enough. Young people's expectations from resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) need to be heard.

Secondly, we suggest that the Secretariat provide a detailed analysis of how the security impacts of climate change are affecting young people, especially women and girls, around the world, particularly in countries where United Nations political missions and peace operations are deployed.

Thirdly, we suggest that youth advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) examine more carefully the interconnected nature of peace, security and development. In recent weeks, peace operations have become even more complicated than they were before. The implications of amended mandates for peace operations must be carefully considered. United Nations peacebuilding programmes need to work more closely with young men and women and focus on their vulnerabilities and the imperative of bringing their talents into the process of creating opportunities for development.

The world's compass — the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs — remains more relevant than ever. We have not paid enough attention to unleashing the full creative and political force of the world's young people in our efforts aimed at achieving the SDGs. We will fail if we continue with a business-as-usual approach.

The youth, peace and security mandate and the women and peace and security mandate are two fundamental signposts for the international system to use to steer us through this turbulent period. Combined, they will be a powerful tool in

creating the foundations for making more solid and irreversible progress towards the achievement of the SDGs.

It took 70 years for the Security Council to recognize the critical role that the young can play in the peace and security agenda. We need to act comprehensively to implement resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018). Fiji pledges its full support to the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security during this difficult period and to its efforts aimed at implementing these resolutions.

Annex 30**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations**

Greece would like to congratulate the Dominican presidency of the Security Council for organizing today's video-teleconference on youth, peace and security. Greece would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for his thorough and comprehensive — and first-ever — report on the subject (S/2020/167).

While aligning itself with the statement submitted on behalf of the European Union, Greece would like to point out the beneficial role that young people can play as drivers of peaceful change in building democratic, resilient and gender-equal societies, very often by engaging informally in peace activism, grass-roots peacebuilding and online human rights campaigns. Nonetheless, as the report of the Secretary-General sadly illustrates, despite certain progress accomplished so far, meaningful youth participation in the maintenance of peace and security and in governance and political processes remains a serious challenge.

In addition, very often, in many parts of the world, we are witnessing human rights violations and abuses directed against young people that highlight the urgent need for more effective protection mechanisms that can address threats against young peacebuilders and human rights defenders, journalists, bloggers and media actors; gender discrimination and gender-based and sexual violence, which are often perpetrated in the context of armed conflict, disproportionately affecting young women and girls and setting up obstacles to their access to sexual and reproductive-health services and information; and abuses committed against the human rights of young members of such vulnerable groups as refugees and internally displaced persons. Needless to say, the impact of such violations and abuses to human insecurity is further exacerbated nowadays by the outbreak of the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Assessing the progress made so far in the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda suggests the need for the adoption of more systematic, coherent, tailor-made and results-oriented approaches thereto, while maintaining ambitious standards and close links with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women and peace and security agenda. In this vein, within the context of its first national action plan on women and peace and security, which is currently in the development process, Greece is giving special focus to the protection and empowerment of young women and girls.

Moreover, coordinated action in the field of youth, peace and security by all members of the international community enhances the creation of a safe, enabling, gender-responsive, inclusive and diverse global environment, where young people can meaningfully fulfil their right to participate in decision-making at all levels and take part in educational and economic opportunities in a non-discriminatory manner, and where young peacebuilders and human rights defenders can carry out their work independently and without undue interference.

Cooperation and partnerships among all stakeholders in this endeavour can serve as fertile ground for cultivating a culture of peace, tolerance and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, all of which better serves in the prevention of violence. Indeed, Greece recognizes that, through culture and sport, young people, as agents of change, can largely contribute to the realization of human rights, sustainable development and peace. Accordingly, Greece, together with a core group of like-minded States, regularly submits a draft resolution to the Human Rights Council on promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic Ideal. It is a truth universally acknowledged that, in order to save future generations from violence and conflict, primary focus should be placed on building and sustaining peace by means of

preventive diplomacy, mediation and peacekeeping, while investing in the capacities and leadership of young people.

Finally, yet importantly, only by putting in place institutional frameworks that effectively address the structural obstacles to meaningful youth inclusion and promote fruitful synergies can young people substantially contribute as equal partners to shaping in future a more peaceful, resilient and secure world, with fewer or no armed conflicts and pandemics.

Annex 31**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, Katalin Annamária Bogyay**

I wish to thank the Dominican Republic for convening today's important meeting and for making it as open and inclusive as possible under the current circumstances engendered by the coronavirus disease pandemic. I also thank the Secretary-General for his thoughtful remarks and for his first-ever report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167). I would also like to thank the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the briefers for sharing their perspectives and bringing the voices of youth to us from across the globe.

We align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and wish to make some additional remarks in our national capacity.

As we celebrate the anniversary of resolution 2250 (2015), Hungary remains committed to strengthened cooperation in fully implementing the youth, peace and security agenda. More than ever, we see the power of youth shining through the insecurity caused by the pandemic worldwide. More than ever, we see young people stepping up all around the globe, using creative means and new technologies to gather and disseminate information, inspire and guide action and create a narrative of shared responsibility. More than ever, they are leading the world in terms of interconnectedness, flexibility and readiness to take action. More than ever, we see the power of peer-to-peer education and advocacy, which is inspiring us also to follow.

However, the global health crisis has not swept away existing challenges, conflicts and inequalities, but rather amplified and exacerbated them. Now more than ever, we need to invest in, encourage the involvement of and ignite action for young people, in order to accelerate progress on the youth, peace and security agenda.

First of all, we need to invest in youth. What this health crisis teaches us is that it is not always possible to predict breakdowns, or even prevent them. Success therefore lies in building robustness and resilience to respond to breakdowns. Building resilience is possible by investing in young people. As UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore highlighted recently, what we give the next generation today is not charity or a donation; it is an investment. Peace is not merely the absence of war: peace starts with inclusion, opportunity, empowerment and resilience.

In order to build resilience, we have to take a holistic approach, reinforce all three pillars of the United Nations and use every tool at hand. This approach includes upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms and getting on track with implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action — and the list goes on.

We should start with foundations, namely, with high-quality and affordable education and skills development, especially the development of the digital skills of young people. We are aware more than ever of the changing digital environment and the pressing digital divide, which can become a defining issue for a student's future. Innovative solutions and a new system of Government instruments are needed to best seize the opportunities presented and tackle the risks children and young people are exposed to online. In recent years, my Government has established and developed a digital child-protection strategy and a digital-education strategy aimed not just at youth, but also at teachers, parents and youth officers. These strategies have become all the more timely in the current global health crisis.

Besides education, investing in youth should ensure their physical and mental health and well-being and protection from violence, discrimination and

marginalization, which requires upholding the rule of law, good governance, access to justice and opportunity to participate in all aspects of life. We should equip youth not only with knowledge, but with the values and critical thinking that will be their compass as they strive to counter exclusion, intolerance and incitement to hatred and violence. Our approach should be intersectional and pay particular attention to those who are at risk of being left furthest behind, be they young women, adolescent girls, minorities, persons with disabilities or others.

Secondly, we need to involve youth. Youth does have a voice. We just need to give young people the space and attention to raise that voice. Young people do have educated opinions. We need to listen to and act upon them, as their perspectives are the perspectives of the next generation. We need to support youth-led and youth-focused organizations by building capacity and agency and by ensuring safe and ample civic space, including for young peacebuilders and human rights defenders, who are often at the forefront of peace efforts.

Moreover, we need to involve youth organizations as partners in decision-making processes and institutionalized mechanisms and bring them together with civil society organizations, Government entities and other partners. The United Nations system, both at Headquarters and in the field, should interact on a regular basis with youth groups. In Hungary, the National Youth Council serves as a forum to represent young people and youth organizations, shape youth policies and engage in exchanges with national and international partners. Hungary's participation in the United Nations Youth Delegate Programme also gives direct representation and voice to Hungarian youth at the United Nations and in national machineries.

Participation is all the more important when a nation is fighting for its future and for peace. It was the youth in Hungary who took to the streets and ignited the 1956 revolution against oppression. It was the youth in Hungary who raised their voice and catalysed democratic transformation in 1989. But revolutions and ceasefires can be washed away: only inclusive peace can be sustainable. Young people need to participate meaningfully and inclusively in mediation, peace processes and wider decision-making structures, and in implementing ceasefires and peace agreements. Through its resolutions, the Security Council should give clear mandate to ensure their inclusion.

Young people also have a key role to play in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In this regard, Hungary welcomes and congratulates the peace and disarmament education efforts undertaken by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. We are eager to see the innovative programmes designed to involve young people in these crucial efforts. In addition, the United Nations Youth Champions for Disarmament is an excellent initiative recognizing and giving visibility to real heroes. The young generation includes many such heroes who are worthy of being recognized.

Thirdly, youth should ignite cooperation for peace. As torches give light to one another, youth voices for peace have to be amplified across borders and regions so that they can cooperate and exchange, not only internationally but also transnationally, horizontally and regionally, to create networks that cut across sectors, social groups and religions.

Let me finish by conveying the message of the Hungarian youth delegate for the open debate, who said that:

“Creating peace has always been a cardinal issue in the history of humankind because it is only in peacetime that countries can thrive and people can live a balanced, happy life. I believe that today, young people play a key role in defining the social atmosphere. With an education appropriate for the twenty-first century, they will find it easier to understand and appreciate their

differences, be they of religion, gender, race or physical or mental ability. This attitude is indispensable to avoid conflict and create a more tolerant society.”

Annex 32

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations

Our thanks go to the presidency for organizing this open video-teleconference on the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), on the youth, peace and security agenda.

Ireland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

We in Ireland know from our own experience that peacebuilding is an intergenerational process. Young people remain at the centre of our efforts to build peace on our island, and we are grateful to have had the input of Ireland's United Nations youth delegates for this statement.

Worldwide, a shocking one in four young people are affected by violence or armed conflict. Just as it is no longer acceptable to exclude women, we can no longer tolerate the exclusion and marginalization of young people from peace and security discussions. The Security Council can and should foster the active, systematic and meaningful participation of young people in peace and security efforts. The contribution of young people to peace needs to be fully reflected in reports to the Security Council. United Nations mission mandates should include language requiring young people's meaningful participation in peace and security efforts, including in mediation, the monitoring and implementation of ceasefires and peace agreement negotiations.

Too often we see harmful stereotypes about youth, whereby the role of young men and boys is reduced to combatants and young women and girls are portrayed as victims. But globally, countless young people are building and sustaining peace in their countries. In Irish, our native language, we have the saying "*Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí*" — "Praise the young and they will prosper". In that sense, we must encourage the inclusive representation of youth in the prevention and resolution of conflict and in peacebuilding, ensuring investment to give youth the tools they need to lead and engage in the political or civic space.

Ireland is concerned by the threats that many young peacebuilders and activists are facing. We urge the United Nations to implement the Secretary-General's recommendation to develop dedicated guidance on the protection of young people, including those who engage with the Organization in the context of peace and security, to protect young peacebuilders and human rights defenders. Furthermore, strengthening the role of youth-promoting United Nations entities, such as the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, and countering the dangerous shrinking space of civil society are vital to support the needs and rights of young people. Together, governing institutions and youth civil society movements can create long-term dialogue and peacebuilding.

Ireland knows that young people are central to the nexus of peace and security, development and human rights. Their participation is critical for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. It is also vital for the promotion of human rights and for wider peace and security agendas, such as those on women, peace and security and children and armed conflict. Ireland's third national action plan on women, peace and security recognizes the importance of the inclusion of youth voices and commits to supporting youth engagement, intergenerational dialogue and the engagement and empowerment of young women and girls.

Ireland calls for a broader, more inclusive understanding of peace and security. It is time to move beyond the understanding of peace as just the absence

of violence and armed conflict. The risks and challenges that young people face today, including relating to physical and mental health, discrimination, racism, hate speech, marginalization, inequalities, climate change, migration, unemployment and financial insecurity and much more, are often root causes and drivers of violence and conflict. Today, as we face the uncertainties caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, we are seeing how pre-existing patterns of inequality and exclusion can exacerbate and deepen crises.

However, it is in the midst of challenges like the COVID-19 crisis that we see young people at the heart of solutions. For example, in Burkina Faso, young people are initiating local awareness campaigns to support the most affected and vulnerable people in their communities and positioning themselves as actors for positive change. Much is to be gained from investing in the resilience and resourcefulness of young people.

Five years from the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), much remains to be done, and Ireland is committed to advancing the youth, peace and security agenda as a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2021-2022. We urge States to join the Secretary-General's call to build on the recommendations of the "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (S/2018/86), which Ireland is proud to have supported. Inadequate resourcing remains a challenge to the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), and accessible resourcing, in particular the improved structuring and implementation of funding, for youth-led and youth-focused organizations must be made available. For those reasons, Ireland joins the Secretary-General in his recommendation on regular reporting on youth, peace and security to track the progress of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) using a global set of indicators that could serve to measure their implementation.

"This [violence] has a very negative effect on us, but it has equipped us with knowledge to prevent it from reoccurring."

This quote from an independent study on youth, peace and security exemplifies the determination of young people to build a better society for themselves and for future generations to come. Ireland believes young people must be part of peace and security discussions because they are an essential part of the solution. Only by ensuring that the voices of young people are incorporated into our work here can we make the progress they deserve.

Annex 33**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Ishikane Kimihiro**

At the outset, I would like to thank the Dominican Republic for convening this important meeting on youth, peace and security. Also, I wish to extend my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his first report on this issue (S/2020/167).

As the Secretary-General's report points out, it is of critical importance to encourage the meaningful participation of youth in efforts for peace and security. Their future depends so heavily on whether or not they are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want and equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential. If given the opportunity, they can make critical contributions to achieving peace and security for all.

The human security crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is seriously affecting the most vulnerable communities around the world, in particular those in conflict and post-conflict situations. Youth in those communities are no exception. They could be either a factor of fragility or a proactive contributor in overcoming the crisis.

Japan is fully committed to supporting the active participation of young people in the peace and security agenda. They are key players in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are thankful to the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, for visiting Japan in February to interact with young people in Hiroshima and other cities and for promoting the #Youth4Peace agenda as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Japan's engagement with youth for peace and security is based on the human security approach, which calls for the twin strategy of protection and empowerment. First, youths need to be protected from armed conflict, terrorism, gender-based violence and other physical threats to their lives, livelihoods and dignity. Japan echoes the point in the Secretary-General's report on the need for additional investment in a whole-of-society approach to prevent violent extremism and promote gender-responsive policies and programmes. Secondly, youths need to be empowered so that they can protect themselves and also fully develop their potential, enabling them to contribute to building peaceful societies. Let me share some concrete programmes for youth empowerment Japan has been supporting.

Japan provides extensive training in the field of peacebuilding and development for young civilian experts from Japan and many other countries in Asia, the Middle East and Africa, in collaboration with United Nations Volunteers. The programme for global human resource development for peacebuilding and development has enrolled around 350 youths with diverse backgrounds since 2007. In addition, Japanese participants are subsequently deployed to overseas field posts in peacebuilding and development as United Nations volunteers. Many who completed the course are now actively contributing to the peace and security work of the United Nations system.

Japan supports capacity-building for youths in post-conflict countries, such as Iraq, South Sudan, States in the Sahel region and Afghanistan, in partnership with the Hiroshima office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. We invite young entrepreneurs and leaders, particularly women, from a wide range of sectors, including the public and private sectors, academia, media and non-governmental organizations, to participate in training courses to strengthen their leadership, business planning and entrepreneurial skills. Alumni are active in the fields of humanitarian affairs, public health, education, agriculture, environment,

anti-corruption and many other areas critical to the establishment of sustainable peace and development. The total number of trainees from those countries since 2015 amounts to 320.

Japan has been working with UN-Women in Bangladesh for a project aimed at empowering women to counter the spread of violent extremism. A forum was established in close cooperation with local universities to raise awareness of the role of women in preventing violent extremism and radicalism. It has attracted more than 300 young participants to discuss issues such as gender equality, the empowerment of young women and the role of young women in peacebuilding.

Since the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015) by the Security Council in 2015, young peoples' role in peace and security has been increasingly recognized not only by Governments but also by civil society worldwide. However, we need to do more. Japan reaffirms its unwavering commitment to building a world where human security is ensured and young peoples' future is better protected and promoted. We look forward to working closely with the United Nations in that joint endeavour.

Annex 34

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations

I would like to start by thanking all the essential workers, particularly the technicians who made this video-teleconference possible during this difficult time. I would also like to thank the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic for organizing this important meeting and wish them success in their presidency of the Security Council for this month. My thanks also go to the briefers who enriched our discussion today with their experiences and views. These young builders are our capital in the face of threats to peace and security.

We are going through a very difficult unprecedented time that is affecting us all. The repercussions and implications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have far reaching effects on our countries, our societies, our economies and our lives. These times are casting us into unclear circumstances, but two things remain very clear: the crucial role of youth in society and the importance of garnering their energy and potential.

Jordan strongly believes in the important role of young people in building healthy and peaceful societies, in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and in ensuring a better future. In 2015, Jordan introduced for the first time a resolution on youth, peace and security, which was adopted unanimously. We celebrate this year the fifth anniversary of resolution 2250 (2015), which created a launchpad for working together towards empowering and enhancing the participation of youth around the world. In that regard, I would like to extend my country's support to the Secretary-General's first report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167), published in March.

The Secretary-General's report emphasizes the importance of collaboration among countries, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations and civil society. In 2017, Jordan launched the Jordanian coalition on youth, peace and security, operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Youth, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Crown Prince Foundation. It is the world's first coalition of Government, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies to collaborate together on the implementation of resolution 2250 (2015) at local and national level. The coalition set up a voting body composed of youth representatives, which had an active role in developing a national youth strategy for the period 2019-2025. The strategy rests on several main pillars, including education and technology, the rule of law, active citizenship, entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, participation and active leadership, as well as health and physical activity. This year, UNFPA and Generations for Peace will collaborate to coordinate the coalition, particularly its efforts to reach out to youth from different communities in Jordan through small-scale projects designed following an in-depth context analysis and to develop outcomes.

Youth unemployment is one of the most pressing issues the world is facing today and will be certainly be compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Job creation for young women is a challenge we all face. Low wages, lack of childcare provision, poor public transport infrastructure, along with cultural and societal constraints, are among the reasons that discourage or stop young women from achieving their economic potential and contributing to the economy. We need to encourage initiatives that nurture a culture of entrepreneurship and creativity and to support business incubators at universities and enterprises to provide sustainable employment opportunities and promote economic growth. The role of public-private partnerships in developing an environment that supports entrepreneurship and innovation is particularly key. We also need to mobilize every effort and encourage Governments,

leaders and international donors to direct more resources to youth programs and policies that foster youth political inclusion, promote civic engagement and support young people in their transition from school to work.

The Amman Youth Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security of 2015 was the culminating point of the first Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, hosted by Jordan. At the Forum, which brought together young people, youth-led organizations, non-governmental organizations, Governments and United Nations entities, participants agreed on a common vision and road map for partnering with young people to prevent conflict, counter violent extremism and build lasting peace, as well as promote gender equality.

Youth play a critical role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, but the spread of COVID-19 and the emergency measures undertaken to contain it will likely curtail the ability of young peacebuilders and human rights defenders to mobilize efficiently in their communities. We must continue to support young peacebuilders so that they can play an effective and meaningful role in implementing the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire.

Social media platforms are playing an important role during this pandemic as young people use social media to raise awareness and share good practices during these difficult times. Promoting the positive role of those online platforms is crucial to combat misinformation and extreme narratives, both online and offline, to prevent young people from falling into the traps of misinformation, frustration, violence and despair. Social media can and must be used to promote the culture of peace and to encourage young people to be agents of peace and positive change.

Now is the moment in history that we need, more than ever, to collectively seize in order to empower youth to create a better future and be resilient in confronting the many challenges facing them and the world.

Annex 35**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, Kairat Umarov**

I commend the presidency of the Dominican Republic for highlighting the important role of young people in the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation not only thanks the Secretary-General but fully endorses his detailed and insightful report of 2 March (S/2020/167) on the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) and recommendations for the future. Kazakhstan fully supports both those resolutions. We were honoured to actually be fully involved in the substantive negotiations on resolution 2419 (2018) during our term as an elected member of the Security Council.

The theme of this meeting is most relevant in the light of numerous violent conflicts raging in several regions of the world, the unprecedented coronavirus disease pandemic and the threats of climate change that we encounter today. We therefore need young people, who are the drivers of change with their openness to new experiences, creativity, innovation, enduring energy and commitment to building partnerships as world citizens. Youth constitute a quarter of the global population, of whom 500 million are living in conflict zones, which is also a cause of concern.

The international community must therefore address the socioeconomic, cultural and political factors that lead young people to violence. Likewise, every country must also launch its own youth, peace and security agenda with a view to realizing its young people's potential. To counter terrorist and extremist ideas, investment must be made in the youth's health, education, employment opportunities, and go beyond policies to concrete measures to address inequalities and boost all kinds of opportunities for young people. We need to move from remedial responses to genuine prevention efforts, investing in young people and the fight against racism and ensuring that both age and gender remain integral to peace and security discussions. We are therefore called on to support and protect young agents of peace and youth human rights defenders.

It is important to turn away from the myopic perspective that focuses on youth as a problem and involve them in charting policy frameworks, adopting legislation, participating in national parliaments and commissioning national road maps for peace and security. Mission mandates, in particular, must also focus on youth capacity-building and leadership, with greater investment in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, as well. Firm action must also be taken against perpetrators who threaten the security of young people, including young women, and ethnic minorities deprived of access to power, resources and political participation. Young people are vital to truth and reconciliation processes and should have a seat at the negotiation table. Young people must be made to feel that their votes count and that they are key actors in democratization, elections, institution-building, disaster risk reduction and the fight against corruption.

Furthermore, we must envision the role of young people in making the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development an effective tool for conflict prevention and mitigation. The huge amounts of money spent globally on military action should instead be spent on advancing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Young people must be considered as partners and leaders in addressing their own marginalization. However, that will be possible only if States invest in building young people's capacities and leadership at the national, regional and global levels through dialogue and consultation platforms.

To achieve the youth, peace and security agenda, action is critical at the national level in order to have an impact globally. Kazakhstan therefore believes that young people are key players in democratization, elections, institution-building, the fight against corruption and disaster risk reduction. Voicing support for the proposal to allocate \$1.8 billion by 2025 — the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), we propose that the international community develop a comprehensive framework relating to youth and the global security-development nexus. My country focuses on poverty eradication, employment and education opportunities, and has introduced the countering religious extremism and terrorism programme, which continues even now.

The young in Kazakhstan today make up almost half of the total population, which is nearly 9 million people aged under 29. The critical importance of young people to Kazakhstan's future is one of the reasons why 2019 was declared the Year of Youth, with the aim of identifying gaps where improvements are needed in order to fully optimize our demographic trends. To develop favourable conditions for volunteer activities, the Government of Kazakhstan declared 2020 as the Year of the Volunteer.

In order to increase the inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, introduced a major project to attract qualified young personnel to the civil service by providing the most talented young people with the opportunity to take leading positions in public administration and the quasi-public sector. Some 300 young professionals were selected on a competitive basis for the presidential cadre reserve out of nearly 3,000 applicants. Starting early this year, many of them have already been appointed to decision-making posts and have started to contribute to the development of our nation.

Kazakhstan also strongly focuses on prevention by eradicating poverty, educating youth and creating employment opportunities to support their dynamic ideas and aspirations. Our country has adopted various national schemes and a comprehensive set of policies to provide free education, vocational training, intensive job creation and entrepreneurship. Kazakhstan's Bolashak Scholarship, or Future Generation Scholarship, which was launched in 1993, provides the opportunity for hundreds of Kazakh young men and women annually to study in leading foreign higher education institutions. It has been recognized as among the best academic mobility programmes in the world.

We also dissuade young people from using violence that serves extremist causes by implementing comprehensive development programmes. In particular, we have successfully completed the national programme on countering religious extremism and terrorism, allocating hundreds of millions of dollars for preventive measures for the entire youth population.

Finally, this year, the United Nations family marks its seventy-fifth anniversary. That is an important milestone, which represents a unique opportunity to take a critical look at the problems and challenges that confront us. My country has always supported young people in using their potential as the most valuable asset for sustaining peace and security, and will continue to do so.

Annex 36**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Lazarus O. Amayo**

The young have taken ownership and have become implementers of significant global agendas that touch on international peace and security. It is incumbent upon the international community to rally around these constructive contributions and the emerging leadership of the young.

In that regard, my delegation commends the Dominican Republic for prioritizing the youth, peace and security agenda during its presidency. As we look to mark the agenda's fifth anniversary this December, Kenya stands behind the call to accelerate the implementation of the related resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018).

We congratulate the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the initiative to adopt resolution 2250 (2015) and for taking leadership of the youth agenda within the United Nations system. We also commend Peru and Sweden for spearheading resolution 2419 (2018), which is complementary to resolution 2250 (2015). My delegation would further like to highlight the presidential statement presented by South Africa in 2019 (S/PRST/2019/15), which focuses on the provisions of Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the role that African youth can play in silencing the guns in Africa by 2020, in particular, and peace and security, in general.

In addition, we welcome the first-ever report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/167) on this agenda item, published in March. This report, read alongside the Secretary-General's Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth, provides important action points and tools for communities seeking to empower the youth demographic.

Kenya supports the localization of these resolutions and initiatives in order to make the recommendations relevant and accessible at the grass-roots level. As Member States, we need to develop contextual road maps that reflect measurable implementation benchmarks for the youth, peace and security agenda.

The experiences and insights shared by the diverse group of youth representatives this morning not only were informative but also demonstrate that young people are indeed agents of positive change and need to be an integral part of peace processes and conflict resolution at the local, national, regional and international levels. This morning we heard the reiterated call from young people for the translation of policies pertaining to youth into practice, including access to sufficient funding for the effective operationalization of youth-led projects.

The five pillars of action embodied in resolution 2250 (2015) — namely, participation, partnerships, prevention, protection and disengagement and reintegration — need to be put into practice and integrated into the work of the Security Council. The inclusive participation of youth in decision-making should be approached from a partnership perspective. Working with the youth is more beneficial than attempting to work for the youth.

Our youth need to be protected during conflicts. Young men and young women need to be protected from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. The reintegration of young men and women directly involved in conflict or those returning from refugee situations needs to be comprehensive and sustainable. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is further compounding pre-existing social and economic challenges, which has the potential of leading to further disenfranchisement of the youth. Our collective mitigation measures should prioritize ensuring that young people are not left behind.

Investment in youth is a preventive measure. Preparing young people to positively focus their creativity and aspirations on resolving societal challenges in various fields, such as the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and information and communications technology, including innovation, cybersecurity and low-cost technologies, will contribute to sustainable peace and sustainable development.

In Kenya, we have rolled out initiatives geared towards ensuring that the youth are part and parcel of the formulation of national strategies pertaining to sustainable peace. The Government has established a State Department of Youth under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Service Youth and Gender. This initiative ensures that the youth work alongside Government officials, community leaders, civil society, the private sector and international partners to contribute to the peace agenda. Currently, the Department of Youth is utilizing social media to disseminate important facts and guidelines with regard to COVID-19. We thank the United Nations Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, for her recognition of this Kenyan youth initiative this morning.

In 2019, Kenya's National Youth Service, which has been in existence since 1964, was transformed into a fully fledged semi-autonomous State corporation that is aimed at training and mentoring our youth through technical and vocational programmes. Other related national initiatives that ensure strategic investments in young people include the Uwezo, or Ability, Fund, which finances businesses for young entrepreneurs.

At the international level, resolution 2282 (2016), on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, reaffirms the important role that youth can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and the success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. The Peacebuilding Commission, as an intergovernmental advisory body to the Security Council, has further engaged with youth peacebuilders in country-specific contexts. We encourage the Council to continue to seek the Commission's recommendations, including with regard to how young people's potential can be positively harnessed in fragile and conflict-affected countries. That was well articulated by Mr. Gatwal Gatkuoth, the youth representative from South Sudan, who reminded us that peacebuilding in such contexts is not just a process but a necessity.

We welcome the reaffirmation by the Secretary-General of the 2018 progress study on youth, peace and security, entitled "The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security" (see S/2018/86), published by the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Population Fund. The study embodies the important principle that most young people are resilient and peaceful and are a positive force for building peaceful and just societies.

In conclusion, my delegation reiterates that the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda should not be in isolation from the women and peace and security agenda. Gender equality is an important tool for any peace and security initiative, not to mention that gender-equal societies have proved to have more resilience to the threat of conflict and violent extremism.

Annex 37

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations, Mirgul Moldoisaeva

First of all, let me express my gratitude to Mr. José Singer Weisinger, Special Envoy of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations, for the invitation to today's open debate of the Security Council. We commend him for the choice of this very timely and critical issue for consideration on this month's agenda during his presidency.

I would like to thank His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres; Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth; Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf, Project Coordinator of Youth Without Border Organization for Development, Yemen; and Mr. Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth, Founder of the Young Adult Empowerment Initiative, South Sudan/Uganda, for their very informative addresses. Let me thank the organizers of today's event for the opportunity to speak on the important topic of youth, peace and security.

In 2015, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2250 (2015), in which it encourages States to consider creating mechanisms that would enable young people to engage constructively in peacebuilding to prevent violence and establish world peace and to clearly identify youth as an important partner in global efforts to strengthen peace and counter extremism.

In September 2018, the Secretary-General introduced Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth, which emphasizes the intention of the United Nations to increase its efforts to work with the youth and for its interests in order to provide every young person with the opportunity to fully realize their potential, highlighting the positive contribution of young people as key agents of change.

Kyrgyzstan is making significant efforts to comply with the requirements of resolutions 2419 (2018) and 2250 (2015). In that context, Kyrgyzstan is interested in active cooperation with the United Nations and all international partners to fulfil the requirements of these important resolutions.

The Kyrgyz Republic fully supports the vital and positive role of the youth in solving problems concerning maintaining peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, cooperating in resolving development problems, reducing poverty, promoting respect for human rights, environmental protection, fighting diseases and many other challenges and issues facing humankind.

The National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040 sets out that young people should be actively involved in the country's development processes, an effective youth development system, the conditions and the necessary legal framework for the effective implementation of the State youth policy aimed at shaping young people into one of the main assets of the development of the State and society and the promotion of youth initiatives in the political, economic and social spheres. In August 2017, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic also adopted a youth policy development programme for 2017-2020, which contains a vision for the future, goals, the main priorities, tasks and key public policy measures aimed at developing the youth of Kyrgyzstan, including the creation of the relevant legal and infrastructural conditions, by the end of 2020.

It should be noted that the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is actively working with the United Nations system to increase youth participation in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There are many successful international projects aimed at peacebuilding, capacity-building, counteracting the spread of violent extremism, strengthening friendly relations among young people

of the States of the region and involving young people in decision-making related to security, conflict and peace. We fully support the vital and positive role that young people are playing in the coronavirus disease outbreak response in relation to peace and security in Kyrgyzstan today.

In particular, in 2019 the United Nations system in Kyrgyzstan, in partnership with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, launched a new programme for young activists to promote the SDGs among young people in Kyrgyzstan and to mobilize them towards achieving the SDGs at the local, national and international levels.

At the regional level, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) and Central Asian States launched a new initiative in 2019, entitled the UNRCCA Preventive Diplomacy Academy, aimed at implementing the United Nations Youth Strategy and the youth and peace and security programme in Central Asia.

The well-being, participation and empowerment of young are key factors in sustainable development and world peace. Achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda requires strong and inclusive partnerships between youth and all stakeholders in order to address youth development challenges and recognize the positive role of youth as a partner in promoting development and peace. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic intends to continue to support and actively cooperate with all Member States, the United Nations system and all international partners to achieve our goals.

Annex 38

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein to the United Nations

I thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate, which is only the second that has been held since the Council was forced to switch to working remotely. We appreciate the progress the Council has made under your leadership in devising working methods that enable the participation of Member States in the Council's open debates. Continued transparency and openness remain key to the Council's effectiveness. The convening of the present open debate also offers an important opportunity; the negotiation of any Council outcome should be conducted in the light of written inputs provided by Council non-members, thereby benefiting from the views of the broader membership.

The ongoing coronavirus disease pandemic is creating significant challenges for young people across the world. Many are missing crucial months of their education, deprived of social contact, quarantined in difficult or even dangerous domestic situations, or losing out on important early-career employment opportunities. These challenges will themselves have knock-on effects. The data show that young people out of school are more prone to forced recruitment into armed forces, radicalization, sexual and gender-based violence and teenage pregnancy, and are more vulnerable to modern slavery and human trafficking.

For young people living in situations of armed conflict, these issues are even more acute. Many will have to choose between staying in active conflict zones or fleeing to overpopulated areas with insufficient hygiene facilities. The global ceasefire suggested by the Secretary-General is a vital first step to ameliorating the potential damage caused to young people by the pandemic. It must be followed by sustained humanitarian assistance and committed efforts towards negotiated conflict settlements.

However, even in situations where a ceasefire is possible and efforts towards broader agreements can begin, young people are often left on the sidelines of negotiations, even though they make up the majority of the population in most situations on the Council's agenda. Efforts to integrate young people into peace negotiations should harness their long-term perspective on peace; they will be responsible for the long-term implementation of peace settlements for longer than the adult signatories to peace agreements and therefore have a far greater interest in forging long-lasting and sustainable peace settlements. Mechanisms such as youth councils strengthen peace agreements by creating a broader sense of ownership across communities. At the same time, youth inclusion helps inoculate young people against radicalization at a time when they may be most susceptible to it, thereby preventing the spread of old hatreds to new generations. Our assistance to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue on inclusive peacemaking has helped teams engage young people in peace processes in the Sahel, Mali, Senegal and the Philippines in recent years.

Engaging young people is also key to long-term prevention, reconstruction and reconciliation. Many States and territories emerging from conflict have placed education reform at the centre of their post-conflict peacebuilding strategies. In particular, attempts to ensure a shared history curriculum have proven important in providing a space for young people to encounter pre-existing grievances in a shared setting, thereby creating the conditions to build bridges between communities, jointly to pursue the right to truth and to help break the cycle of violence. United Nations missions in post-conflict settings have also taken positive steps to engage young people, for example through the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia's

creation of a specific youth, peace and security strategy. We hope that this initiative will be mirrored in other situations on the Council's agenda.

The leadership of young people on the critical issue of climate justice illustrates the long-term perspective they bring to issues of peace and security, as well as an understanding of the need to take immediate action to secure a liveable world for future generations. We know that the impacts of climate change are exacerbating existing vulnerabilities in fragile situations, and will lead to increased insecurity and instability for all. We extend our wholehearted support to young people who have been front and centre in advocacy for climate action, and hope that the Council will draw from their examples in its efforts to address global warming as an ongoing threat to peace and security.

Annex 39**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations**

We thank the Dominican Republic for organizing this open debate on the importance of looking towards accelerating the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), which is greater today than it has ever been as we look forward to celebrating the fifth anniversary of the youth and peace and security agenda.

Malta fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union and would like to add a few remarks in her national capacity.

Malta believes that young people have an essential role to play in fostering and maintaining peace and security. In this regard, it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach that empowers youth and, at the same time, counteracts the conditions — oppression, injustices, disaffection due to youth unemployment — that provide a breeding ground for terrorism, and to tackle its multiple facets, including countering terrorism and violent extremism, promoting border security, combating terrorist financing, preventing radicalization and addressing the problem of foreign fighters, in full compliance with human rights obligations and in accordance with international law.

There is a growing recognition that young people are agents of change in conflict prevention and sustaining peace. Indeed, Malta recognizes that the young can contribute actively to building peace and promoting solidarity. Conscious of the need to empower our young people by opening up additional avenues for participation through which they may express their views and ideas about this important interdependence, Malta has embarked on a number of initiatives at the national level, seeking to give our young people a stronger voice. One such initiative is the lowering of the voting age in local elections to 16 years of age. The early involvement of our youth in decision-making processes, particularly but not exclusively in those that impact them directly, will help ensure that efforts to tackle issues benefit from this additional perspective and that young people, who are themselves the decision-makers of tomorrow, gain a sense of ownership over such processes.

Today's debate will provide an invigorated impetus to our engagement with the leaders of the future. It will, in particular, reinforce the United Nations capacity to engage more extensively and systematically with young people.

Over time, we have observed that not only are our young people ready to participate as active contributors in debates, but that they have also become advocates for change. Indeed, it has been made abundantly clear that young people are thrilled to participate and envisage multilateralism as an avenue through which they can voice their ideas, cause positive social change and make a difference in their communities and society.

In conclusion, we cannot deny the essential contribution of youth to today's society. Firm in this belief, we underline the importance that young people must be empowered and provided with the appropriate tools if we expect them to grow, develop and further shape society. Furthermore, in acknowledging that today's young people represent our future, we must ensure that they are able to develop their leadership skills by instilling in them principles and values. We need to invest in them today to safeguard our future.

Annex 40**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

Mexico commends the Dominican Republic for the way it has conducted its presidency of the Security Council this month amid the unprecedented and particularly complex global context resulting from the coronavirus disease pandemic. We thank the presidency in particular for its efforts to ensure that the Security Council maintains the same level of transparency in its work.

We agree with the first report of the Secretary-General on the subject of this debate (S/2020/167), which recognizes that young people make a crucial contribution to preventing and resolving conflicts and building sustainable peace.

Young people face considerable challenges as a result of globalization, changing socioeconomic dynamics, the use and impact of new technologies, and the effects of climate change, among other things. It is alarming that one in four young people in the world is affected by violence or armed conflict. An additional challenge is that more than 1.5 billion girls, boys and young people have been affected by school closures as a result of the pandemic, which has led to an increase in psychological abuse and corporal punishment — a situation of grave concern that cannot and must not be tolerated.

Sustainable peace and development, as well as global governance, must include the active participation and meet the aspirations of young people. Young women and men are often perceived as a threat or part of the problem, in addition to being marginalized or excluded from both decision-making and personal- and professional-development opportunities. This view is wrong, and we must change it completely. Young people are the actors who will ensure that development is truly sustainable and, for this to happen, our preeminent goal must be to empower them.

Rising youth unemployment has been a huge cause for concern. The scenario becomes even more critical if we consider the implications of the current pandemic for the global economy and social dynamics in the years to come.

We must forge a new paradigm for our relationship with young people in the economic and social spheres, one that ensures their inclusion and provides them new opportunities. As a first step, Governments need to take measures to reduce the impact of economic contraction on young people. The Government of Mexico will continue to make meeting the needs of young people one of its top priorities through a range of programmes intended to guarantee the economic and social rights of millions of young Mexicans.

Among other activities to improve employment opportunities for young people, the Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro programme was launched with the aim of connecting people aged between 18 and 29 with companies, workshops, institutions or businesses where they can develop or enhance professional capacities and technical skills to improve their future employment prospects. It is important to note that, with Mexico's collaboration, this scheme has already been replicated in other Central American countries.

Similarly, the Semilleros y Territorios de Paz initiative, developed as part of the Juntos por la Paz strategy, focuses on promoting a culture of peace and preventing violence by addressing conflicts through the participatory communication of young people and respect for human rights.

The review of the peacebuilding architecture provides a further opportunity to strengthen the participation and empowerment of youth in peacebuilding efforts, from the local and community levels to the national and international.

Youth participation has been recognized as a key aspect for the sustainability, inclusion and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, as reflected in the draft resolution on the comprehensive review of special political missions Mexico and Finland are introducing before the General Assembly.

Mexico believes that the Security Council should consider taking the following specific measures.

First, it must strengthen the synergies between the youth and peace and security agenda and the women and peace and security agenda, placing particular emphasis on incorporating the needs and perspectives of young women and girls. Gender equality is an essential prerequisite for strengthening the social fabric and building societies that are resilient to all kinds of conflict and violence.

Secondly it should ensure the more systematic involvement of young people in the work of the Security Council and that it hears and takes their voices into account.

Thirdly, it must promote the meaningful participation of young people, particularly those from marginalized and traditionally excluded groups, in international peace and security initiatives, as well as in voluntary activities, humanitarian support and certain components of peace missions.

Fourthly, it must strengthen the interaction of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict with the rest of the United Nations system, and ensure that the youth dimensions of the topics on the Council's agenda are linked to the work of the Working Group.

For Mexico, the path ahead is clear — we must promote prevention and sustainable and inclusive development, with full youth participation. There is no doubt that young people will always be capable of making the change our societies need as long as they are provided with the tools they need. Without young people, implementing strategies to achieve the 2030 Agenda Goals and thereby ensuring that no one is left behind would simply be inconceivable. Investing in young people is our best hope for realizing a world of peace.

Annex 41**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Monaco to the United Nations**

[Original: French]

Five years after the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015) by the Security Council, the Secretary-General's first report on youth, peace and security, dated 2 March (S/2020/167), marks an important step in the recognition of the crucial role of youth in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacekeeping.

The report and the initial results of the large-scale global dialogue launched within the framework of the UN75 campaign underline the fact that young people around the world, confronted with many challenges — demographic changes, inequality, new technologies, forced displacement, a shrinking civic space, a changing labour market and climate change — strive for peace, justice, inclusion, gender equality and human rights.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has plunged the entire planet into an economic crisis of unprecedented violence, which the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank estimate will have a cost two to three times higher than that of 2008. The crisis will have a significant impact on young people, who are known to be particularly vulnerable to recessions, which could exacerbate their difficulties.

Indeed, three out of four young people work in the informal economy, and a large proportion of them are engaged in precarious temporary and part-time work, often in sectors that are particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic. As States begin to adopt support and recovery measures, it is essential that specific measures to help young people be taken in order to avoid ensnaring them permanently in a "poverty trap".

Political inclusion is a central demand of youth. The many movements whose voices were heard in 2019 sent a strong signal. Youth will not wait. Young people have also shown a remarkable ability to create alternative spaces for a political engagement that, if not given sufficient attention, will challenge the old formats that we are perpetuating. It would be unwise to take the risk of fuelling and increasing a distrust of institutions. Dialogue, cooperation and the establishment of partnerships are our best weapons against sectarian conflict, violent extremism and terrorism.

As the United Nations and its Member States have just embarked on a decade of action, we need a massive and full engagement on the part of youth more than ever. Without it, we cannot hope to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals or lasting peace. Young people need our support, and we need the young to build our future.

In the current context, which is particularly anxiety-provoking, sport and the practice of physical activity play an important role in maintaining the physical and mental health of individuals and in sustaining social ties. Monaco advocates, and will continue to advocate, the importance of sport as a tool for building a culture of peace and tolerance, thereby bringing together nations and peoples around common values. Sport and physical activity are widely used by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as an important vehicle for integration and the easing of tensions in situations where war, conflict and persecution have destroyed all semblance of normalcy.

Annex 42**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the United Nations, Milica Pejanović Đurišić**

Montenegro thanks the Council and the Dominican Republic, as President for the month of April, for the opportunity provided to the Member States to continue to participate in and contribute to the activities of the Security Council during these challenging times.

Montenegro welcomes the first report of the Secretary-General on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167) since the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015). While recognizing the essential role of young people in peace and security, the report clearly indicates the remaining core challenges that can have a devastating impact on youth development and lead to their further marginalization. The marginalization of young people foments political distrust and hopelessness, challenges systems and structures and contributes to national, regional and global insecurity. Therefore, we must do more to engage young people as equal partners, not only as beneficiaries, in our efforts to shape the future of the world. In particular, their voices and perspectives must be heard in regard to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We strongly believe that by empowering new generations of peacemakers, we will prevent their marginalization and stigmatization, further mistrust and even radicalization. In doing so, particular attention should be given to the protection of young human rights defenders and peacebuilders, during and after armed conflict.

The youth, peace and security agenda, along with resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), charts a course for young people to become active citizens in shaping Government policies and politics in their countries. Its successful implementation requires further support, including political will and ownership on the part of Member States, funding for programming and institutional support for capacity-building and prioritization.

Montenegro supports all efforts aimed at making the specific needs of young people heard, upholding their rights and acknowledging their diversity and the challenges that they face. Montenegro's National Youth Strategy for the period 2017-2021, along with its action plan, is focused on facilitating access by youth to the labour market and employment; access to quality education; active participation in decision-making processes and policy creation; quality health care; and access to culture as both creators and consumers. Through the adoption of the Strategy and the Law on Youth, we have established an efficient framework for the systematic improvement of the situation of young people in Montenegro. We strongly believe that investing in youth is the best investment for the stability and prosperity of our society.

The Government of Montenegro has already undertaken activities aimed at achieving the goals of the United Nations Strategy on Youth by initiating policies and reform processes aimed at increasing their active participation in social life and improving the quality of education by introducing new skills into national school plans, both for acquiring knowledge and personal development as well as to ensure their future success in the labour market. In order to improve on existing mechanisms for supporting youth in Montenegro, the Government of Montenegro is closely collaborating with the United Nations country team in Montenegro through various programmes and projects. These initiatives are of great importance in terms of enabling young people to use their full potential in the areas of decision-making and entrepreneurship and participation in various social activities.

Bearing in mind that the process for achieving lasting peace needs to be democratized in such a manner as to include the communities most affected,

Montenegro is also very active in connecting youth from the region of the Western Balkans, particularly through the work of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office. We are proud of the fact that Montenegro was the first country to establish a liaison office for this important regional initiative aimed at reconciliation through the promotion of joint activities for young people from the Western Balkans region.

Although some progress has been made globally in supporting the active participation of young people, we must step up our efforts to accelerate the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda. Young people must be treated as a vital asset. Investment in their capacities and leadership, addressing structural barriers and ensuring their equal participation are prerequisites for achieving lasting peace and the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, we call on all Member States and partners to listen to what young people have to say and to engage in translating their words into action.

Annex 43

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations

My delegation would like to thank the Dominican Republic, President of the Security Council for the month of April 2020, for having organized this open video-teleconference of the Security Council on the very important question of youth, peace and security, as this year we are celebrating the fifth anniversary of this agenda.

We would also like to acknowledge Jordan's commitment to this issue and its initiative of bringing it first to the Security Council through resolution 2250 (2015), adopted in 2015.

The United Nations has long recognized the potential of young people in contributing to the development of the societies in which they live and their crucial role in forging an inclusive vision of a shared future, a *sine qua non* for sustainable peace. That was acknowledged in the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, adopted in 1965, and the International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace, observed in 1985, thereby laying the foundations for a global reflection on youth issues.

A decade later, Member States adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, which offers practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people around the world through 15 interlinked and mutually reinforcing youth priority areas. The objective was to strengthen the international commitment to young people by directing the international community's response to the challenges faced by youth.

That international commitment was further underpinned by the adoption in 2015 by the Security Council of the landmark resolution 2250 (2015), complemented by resolution 2419 (2018), which both recognized the positive role of young people in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

Today there are more than 1.8 billion young people in the world — 18 per cent of the global population. They are the largest generation of young people the world has ever known. Therefore, they constitute decisive agents of change and have tremendous potential for sustainable development. Leaving them behind would have an impact on the world's peace and security.

As the world evolves, so do the issues that affect young people. The only effective long-term solution to overcome the challenges that young people confront is to build more inclusive, participatory and egalitarian societies and to maximize and harness the potential, commitment and resilience of young people. Establishing an ongoing dialogue with young people will enable them to strengthen their defences against hate speech, radicalization and extremism as well as criminal activities. It will also ensure their full integration into society.

The Kingdom of Morocco has over the years undertaken many commitments to youth, including the following.

The Constitution devotes a special place to young people, dedicating both articles 33 and 170 to their empowerment, calling on the public authorities to take all measures to generalize their participation in the socioeconomic, cultural and political development of the Kingdom. A Consultative Council of Youth and of Associative Action was also instituted by the Constitution to this effect.

Young people have a quota in the membership of the Parliament of Morocco.

Following a consultative process including all stakeholders, the Government launched the National Integrated Youth Strategy 2015-2030.

The National Initiative for Human Development, which has launched its third phase — 2019-2023 — aims to support the well-being of the whole population, in particular the youth.

The establishment in Rabat of the Union of Young African Parliamentarians is promoting exchanges and cooperation among young people from the African continent.

These actions and other initiatives clearly demonstrate the particular attention placed by His Majesty King Mohammed VI on youth, whom he has always regarded as the country's true wealth, and put them at the centre of the new development model.

Today Morocco's youth are stepping up to the plate with efforts to assist those most affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, demonstrating continued leadership and solidarity in supporting their fellow Moroccans as well as foreign nationals, distributing food packages and sanitation kits.

Moreover, young Moroccan entrepreneurs and innovators have initiated various contributions to the crisis response. These include making artificial ventilation machines, automatic thermometers, automatic gates for sanitary disinfection and sterilization, protective clothing and masks, manufacturing drones used for air disinfection, virus detection and awareness-raising, and creating electronic platforms for remote learning to support the Government's efforts to promote online education. They also fight fake news about COVID-19 through their widespread use of social media.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize that the key to consolidating peace and achieving social cohesion and sustainable and inclusive development is to invest in young people.

This commits us to seek and promote new possibilities for the effective, structured and sustainable participation of youth in all aspects of political, economic, social and cultural life, in particular in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I would like to end with a quote from Graça Machel: "Preventing the conflicts of tomorrow means changing the mindset of youth today."

Annex 44

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations

I would like to begin by thanking the presidency of the Dominican Republic for having convened today's open debate to recognize the importance of young people to peace and security. I also thank the Secretary-General and the briefers for their updates and valuable insights.

Nepal welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on youth, peace and security, dated 2 March (S/2020/167).

As highlighted by the Secretary-General in his report, there are about 1.85 billion young people in the world. Undoubtedly, the future of humankind depends on them.

Youth's marginalization and exclusion from any process foment socioeconomic and political challenges. We cannot imagine a global future in which the youth suffer from hunger, unemployment or other socioeconomic menaces.

Youth have the resilience and capacity to amplify development goals and promote peace and stability. Youth suffer not only from conflict but also pay the opportunity cost of not receiving a proper education as a result of conflict. Young people fight on both fronts during conflicts, either as soldiers or as rebels. If they are left behind and marginalized in post-conflict situations, the likelihood of a relapse into conflict will be very high.

Young people aged from 16 to 40 constitute more than 40 per cent of Nepal's population. That is a huge demographic dividend for Nepal. Young people have played crucial roles not only in Nepal's socioeconomic development but also in its political transformation. They have also played a significant role in the progressive political changes that have occurred in the last 70 years of the history of modern Nepal. That is one reason why Nepal has a policy of engaging youth in every sector of national life.

In line with the relevant Security Council resolutions, the Government of Nepal recognizes young people as agents of change in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. We focus on participation, partnership, prevention, protection and disengagement, and reintegration as five pillars for action on young people's contribution to building and sustaining peace.

Similarly, to achieve the aspirations of the Constitution of Nepal and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Government of Nepal has laid out plans and policies to include and ensure the political, economic, social and employment rights of young people.

Nepal's National Youth Policy 2015 places emphasis on the quality of vocational education, employment, entrepreneurship, skill development, health and social security, youth engagement and leadership development, and sports and entertainment. We have also set up a Youth Information Centre to increase young people's access to information. We believe that only well-informed youth who participate meaningfully in politics, the economy and other sectors can play a significant role in the country's socioeconomic progress. Nepal has also increased its youth investment through its youth self-employment fund, aimed at creating jobs for young people and utilizing their skills for the country's development.

We are committed to ensuring the active and equitable participation of youth in decision-making processes in order to promote a peaceful and inclusive society. Our policy of inclusion seeks to ensure proportionate youth representation from various communities at all sectors and levels of governance.

In conclusion, my delegation is confident that today's deliberations will provide further impetus to effectively implement resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018). I also hope that this fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015) will serve as an opportunity to better integrate the youth, peace and security agenda, facilitate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, help prevent conflicts and sustain peace.

Annex 45**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations on behalf of the Nordic countries**

The Nordic countries — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway — applaud the Dominican Republic for convening this open debate on youth, peace and security. We appreciate its efforts to keep this important issue on the Council's agenda and for facilitating the submission of written statements from non-Council members. We also welcome the participation of the young civil society briefers in this new format. The voices of civil society and youth-led organizations continue to bring vital input into the work and considerations of the Council, even amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report on youth and peace and security (S/2020/167). The report shows that we have made progress across several pillars, in support of the meaningful participation of youth in peace and security issues. However, we emphasize the need for continued focus and momentum on the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda.

Since the adoption of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), we see more consistent reporting on youth-specific issues to the Council. Together with Jordan, the Nordic countries have consistently reported on the role of youth through the Group of Friends of Preventing Violent Extremism. We encourage countries to report on the contribution and situation of young people in peace and security efforts, giving special attention to marginalized groups such as young women. We also welcome a measure mandating the Secretariat to regularly report on the youth, peace and security agenda.

Young women and men have both the wisdom and the commitment to help pivot societies towards sustainable peace and security, and they are a positive force in that regard. However, systematic exclusion and many structural barriers for youth engagement and participation remain, even within the Council. The Secretary-General's report offers interesting ideas for stimulating the broader participation of young people in conflict resolution, mediation, peace and political processes.

In that regard, the relevant Security Council mission mandates should include language requiring the meaningful participation of youth in peace and security efforts, including in the mediation, monitoring and implementation of ceasefires, as well as in peace agreement negotiations. Those mandates should also include age- and gender-sensitive conflict analysis.

The Nordic countries have a long tradition of youth engagement. We support a range of initiatives at both the national and the international levels, including youth-led initiatives that support young peacebuilders in conflict contexts. For instance, Norway and Finland are key partners of the African Union's flagship initiative, Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020, which aims to promote peace in conflict-affected areas. We recognize the efforts that the African Union is taking to involve African young women and men in peace processes, and we highlight the importance of similar efforts made in the Middle East and Latin America. At the global level, Sweden is a key partner in the institutionalization of the youth, peace and security agenda within the United Nations system.

The safety of young people who speak up in their societies is a source of major concern. The Secretary-General's report includes important provisions on the protection of young mediators, peacebuilders and human right defenders. We stress the importance of respecting and protecting human rights, and we reiterate

that Member States have an important role in preventing abuse committed against these groups.

The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth plays an important role in promoting the protection of aspiring peacebuilders and human rights defenders. We hope that the framework for the effective protection of young peacebuilders is one of several deliverables that the Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth, launched by the Office, will help bring about.

Finally, supporting the youth, peace and security agenda requires continued commitment across other areas, such as education. The Nordic countries will remain engaged so as to directly and indirectly empower young women and men as agents of change for lasting peace.

Annex 46**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

We welcome the holding of this important meeting and the valuable statements made, especially in the very difficult context created by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, despite which we continue to make progress on an important milestone in the Security Council. This year will mark the fifth anniversary of the introduction of the youth, peace and security agenda. We are also grateful for the first report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/167) on this agenda item, which we are sure will be an essential guide to advancing and deepening this important agenda.

The current generation of young women and men is the largest in history, representing some 16 per cent of the world's population. Nearly 90 per cent of young people live in developing regions, where they are the largest segment of society, and a significant proportion live in areas affected by armed conflict. They therefore constitute a demographic dividend that we cannot ignore; rather, we must value and know how to use them for the current and future benefit of our societies, in special recognition of the great and valuable contributions young people can make to peace and security.

The current context of the COVID-19 pandemic is showing us that the resilience of young people is essential to making progress in difficult situations. Since our elderly population and adults with underlying conditions are particularly vulnerable and our children — though seemingly immune — are in need of care and attention, young people are called upon to be a key pillar of our pandemic response and to help our economies recover. We must regard young people as relevant actors in overcoming today's challenges. At the same time, we must address the socioeconomic consequences that affect young people in particular and are exacerbated by the pandemic, bearing in mind that deepening inequalities risk fuelling conflicts that threaten peace and security.

We welcome the important progress made in the Security Council over the past five years through the adoption of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) — the latter promoted by Sweden and Peru. We also welcome presidential statement S/PRST/2019/15, which encourages “mobilising the Youth towards Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020”; as well as the report of the Secretary-General on the matter before us (S/2020/167).

Peru stresses the role that young women and men are called upon to play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, in justice and reconciliation, and in peacebuilding processes. Young people are key to building the inclusive vision of the future required to achieve and consolidate peace and to prevent new conflicts. Unfortunately, despite their enormous potential, the 2018 study entitled “The missing piece: independent progress study on youth, peace and security” (see S/2018/86) indicated that, in many cases, young people are seen as a problem rather than as partners and allies for peace, which leads to their frustration. To enjoy sustainable peace, we must work on the inclusion of young people in the fields of politics, economics and digital information, and in humanitarian responses.

We are convinced that this is the right approach to effectively implement and promote this issue on the Council's agenda. We must harness and maximize the potential, commitment and resilience of young people in order to prevent and address conflict. To that end, we believe that it is important to create inclusive and safe spaces that allow young people to participate in and contribute to sustainable

peacebuilding in their respective national communities. We welcome the efforts made in that regard and encourage their continuation.

This issue is obviously linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Sustainable Development Goals commit us, among other actions, to creating decent employment for our youth, to guaranteeing equal opportunities through access to health and education, and to promoting peaceful societies with inclusive institutions. After all, our efforts and decisions today will be reflected in the world of tomorrow, in which the young people of today will become the leaders responsible for guiding us.

Humankind today sees new challenges and difficulties arising from globalization, violence, demographic changes, inequality, new technologies, forced displacement, changing labour markets and climate change, all of which impact the lives of young people. Those problems threaten to deteriorate in the future and more seriously affect them as adults. We therefore cannot leave them out of the decisions that may determine their fate. Perpetuating exclusion will inexorably lead to feelings of marginalization, mistrust and despair, and with it the potential of a ruptured peace.

We are committed to promoting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all young people, safeguarding their diversity and fighting discrimination. That means abandoning the stereotypes that stigmatize them as people prone to violence, as well as recognizing and promoting their capacities for participation and leadership in public life.

The participation of youth delegates in various United Nations forums and processes is certainly a good practice. It serves to build bridges between Governments, international organizations and youth organizations around agendas that promote the maintenance of international peace and security.

Moreover, it is essential to consider the role that women, especially young women, can play. Young people are marginalized, even more so when a gender component is added. Gender equality and women's empowerment are crucial if we are to register significant advances in this and other fields, as recognized in the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, we consider it appropriate that the youth, peace and security agenda be addressed in tandem with the children and armed conflict agenda, as they are mutually complementary, with a view to promoting peacebuilding on a continuum from childhood and adolescence to youth. That will lead to lasting and sustainable peacebuilding.

In conclusion, Peru reiterates its support for and commitment to promoting this issue as we are convinced of its importance in achieving the purposes of the United Nations.

Annex 47

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations

Poland would like to congratulate the Dominican Republic on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of April. We would like to thank Dominican Republic for organizing this important open debate on youth, peace and security and for allowing all Member States to take part, despite the challenging circumstances.

We are very grateful for the leadership of the Secretary-General and his Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake. We would also like to thank the briefers for their presentations and inspiring messages.

This year is a year of many important anniversaries for multilateral diplomacy. It marks five years since the introduction of the youth, peace and security agenda, and 20 years since that of the women and peace and security agenda. It also marks 10 years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It therefore represents a great opportunity to reflect on the role of youth in these challenging times as an equal partner and an important stakeholder, and to look at the youth, peace and security agenda as a critical component of discussions in the Council and beyond.

We turn now to challenges for youth in the context of peace and security. As the Secretary-General's first report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167) indicates, there are 1.85 billion young women and men — from the ages of 10 to 24 — in the world, 90 per cent of whom live in developing countries. Conflicts take a toll on young people in various ways. Young women and men with disabilities, who are often ostracized or marginalized within their immediate families and communities and find themselves at an increased risk of violence and abuse, are particularly affected. Young people today face many obstacles, ranging from exclusion from political processes to suffering from the effects of underdevelopment, lack of access to services and education, and high levels of unemployment.

As UNICEF reports, the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has long-term and destructive consequences on access to education. According to UNICEF, almost 1.6 billion children do not currently attend school, and it is estimated that more than half of the children from poor and developing countries will not be going back to school once they have reopened.

At the same time, all the foregoing factors constitute important drivers for violence among youth, some of whom simply feel that they do not have options, if they even wish to survive, as they do not believe in a happy future for themselves. That is why education represents a principal tool in shaping the future opportunities of young people.

The report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security rightly mentions that young people around the world are striving for peace, justice, inclusion, gender equality and human rights. Their aspirations, views and demands not only have to be heard, but need to be listened to. It is time for youth to be a part of peace processes, including negotiating peace agreements.

Dire conflict situations have deplorable impacts on girls. Every day, millions of young women are exposed to gender-based violence, early and forced child marriage, sex trafficking, sexual harassment, rape and abuse. They are in critical need of humanitarian assistance and access to medical services. Now more than ever, young women should be free to live without prejudice or limited chances and with equal opportunity. Moreover, we need to remember that men are also victims of patriarchal mindsets and toxic masculinity. We need to take up the challenge of changing the stereotypes, norms and the roles assigned to each sex because

we want to live in a world where the equality of women and men is a reality and nobody is marginalized on the basis of sex or origin. Young people are also victims of violence based on religion and belief; we must therefore reassure them of our unwavering support.

The frustration of young people and the lack of trust towards authorities, Governments and leaders are growing. Young people do not want meaningless assurances; they want to see concrete action and they want to be a legitimate part of peace processes. Young people are increasingly aware of their rights and the opportunities available to them. They are able to exchange views and engage in meaningful discussions through the Internet and social media. They no longer want to keep quiet, and our obligation is to incorporate their voices in our national policies.

With regard to initiatives my country is taking, Poland is especially concerned about the increase in violence against educational facilities, students and teachers. We welcome and support initiatives aimed at putting an end to the use of schools and universities for military purposes. The 2014 Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict is a good example in this regard. To confirm our commitment to effective implementation of the Lucens Guidelines, we signed the Safe Schools Declaration. We believe that initiatives such as these constitute an important step towards protection and promotion of the rights of the child, especially in the conflict situations.

It is particularly relevant that the Warsaw Process, which is a joint initiative by Poland and the United States inaugurated last year to tackle security problems in the Middle East, is also discussing humanitarian and refugee issues, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups, including children and youth. The refugee crises and forced displacements in the Middle East are among the most pressing issues to be addressed by the international community. Protecting all young people, in particular young refugees and internally displaced persons in such countries as Syria, Iraq and Yemen, has to be a priority for all actors. These ongoing conflicts deprive children and youth of one of their basic needs and rights — safety. They are being maimed, abducted and attacked, recruited to fight, sexually abused, and denied access to education and humanitarian aid. Such traumas deprive them of dignity and leave permanent marks on their adult lives. Violations of their rights not only endanger their lives, but also undermine overall stability and welfare in our societies.

Those issues were further developed during the Warsaw Process Humanitarian Issues and Refugees Working Group meeting that took place this February in Brasilia. The main purpose of the meeting was to foster political solutions, better coordination and structural interventions leading to the reduction of the impact of the humanitarian crises on children and youth in the Middle East.

Protection of vulnerable and fragile groups, with a special focus on children and youth, remains the top priority for Polish development cooperation. Although Poland is a relatively new donor of development assistance, including humanitarian aid, my country has already managed to develop areas in which we can share our knowledge and experience, for example in providing protection in situations of conflict to persons with disabilities and other groups at risk of exclusion.

A specific example of Polish Aid's actions is its involvement in development activities aimed at providing psychological support for young people affected by the conflict in Ukraine. Together with Polish Humanitarian Action, we are improving the functioning of the social services system by expanding the capacities of social and psychological services personnel working in the settlements along the contact line.

With regard to the role of youth in the context of peace and security, Poland fully adheres to the view set forth in the preamble of the resolution 2250 (2015), namely, that

“youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation”.

The passion and commitment of young people, who, as Polish experience shows, are deeply committed to working in all sorts of non-governmental organizations, contribute significantly to the culture of peace on different levels and in different areas.

We wish to acknowledge the unique contributions of many young peacebuilders, activists and volunteers in conflict prevention, in the justice system, and in building and sustaining peace. Youth and student organizations are increasingly active in delivering aid and humanitarian assistance to people in the most dangerous places. We also see it in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic — young people and their organizations are engaged on delivering aid to those most in need. It is crucial to engage in dialogue with young people with a view to working together to achieve sustainable peace and development.

We must do everything in our power to ensure that young people grow up in a world in which they will have economic opportunity, social justice, access to political participation and a sense of security. Only with the substantial engagement of youth will we be able to advocate more effectively to achieve sustainable peace and security conditions, human rights and our development goals. In this context, the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015) in 2015 and resolution 2419 (2018) in 2018 were groundbreaking achievements, demonstrating that the younger generations are ready to take centre stage in peace and security initiatives and become agents of change.

In conclusion, let me again express our appreciation to the Dominican Republic for putting this important matter high on the agenda of Security Council. We hope to see more significant progress in terms of including youth in the debate. A more systematic approach to implementing resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) is urgently needed. Young people have enormous power, dedication and a strong voice, and we must provide them with platform to be heard and taken into account.

Annex 48**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations, Francisco Duarte Lopes**

Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

The year 2020 marks the fifth anniversary of resolution 2250 (2015) on youth and peace and security. At the same time, the first-ever report of the Secretary-General on the topic was issued last month (S/2020/167). The report recognizes some positive trends, namely, the growing awareness of the role that young people are playing in the peace and security agenda. The report also underlines the obstacles and barriers that remain. This is the moment to assess the progress made, share good practices and lessons learned, and set the path for a stronger youth and peace and security agenda for the years to come. We therefore thank the Dominican Republic for organizing today's timely debate.

In order to track the progress of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), Portugal strongly supports the establishment of a regular reporting structure on youth and peace and security backed by a global set of indicators that could serve to measure the progress of the resolutions' implementation. A translation of resolution 2250 (2015) into Portuguese has been disseminated in Portugal and is used to raise awareness as part of human rights training under the auspices of the National Youth Plan, adopted in 2018, which is an interdepartmental instrument for action in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all its Sustainable Development Goals.

The Portuguese authorities have issued practical guidebooks and toolkits that address how to tackle specific challenges that young refugees are facing. Our aim is to help them overcome uncertainty and support them in building a long-term perspective. At the same time, these forms of guidance are designed to reinforce the resilience of our hosting socioeconomic structures in building trust, acceptance and intercultural dialogue.

In the context of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), a Youth Action Plan 2018-2022 was approved. High among the Plan's priorities is post-conflict reconstruction. A study on youth violence is being prepared, and the sharing of programmes and experiences among member States to prevent marginalization, violent radicalization and youth criminality is being incentivized.

In addition, the Ibero-American Youth Pact, formalized in 2016 at the Conference of Ministers of Youth of the International Youth Organization for Ibero-America, effectively contributes to the implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda. We encourage member States of the CPLP to adopt national plans to make progress on, inter alia, the youth and peace and security agenda through meaningful consultations and engagement with youth-led organizations.

In order to guarantee the safety of students, Portugal is implementing the Safe School Programme. The Programme diagnoses the areas with the highest incidence of violent acts, and its intervention model has been designed based, inter alia, on non-formal education methodologies. Furthermore, in the domain of education for citizenship, Portugal has developed specific awareness-raising guidelines on defence and security, gender equality, addiction and dependency prevention, aquatic and maritime security, cybersecurity, environmental education and citizenship.

Last but not least, in 2019 the Portuguese Government, in cooperation with partners from the United Nations system and the participation of the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session and the

Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, among many others, organized the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth 2019 and Youth Forum, known as Lisboa+21. The outcome of the Conference and Youth Forum was the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, which was welcomed in the youth resolution adopted in Geneva and in the Third Committee resolution on policies and programmes involving youth, adopted by the General Assembly last December as resolution 74/121.

Among the several commitments set forth in the Lisboa+21 Declaration is the recognition of young people's contribution to peace processes and conflict prevention and resolution. The Declaration also expresses the concern that, among civilians, youth is one of the groups that is most affected by armed conflict.

The women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda are mutually reinforcing, especially when it comes to girls and young women. The promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls can be successful only if both agendas are fully implemented. In line with what is being done on the women and peace and security agenda, we encourage the establishment of a network of United Nations youth and peace and security advisers and focal points to implement the youth and peace and security agenda at the country level, including in peacekeeping and political missions.

Finally, Portugal considers that young people have a key role to play in the coronavirus disease pandemic, for example through volunteering, youth activism in social media, and raising awareness in the fight against hate speech. In Portugal, many activities, including workshops and webinars on youth and youth rights, remain ongoing.

Annex 49

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani

[Original: Arabic]

It gives me great pleasure to thank the Security Council, presided over by the Dominican Republic, for holding this open meeting under the exceptional circumstances in which our world currently finds itself and to thank the Secretary-General and his Envoy on Youth for their important briefings. I would also like to thank Olla Al-Sakkaf, Project Coordinator for the Youth Without Borders Organization for Development, Yemen, and Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth, founder of the Young Adult Empowerment Initiative in South Sudan and Uganda, for sharing their perspectives and experiences on the ground.

The unprecedented crisis we are going through because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is definitely having a catastrophic effect on societies all over the world, and young people are no exception. We therefore welcome the report of the Secretary-General entitled *Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19*, in which he addresses the disease's impact on young people and the important role they can play in responding to it. According to the report, 1.5 billion young people, or 87 per cent of the world student population, are currently out of schools or university. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant spike in youth unemployment.

In the face of these major challenges, Qatar continues to do all it can to provide education services to children and young people. It was one of the first countries in the region to put precautionary social distancing measures in place to stem the spread of the virus and to respond to the situation by taking steps to ensure a smooth transition to online remote learning.

As Council members are aware, protecting and promoting the right to education is a priority for Qatar, whether or not in times of emergency. For some years now, it has been harnessing technology to develop education, guarantee its continuity and ensure that it keeps pace with the demands and challenges of the times. The transition to remote learning in Qatar has thus been rapid and smooth, given that the necessary infrastructure, plans and resources were already in place. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has activated a remote learning mechanism and dedicated electronic platforms, working to ensure that the remote learning experience encompasses all students, including those with any type of disability. The authorities have also made sure that students without access to laptop computers or tablets are provided with them, thereby ensuring that no one is left behind in the distance education process.

At the international level, Qatar has intensified its efforts to provide development and relief aid, with a focus on education and access to technology for learning. Aid provided by the Qatar Fund for Development, the Government's executive arm in various parts of the world, is in step with the challenges arising from the difficult circumstances brought about by social distancing, lockdowns and school closures. The country's institutions, including the Education Above All Foundation, have also developed cutting-edge programmes to facilitate remote learning in the home. The Foundation has acted swiftly to assemble remote learning resources in different languages in order to assist parents and guardians and ease the process of adapting to remote learning.

In addition, Qatar is pursuing its work to empower young people and encourage them to participate actively in sustainable development. At the Second Doha Forum

Youth Edition, which was held in November 2019 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, in-depth discussions on issues of concern to young people took place. The Forum provided them with an open platform from which to express their views on current affairs, including peace and security issues, in the run-up to the Doha Forum, which was held the following month.

We all know that combating COVID-19 requires not only international cooperation but also a safe environment and the removal of any obstacles or conditions that might stand in the way of a strong and effective response, as well as active support for young people in the central role they have to play in that response. We therefore affirm our support for the calls of the United Nations for a ceasefire in regions affected by conflict so that we can focus on dealing with the pandemic. In addition to the key role that they can play in peace processes, as the international community agreed five years ago with the adoption of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015), young people have an equally important role to play in putting United Nations calls for a ceasefire into practice.

Qatar looks forward to hosting, with the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy for Youth, a high-level world conference on comprehensive youth peace pathways. The conference will be a part of ongoing efforts and build on the achievements of the first International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes, which was held in Helsinki in 2019. We take this opportunity to express appreciation to our partners, Finland and Colombia, and the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy for Youth, for their efforts and cooperation in preparing the way for the coming conference, which will coincide with the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The focus of the conference will be on, among other matters, the participation of young women in peace processes, through discussion circles and the mainstreaming of gender equality considerations throughout the preparatory stages of the event, during the event itself and in the follow-up to its outcome.

In conclusion, Qatar remains committed to pursuing its efforts to create an environment conducive to the participation of young people in the development process and to providing support at the national, regional and international levels in order to enable them to contribute effectively to peacebuilding and to work actively to address the challenges facing our world today.

Annex 50**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, Cho Hyun**

I thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative in convening today's open video-teleconference of the Security Council on the theme "Towards the fifth anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda: accelerating implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018)".

The Republic of Korea takes this opportunity to offer its deep appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres for his timely report (S/2020/167) and briefing on this important subject. My delegation also thanks Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth; Ms. Olla Al-Sakkaf, project coordinator at Youth Without Borders Organization for Development, Yemen; and Mr. Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth, founder of the Young-Adult Empowerment Initiative, South Sudan/Uganda, for their enlightening interventions today.

The Republic of Korea welcomes the marking of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), which recognized the important positive contribution of youth to the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. As Secretary-General Guterres' March 2020 report rightly points out, it is critical that the international community support young people in fulfilling their full potential as a positive force for building peaceful and just societies. Indeed, the role of youth in the field of peace and security is especially important in that young people often form the majority of the population in countries affected by armed conflict. At the same time, young people will have a durable impact on the future of their own societies, as they hold the key to the trajectories of future generations.

In that connection, the Republic of Korea believes that the international community must redouble its collective efforts to harness the potential of youth with a view to maintaining and promoting peace and security. My delegation believes that a comprehensive approach — in line with the humanitarian-development-peace nexus — is greatly needed to achieve that driving vision, and would like to highlight the following five points to that end.

First, we should prioritize the strengthening of a mechanism to channel the youth voices in the field of peace and security. Building upon the progress of political democratization in many parts of the world, we need to develop new forms of communication, including forward-thinking online and offline forums, to integrate more young people into decision-making processes.

Secondly, we must do our utmost to provide better access to employment and other forms of economic opportunity. All across the globe, in both developing and developed countries, high unemployment rates and a lack of opportunity for young people create significant levels of marginalization, which then becomes a root cause of social instability, and, in some instances, extremism, thus directly affecting peace and security.

Thirdly, we need to establish a legal and institutional framework that ensures inclusivity for all young people, regardless of their gender, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, disability or affiliation of any kind. Bearing in mind the importance of the full enjoyment of human rights for youth, we also need to take firm action, with greater awareness, against violence and discrimination in order to protect marginalized groups who are frequently targeted.

Fourthly, we must greatly expand the culture of peace, tolerance and intercultural and interreligious dialogue all around the world. Global citizenship

education is key in that regard, as it provides youth with the tools to cultivate a deeper understanding of themselves and others in our interconnected world.

Fifthly, we need to bear in mind the great significance of the latest technology, such as information and communications technologies, and its importance in the lives of young people. Such technologies can serve as a medium for political reform but, simultaneously, as a recruiting tool for terrorist organizations. They can serve as a crucial avenue for the exchange of innovative ideas and positive messages, but also for the spread of disinformation, hatred and division. As such, we must maximize the positive impacts of new technologies while simultaneously limiting their negative effects.

Through such a comprehensive approach, we can enhance the constructive role of young people and ensure that they will, in turn, serve as models for future generations. Youth's catalysing effect has the potential to pay exponential dividends in the field of peace and security in the years to come.

In the Republic of Korea, the role of youth has always taken centre stage in overcoming the major challenges each generation has experienced. Student protests helped end military rule and usher in democracy. Young people, as innovative entrepreneurs and earnest workers, were integral in transforming one of the poorest countries in the world into an economic powerhouse within a single generation. They spoke out against various forms of discrimination and social injustice. And today, the strong voices of our dynamic youth continue to hold leaders accountable for providing good governance.

Based on that rich experience, Korea has been actively contributing to the strengthened role of youth in the field of peace and security. That includes our leadership in the Peacebuilding Commission as the previous Chair and our robust support of the recently released Peacebuilding Fund Strategy 2020-2024, which clearly lays out the Secretary-General's prioritization of youth empowerment projects.

The Republic of Korea has been a proud champion of youth engagement in the field of disarmament. As I emphasized at the 74 Years of Nuclear Disarmament and the Contribution of Youth Beyond 2020 event that my Mission co-hosted with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, youth engagement is meaningful for securing diversity, as well as creating new positive momentum for disarmament discussions that have been polarized and have remained at a standstill for quite some time. Such efforts include presenting last year's landmark draft resolution on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation in the First Committee for the first time in history.

The Republic of Korea is also proud to be scaling up its engagement with various United Nations Development Programme projects, such as the YouthConnekt initiative in Rwanda, youth volunteers supporting peace and recovery in Darfur and strengthening women's and youth leadership to accelerate participatory, inclusive and sustainable local governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as with UNESCO, including youth empowerment through technical and vocational education and training in the Gambia, to name just a few.

Youth are undoubtedly among the most vulnerable in the face of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, with its historic economic impact, including unprecedented levels of unemployment. Moreover, COVID-19 has serious implications for young people's ongoing role in the field of peace and security. The Republic of Korea has been targeting its response on the basis of transparency, openness and accountability to its citizens and is making efforts to mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable. As a result, Korea was able to successfully hold its nationwide legislative elections in the shadow of COVID-19 and saw the highest voter turnout for a general election in 28 years. At this election, the Korean Government

lowered the voting age to 18, thereby expanding the participation of young people in the political process. My delegation believes that our recent experience in that regard can provide some hope for others, including young people, as the world collectively responds to the unique challenges presented by the pandemic.

There are various prospects for the post-coronavirus global order, and it is our own choice what path we elect to take. Will we choose a world that is divisive, exclusive and closed owing to bigotry, stigmatization and demagoguery? Or will we rise to the challenge and consider the possibility of a world that is inclusive, cooperative, peaceful and based on solidarity, tolerance and transparency? This is a critical moment for all peoples and nations, and the choices we make in the construction of the post-coronavirus order will have outsized and long-lasting ramifications on our youth and subsequent generations. Together, let us energize our efforts in order to make the choices that will propel us forward in the right direction.

It is also important to highlight that the youth, peace and security agenda is closely interlinked with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Republic of Korea notes with appreciation United Nations efforts to expand the critical role of youth in helping to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Republic of Korea strongly supports global efforts to strengthen the youth, peace and security agenda and will continue to play its part, alongside the United Nations and other Member States, to ensure that our world is more peaceful and secure for our future generations.

Annex 51**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations**

[Original: French and English]

The topic of today's debate is important, and I would like to thank the presidency for organizing the debate in such a way as to allow all Member States to participate.

As Switzerland wrote in its two letters to the presidency of the Security Council on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Switzerland welcomes the latest adjustments to the Council's working methods to ensure that they remain up to the standards of transparency and inclusiveness during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis.

In line with resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), Switzerland considers it essential to increase the participation and contribution of young women and men in the area of peace and security. Allow me to highlight three points that are particularly important in this context.

First, young people constitute a large portion of the population in countries affected by armed conflict. Many young people are currently seeing their situation worsen owing to the threat of COVID-19. Their specific needs must be taken into account. Switzerland has set up a rapid reaction mechanism to support the fight against the pandemic and its impact on human security. Those efforts include civil society activities to raise Syrians' awareness of the effects of COVID-19 and to strengthen trust-building mechanisms in communities, especially among Syrian youth.

Secondly, young women and men are drivers of change. Their potential for action must be strengthened at all stages of peacebuilding. Switzerland welcomes the Peacebuilding Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, which has boosted the empowerment of young people in recent years. The youth, peace and security and the women and peace and security agendas are mutually reinforcing, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the implementation of the Council's mandate. Switzerland urges the Council to strengthen the role of young people across its agenda items, specifically by inviting more young briefers. The Council should also recognize the indispensable role of civil society in peace and security. The increased involvement of youth in sustaining peace is also a request resulting from the consultations during the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture held in Geneva in February.

Thirdly, creating economic conditions conducive to youth employment is an important lever for lasting peace. Switzerland supports a joint job-creation programme of the International Labour Organization and the Peacebuilding Support Office in fragile and conflict-affected situations. The project is part of the wider United Nations effort to make more systematic use of such peacebuilding programmes. The inclusion of young people in the labour market helps to improve their prospects. In Myanmar, for example, Switzerland provides local stakeholders with expertise from its hotel industry by developing skills in the tourism sector. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Swiss vocational training programmes have helped to reduce the high unemployment rate among young people.

The inclusion of young people is an important precondition for conflict resolution, sustainable peace and conflict prevention. The resolutions adopted by the Security Council, in particular resolution 2250 (2015), adopted five years ago,

set out areas for action and steps to follow. Strengthening youth engagement in peace and security means acting now for the future.

Annex 52

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations

Let me start by thanking the Dominican Republic for organizing this timely debate.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union, and wishes to add some remarks in its national capacity.

This year, when we are marking many important milestones, including the fifth anniversary of the youth, peace and security agenda, we need to reaffirm the important role that young people have in shaping a better world for everyone, but especially for themselves, as they are humankind's future generation. It is imperative that they have a place in shaping it.

Young people have already demonstrated that they can be drivers of positive change and key actors in the search for sustainable solutions to the many challenges that the world is facing today. They must have a voice, and we need to listen and empower it. Their participation in post-conflict peacebuilding processes and sustaining international peace and security is an important part of that.

One of our contributions is to provide a unique platform for young leaders, entrepreneurs, influencers, thinkers and social activists to share their visions, exchange ideas and connect with peers from different parts of the world. Since 2011, the Young Bled Strategic Forum has been bringing together young leaders aged between 18 and 35 years from all over the world to engage in lively discussion and to develop innovative solutions to some of the most pressing global issues. The platform is part of the Bled Strategic Forum, an annual international foreign policy conference. This year, we look forward to also welcoming the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake.

We are happy to see young women stepping up and taking the lead in addressing not only many global challenges, such as environmental degradation and climate change, but also particular challenges at their local level. Their important role needs to be recognized and supported. The gender perspective must be an integral part of the youth, peace and security agenda.

For many years now, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been supporting the engagement of the United Nations Youth Delegate Programme in the work of the United Nations. Slovenian youth delegates regularly participate in the sessions of the Third Committee and the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum. Last year, our youth delegate actively participated in the Youth Climate Summit and was a member of the official delegation, led by our Prime Minister, at the Climate Action Summit. The Prime Minister and the youth delegate signed the Kwon-Gesh Youth Pledge within the framework of the youth engagement and public mobilization coalition for the meaningful involvement of young people in climate policy planning.

Young people can be full participants in shaping our world only with the full protection and assurance of the full enjoyment of their human rights, including the freedom of expression and movement, the freedom of peaceful assembly and economic and social rights, and the right to quality education, which are essential for empowering young people. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the most important document that the international community has as a signpost for the future. The young are an essential key player in its implementation. Let us not forget that one of its goals — education — is most pertinent to precisely the young generation.

When it comes to issues of peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, mediation is an effective tool for saving lives and sparing human suffering. It is a cost-effective tool for prevention and for post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction. However, only an inclusive mediation process can be efficient and effective, and we believe that the active participation of young people in that regard is essential. In 2017, Slovenia launched a pilot project of school and peer mediation against peer violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By building up mediation capacities among teachers and students, schools become promoters of reconciliation, tolerance, human rights and diversity. The project, which has been well received within the local communities, has thus had a positive impact on raising tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution. In fact, mediation techniques could, or should, be part of a comprehensive education.

Today, as we deal with this unprecedented coronavirus disease crisis, the need to engage all our human potential that the different generations can bring to the table is more evident than ever. Only by working together in an inclusive manner will we overcome this global threat and come out stronger and with better prospects for the future. As I mentioned at the beginning, this future belongs to the young.

Annex 53**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu**

I would like to express our thanks to you, Mr. President, for bringing this cross-cutting issue to the attention of the Security Council. The recognition of the role of young people in both peace and conflict settings is a significant step towards building sustainable peace, combating extremism and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The role of young people in the maintenance of peace and security has long been neglected. Today young people between the ages of 10 and 24 years constitute almost one third of the world's population. One in four of these young people are affected by, or living in, regions fraught with conflict and violence.

Young people around the world strive for peace and justice, as well as economic and social development. Their voices should be heard and their needs and demands should be addressed. Their capacities must be further improved. Investing in young people is an investment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in our global pledge to leave no one behind.

As we mark the fifth anniversary of the milestone resolution 2250 (2015) this year, we need to step up our efforts to accelerate its implementation and to amplify the voices of young people at all levels by taking into account the crucial nexus between long-lasting peace and sustainable development.

In line with that understanding, Turkey's youth policy encompasses a wide range of areas, including education, vocational training, employment, entrepreneurship and civic participation. Article 58 of the Turkish Constitution is devoted explicitly to youth and the rights of young people. The Ministry of Youth and Sports plays a central role in planning, implementing and monitoring youth-related policies and strategies. It develops mechanisms for the participation of young people in all spheres of social life.

The coronavirus disease crisis has revealed, among other things, the importance of the role of young people and the value of intergenerational solidarity. Young people in Turkey are actively contributing to the success of the fight against the ongoing pandemic as active agents of their communities.

Young people shoulder an immense burden in humanitarian crises. The World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul in May 2016, played a catalytic role in putting in place mechanisms to guarantee that young people are prioritized in the humanitarian system. It noted the urgency of upholding the rights of young people in humanitarian settings, including the right to access secondary education as well as health services and information. The Global Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, launched at the Summit, has been key in guiding the long-term commitment for youth in emergency situations.

As the largest refugee-hosting country in the world, Turkey has taken significant actions to prioritize young people and children in its refugee policy. To cite a few examples, we have been working closely with the relevant United Nations agencies to address the social and health-service needs of young asylum-seekers. So far, we have granted more than 20,000 scholarships to those who are under temporary protection in Turkey.

Together with United Nations agencies, we have established more than 40 safe spaces for women and girls across the country. Such cooperation has been expanded

to a number of social service centres with a view to reaching over 1 million people in order to provide psychological support, legal advice and language lessons.

As stressed in the Secretary-General's first report on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167), the engagement of refugee young people in global discussions, such as the global compact on refugees, has enabled the recognition of the significance of youth participation in humanitarian settings and helped to galvanize the commitment of Member States to improving their support for young refugees. We look forward to further steps being taken in that direction by the international community.

Resolution 2419 (2018) rightly focuses on the need to increase the role of young people in decision-making processes concerning security, conflict resolution and peace, including peace agreements. It is encouraging to see that some Governments, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations have stepped up efforts to accelerate the implementation of the resolution. Yet more efforts and investments should be made at the level of the United Nations in order to meaningfully incorporate young people in decision-making processes and address the underlying social, economic and political factors that may lead to radicalization and violent extremism.

In many regions around the world, we have come to see that the full and active participation of women and young people in peace processes is imperative. We need to improve the role of women and young people in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation.

We also need to establish policies to ensure the incorporation of views and interests of young people into the design and implementation of development strategies and to make better use of the analysis of age-disaggregated data so as to improve the possibilities for young people to contribute to socioeconomic life.

With that understanding, Turkey spearheaded efforts and worked with all stakeholders to address youth unemployment during its presidency of the Group of 20 (G-20) in 2015. We built a consensus among the G-20 members to commit to a reduction in the youth unemployment rate by 15 per cent by 2025. Turkey's efforts were successful in securing a specific target for youth unemployment for the first time in the history of the G-20, with an accountability mechanism to be monitored by the International Labour Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The launch of the Secretary-General's Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth is also the result of a growing acknowledgement of the need to advance our youth policies and focus our attention on the concrete needs of young people. At the same time, more remains to be done to deliver a coordinated United Nations response to realize their rights and build their capacities as agents of change. Turkey remains ready to contribute to the efforts of the Secretary-General to advance the youth agenda of the United Nations.

As we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it is time to realize our promise to young people by establishing a United Nations youth centre, through which we can all contribute to the implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) and where young people can amplify their voices at the global level.

Annex 54**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations, Sergiy Kyslytsya**

We appreciate the initiative to hold this open debate on the issue of youth, peace and security, including the role of young people in the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak response.

This year we mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), on youth, peace and security, as well as celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. The appropriate observance of these milestones is now even more important than before due to the global pandemic. We consider that a united and targeted response to the coronavirus disease would be incomplete without the inclusion of representatives of young people in this process.

The first report of the Secretary-General on youth, peace and security (S/2020/167) provides an analysis of the five pillars: participation, protection, prevention, disengagement and reintegration, and partnerships. We took note of that analysis and support the report's findings on the growing recognition of the role of young people in peace and security, as well as on the remaining core challenges for young people, including the violation of their human rights. In that regard, we see a further need to reinforce our actions to respond to the aspirations of young people for peace, justice and human rights.

We would like to affirm that the Ukrainian Government is carefully studying the recommendations contained in this report and will consider them in the process of the further adjustment of its national youth policy. Ukraine is committed to strengthening the potential of young people, creating equal opportunities and guaranteeing equal rights.

Returning to the Secretary-General's report, we note that there has been tangible progress in the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda with the crucial involvement of key actors in this process, in particular representatives of civil society organizations and young people themselves.

At the same time, it is too early to celebrate our success. Unfortunately, the most serious challenges for young people continue to impede positive changes, even in the five pillars mentioned by the Secretary-General. All regions of the world deserve a more peaceful and sustainable environment for young people that enables them to realize their potential, creativity and aspirations for a more prosperous future.

While witnessing some positive elements of the implementation of the agenda at the national level, we should not forget that the scale of problems and actions in response to different regions and States are incomparable.

Africa's young people have the potential to be the driving force behind collective prosperity yet to be revealed. Africa has the world's youngest population, and it is growing rapidly, projected to account for over 40 per cent of the world's young people within three generations. Over recent decades, we have seen advances in terms of policy commitments to youth development in Africa at the national and regional levels alike. Africa's Agenda 2063 underscores the importance of promoting the rights of young people and meeting their needs, in all their diversity. At the same time, too many young people remain jobless and struggle to access public resources and quality social services. They remain excluded from policy formulation. Engaging young people is central to the successful implementation of the transformative agenda in Africa.

In Asia, the largest generation of young people in history should ensure the region's dramatic socioeconomic growth is sustained and even improved. At the

same time, youth in Asia still face particular issues of engagement in education, employment and training.

Ukraine understands the need to create and adopt an inclusive and integrated education policy that equitably supports and develops the diverse categories of young people in Africa and Asia. Given our well-developed higher education system, Ukraine provides broad opportunities for foreign students to receive quality education and become acquainted with European culture. During the 2019-2020 educational year, more than 63,000 foreign students, mostly from Asian and African countries, are receiving education in my country.

It is also worth noting that, in many countries affected by conflict or occupation, young people face permanent threats and danger. This situation is unacceptable, and the States concerned should end violations, ensure protection and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

This call is especially relevant given the gravity of problems and challenges exposed by the current global pandemic. In this regard, we would like to call for continued efforts to fight the COVID-19 threat, while ensuring the best possible balance between the introduction of urgent exceptional measures to counter the threat and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, with a focus on attention to vulnerable populations, including youth.

Youth have traditionally played an instrumental role in Ukraine's political and public life. Back in October 1990, Ukrainian students conducted non-violent public protests, which later forced the Soviet authorities to address the concerns of the Ukrainian youth, cemented the foundations of our emerging civil society and accelerated the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It was young people who initiated the peaceful demonstrations in Kyiv in November 2013, protesting against the decision of the political leadership to put on hold Ukraine's further integration with the European Union. After almost three months of the stand-off, a new Ukraine emerged.

Following the Russian military aggression against my country in 2014 and the resulting temporary occupation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as well as certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, young people were among the first to face this threat and protect their motherland. Tens of thousands actively volunteered to provide support to our armed forces in the fight to protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Youth and student organizations also became active in delivering aid and humanitarian assistance to the people affected by the ensuing hostilities.

Six years have passed, but a multitude of threats and challenges for youth in Ukraine continue to grow in the temporarily occupied territories. The occupying authorities engaged in a massive campaign of human-rights violations, including against young representatives, activists and human-rights defenders. They seek to erase Ukrainian national and cultural identity and the identity of children and young people as citizens of Ukraine.

Another flagrant violation of international humanitarian law — which prohibits Russia, as the occupying Power, from forcing protected persons to serve in its armed or auxiliary forces — is the plan to send almost 3,300 people from the territory of the Crimean Peninsula for so-called "military service". Most cynically, most of them are expected to serve outside the Crimean peninsula, primarily in the Southern Military District, whose military units and command are directly involved in carrying out armed aggression against Ukraine in Donbas.

Unfortunately, the spread of COVID-19 has become an additional concern for the life and health of the population in the temporarily occupied territories.

Therefore, we recall the obligation of the Russian Federation as an occupying Power under international humanitarian law to take all the necessary measures to protect the life and health of the population of those territories, to ensure and maintain in the occupied territories satisfactory health care and hygiene conditions, and to take the prophylactic and preventive measures necessary to combat the spread of contagious diseases and epidemics.

Taking into account that the report I mentioned did not cover the negative impact of COVID-19 on youth in the long run in the same way that it considered the situations of women and children, we would be grateful for the preparation by the Secretary-General of a targeted policy brief with urgent measures to minimize the impact of this pandemic on youth. In our view, such a document should devote special attention to youth affected by conflict and occupation amid the worsening epidemiological situation as COVID-19 and its consequences spread.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight that, by protecting youth and their rights, we are investing in our future, development and progress. The environment in which they live today, and the possibilities we create for them to realize their potential and put to use their energy and creativity, will define their role in ensuring peace and security tomorrow. In this regard, I call for the full and effective implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda.

Annex 55**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations**

I thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on youth and peace and security. The United Arab Emirates attaches particular importance to the constructive role that young people play in the development of our youthful and fledgling country, and we are therefore pleased to participate in today's meeting. Today, as we all face a global health crisis, it is more important than ever that we champion young people as active agents at the nexus between global health and security.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), on youth and peace and security, and we thank the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for its leadership in championing that initiative. It was a ground-breaking resolution, which recognized the important and positive role that young people play in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

Since the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), the world has seen the many ways in which young people are creatively seeking to prevent violence and build peace across the globe, in devastated and conflict-affected societies as well as in those enjoying relative peace. Their work heralds the tremendous potential of peace and security dividends for all.

Young people across the globe have articulated the view that peace and security are more than just the absence of violence, and, as such, these are matters of universal concern. They have stressed the importance of ending violence and addressing its symptoms as well as engaging with its underlying causes, including corruption, inequality and social injustice.

Turning to the world's struggle to face the current pandemic, the role of youth has never been more vital. In the United Arab Emirates, youth are volunteering to support our country's efforts to navigate this global crisis through emergency-response trainings and safety workshops. Young people also took part in the national sterilization programme to disinfect the main cities in order to prevent the spread of the virus. The United Arab Emirates continues to believe in the transformative leadership of youth at the national, regional and international levels to address major global challenges.

At the national level, the United Arab Emirates' leadership has taken concrete steps towards the meaningful inclusion of youth in decision-making processes. Since the appointment in 2016 of a Minister of State for Youth Affairs, several mechanisms and initiatives have been institutionalized, such as the establishment of youth councils and the adoption of a national youth strategy developed and championed by young Emiratis. These steps underpin an open policy of engagement, which is the cornerstone of nurturing a peaceful and thriving society.

At the regional level, the United Arab Emirates continues to support youth in the Arab world. In a region shaped by pervasive security concerns, stereotypes associating young people with violence remain widespread and contagious. To counter such narratives, the United Arab Emirates promotes a model of moderation, tolerance and acceptance. In this model, we believe that youth are not part of the problem, but rather partners in the quest for more peaceful and prosperous societies. In December 2019 in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates, together with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and Hedayah, hosted a regional conference on the theme "Empowering Youth and Promoting Tolerance: Practical Approaches to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism". The conference brought together 300 participants, providing an opportunity to discuss

initiatives and action plans to strengthen resilience against radicalization leading to terrorism, with a focus on youth empowerment and tolerance at the national and regional levels. This type of partnership is important if we are to benefit from and support young people's contributions to peace and to realize the potential of the world's 1.8 billion young people.

Youth-led peace and security efforts are noticeably innovative and resourceful, making use of art, sport and media. From interpersonal engagements to spontaneous, autonomous and leaderless social movements mobilized online, the diversity of youth initiatives in this sphere is significant. Building thereupon, the United Arab Emirates hosts initiatives such as the Arab Youth Centre, which provides opportunities for young Arab pioneers in different fields to mobilize their peers and take part in the sustainable development of their communities.

At the international level, the United Arab Emirates launched the Youth Delegates Programme in 2016, which involves Emirati youth in the official United Arab Emirates delegations participating in General Assembly meetings, committees and relevant international forums. The programme includes their participation in negotiations, side events and high-level meetings. In a similar vein, the United Arab Emirates encourages the Security Council to invite more young leaders to brief it on a regular basis to reflect on individual experiences while pursuing peace and security in their societies.

Finally, the United Arab Emirates reaffirms its commitment to the important role youth can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. We also take this opportunity to encourage Member States and relevant United Nations organs and entities to consider ways to increase the meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in peacebuilding efforts in the furtherance of the youth and peace and security agenda.

Annex 56**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

Uruguay thanks the Dominican Republic for convening this timely debate, which provides us an opportunity to reflect on the progress made on the youth, peace and security agenda, identify relevant challenges and obstacles and share experiences and good practices in its implementation.

Today the world is suffering an unprecedented global health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which is disrupting lives across the planet. As humankind faces trying and uncertain times, young people are among the most active groups engaged in mounting a comprehensive response to the crisis: many work on the front lines as health personnel or humanitarian activists; some are leaders, providing aid or distributing food and basic health supplies in their communities; others are leveraging social networks and their advanced technologies skills to share accurate information and raise awareness among the population, or further developing applications for virtual platforms to facilitate communication during this period of isolation and social distancing. Many others are working in innovation and research, helping to develop new technologies, diagnostic tests and treatments to fight the disease.

In carrying out these tasks, young people are showing not only their dedication and creativity but also their strong moral values, such as empathy, solidarity and compassion, as well as their strong commitment to global causes. This goes to show that simplistic and negative stereotypes portraying young people solely as victims or perpetrators of violence must be done away with; we must once and for all recognize the immense potential of young people as active agents of change in building peaceful environments, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Resolution 2250 (2015), adopted five years ago this month, represents a historic milestone in the recognition of the essential role of youth in preventing and resolving conflicts and in sustaining peace. Resolution 2419 (2018) called for the inclusive participation of young people in such efforts, including in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. Uruguay would like to highlight four aspects crucial, in our view, for making progress on the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda, and for helping young people make a meaningful contributions to peace and security.

First, there is a need to create an enabling environment in which young people are respected and where they can fully develop their talents and abilities. Equal access to quality and inclusive education, as well as opportunities for decent work, as advocated by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, are essential factors for building the favourable environment that young people need. Education is probably the most transformative resource human beings have, and an essential tool for empowering young people.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to use new digital technologies. Digital transformations are already under way as we adapt to our new circumstances. Digital literacy should be part of educational programmes, as should health education, including preparation for tackling global health crises.

Nonetheless, education must do more than transmit knowledge and information. Young people should also be taught values, such as respect, tolerance

and solidarity, and the ability to participate constructively in political and social life. Education should also impart to them the skills to become effective agents of change and to undertake initiatives aimed at building a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Employment is a further priority, as it helps maintain the stability and security of communities and contributes to social integration and inclusion. According to the Secretary-General's recent plan, *Shared responsibility, global solidarity: responding to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19*, young people are among those most affected by the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic. Unless we can ensure economic security, which helps guard against young people resorting to crime and enables them to be productive members of society, young people run the risk of ending up dangerously marginalized.

Uruguay is of the view that young people's participation in political life and decision-making processes should encompass all issues in which young people have a stake, such as education, employment and health, including sexual and reproductive health rights. Therefore, Uruguay has developed legislative frameworks and public policies in line with resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) to strengthen and protect young people and promote their participation as key actors in the national development process. Furthermore, the Youth Action Plan 2015-2025 was devised in close consultation with young people from all over the country. The Plan is a road map that systematizes and coordinates the main youth-oriented actions and policies. It addresses areas such as gender, young people with disabilities, young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, youth living in rural areas and the information and knowledge society.

The National Youth Institute is the Government body in charge of implementing programmes and actions designed to increase the involvement of youth in public affairs. Some of the programmes developed by the Uruguayan Government are: Jóvenes en Red, which provides assistance to young women and men in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability who are unemployed or disconnected from the formal education system; Acompañamiento al Egreso en Comunidad, which assists young people released from prison in entering the labour market and reintegrating education; and Jóvenes a Programar, carried out jointly with the Uruguayan Chamber of Technology and the major companies in that sector, which provides training and employment in the area of information technologies. The programme also includes employment services so that graduates can quickly join the labour market.

We are aware that we should do more. Therefore, the Government is planning to implement a strategy aimed at encouraging youth volunteering through the creation of a network of young people who are already young leaders in their respective communities. The hope is that their example will inspire and mobilize their peers, thereby facilitating attitudinal changes in youth and promoting the exercise of positive leadership.

Secondly, to advance the agenda and facilitate the work of young peacebuilders, it is important to build bridges of trust and communication between them and Governments and to foster intergenerational exchanges. Youth mobilization and peace efforts are more likely to be successful if young people are given an opportunity to work with local and national authorities. That would help ensure that Governments take into account the views of youth in policymaking and peacebuilding. Dialogue and cooperation among youth and older people and community elders could bring together the new and innovative ideas of young people and the experience of older generations, thereby producing sound creative initiatives to solve complex issues related to peace and security. To that end, a fundamental factor is required — Governments and older generations should show young people their support and confidence and acknowledge young people's capacity for action and initiative.

Thirdly, a measure that should be taken as a matter of urgency is to increase the protection of young peacebuilders and human rights defenders, who are increasingly the victims of threats and attacks, so they can continue doing their job, free from intimidation and reprisals. They also have to adjust their work to the current health situation; accordingly, efforts should be made to provide them with personal protective equipment and training on how to improve their work during these turbulent times in which they also have to manage the impact of the pandemic.

Fourthly, Uruguay would like to highlight the synergies between the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas. Resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), on youth, peace and security, build on resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions related to women and peace and security. Both agendas are complementary and mutually reinforcing. Breaking down the silos between them will help to advance their implementation and improve the participation of women and youth in peace and security issues. There are striking similarities between the two agendas. At their core lies the fundamental principle that women and youth should be engaged as partners in building sustainable peace. Women, like youth, are underrepresented at all levels of decision-making. They are also generally excluded from negotiation and peace processes, as their opinions are frequently ignored. Both women and youth are viewed as victims or perpetrators of violence rather than as agents of change. Significant efforts have been made to implement the women and peace and security agenda for almost 20 years. Lessons learned from that experience can be used to advance the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda.

Despite barriers to the full participation of women, tangible progress has been made since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), 20 years ago. A set of new resolutions has been adopted, countless studies, research and analyses have been conducted, strong partnerships have been forged with civil society and other stakeholders, and a wide range of networks and coalitions, such as the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network and networks of women mediators, have been established across several regions of the world. Although the journey has been slow, the participation of women in peacekeeping operations has increased significantly. The participation of women in peace processes and the inclusion of references relevant to women in peace agreements have also increased, although to a lower extent. In Latin America, the Colombian peace process and the historic peace agreement there are an example in that regard. National action plans are among the most successful mechanisms to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Similar plans to implement resolution 2250 (2015) would be valuable tools in advancing the youth agenda as well.

Another aspect related to the synergies between these agendas that deserves attention is the role of young women as forgers of peace. They are part of both the women and peace and security, and the youth, peace and security agendas. Given that resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015) complement each other, it is obvious that including young women in conflict prevention and resolution is highly beneficial. The concurrence of their dual identity as women and young people gives them unique skills, abilities and perspectives to make critical contributions to ensuring inclusive and lasting peace.

In conclusion, the COVID-19 crisis gives us an opportunity to reflect. No one knows exactly what will come afterward. The youth, peace and security agenda will probably change and adapt to the new reality. However, one thing is certain: youth will continue to play a pivotal role. Ultimately, they will be the ones to build that new reality. It is time to build peace. To that end, we need more than ever the creativity, enthusiasm and innovative energy of the new generations in order to respond in an

effective manner and build the foundations for the safe and peaceful world that we all need.
