



Security Council

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Letter dated 21 April 2021 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 a copy of the briefings provided by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres; and His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General, as well as the statements delivered by Their Excellencies Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of SViet Nam; Mrs. Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia; Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya; Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Mr. Wang Yi, Special Representative of President Xi Jinping, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China; Mr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister for External Affairs of India; Mr. Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense of Ireland; Mr. Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Mr. Othman Jerandi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad of Tunisia; Mrs. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Permanent Representative of the United States of America and Member of President Biden's Cabinet; Mr. Audun Halvorsen, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway; and Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as by the representatives of France, the Niger and the Russian Federation, in connection with the video-teleconference on "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security" convened on Monday, 19 April 2021.

Statements were also delivered by Their Excellencies Mr. Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, Foreign Minister II of Brunei Darussalam, as Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden; Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Ms. Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members for this video-teleconference, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are also enclosed: Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malta, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines,



Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Dang Dinh Quy**
President of the Security Council

Annex 1**Briefing by the Secretary-General**

I would like to thank the Vietnamese presidency for organizing this open debate and for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on what has been a key priority since taking office: cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

That cooperation has grown exponentially since 1945. Today it encompasses preventive diplomacy, mediation, counter-terrorism, preventing violent extremism, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, promoting human rights, advancing the women and peace and security agenda, combating climate change and, since last year, the response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

As we look to the future, fostering dialogue and building confidence across all those areas is central to our common work. Our investment in institutionalizing partnerships has translated into more effective engagements before, during and after crises, with concrete operational results.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, the United Nations is working with the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe to support local efforts to advance dialogue, trust-building and reconciliation.

In the Sudan, the United Nations supported the African Union and Ethiopia in facilitating negotiations that resulted in the establishment of a civilian-led transitional Government, with women and young people playing a prominent role.

Together, through our hybrid operation in Darfur, the United Nations and the African Union also provided technical, advisory and logistical support to the negotiations that culminated in the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement on the Sudan in October 2020, before jointly presenting options for a new United Nations political mission, which led to the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan. As we continue to support the Sudan in its efforts towards democratic governance and an inclusive society, our collaboration remains essential.

In Mali, following a military coup, the United Nations and the African Union supported the efforts led by the Economic Community of West African States towards the formation of a transitional Government in September 2020. Since then, we have been working closely with Malian stakeholders to support the implementation of the transition road map and action plan.

In supporting the Libyan-led, Libyan-owned dialogue process and transition, the United Nations is working closely with the African Union, the League of Arab States and the European Union, including in the context of the Berlin process and the Quartet. We are working together to support the implementation of the ceasefire, and we are closely cooperating with the African Union in its initiative to support the Libyan authorities in promoting national reconciliation.

In Bolivia, close cooperation among the United Nations, the European Union and the Episcopal Conference of Bolivia played an important part in finding a peaceful solution to the crisis following the 2019 general elections and in building confidence ahead of the general elections held last October.

Such examples show that our ability to work together and build on our complementarities allows us to more effectively support Member States in managing complex political transitions and in finding sustainable solutions to political challenges.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an important part of that picture. Since its founding, ASEAN has played an important role in its region through diplomacy, conflict prevention and peacebuilding in conflict situations. The comprehensive partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations, well-established since 2011, has grown across the peace and security spectrum, as well as social and economic development. Under our technical cooperation agreement, we have provided capacity-building support in the areas of mediation and dialogue, ceasefires and gender inclusion.

Today ASEAN's role is more crucial than ever as the region faces an urgent crisis in Myanmar. I have repeatedly called on the international community to work, collectively and through bilateral channels, to help to bring an end to the violence and repression by the military. United Nations cooperation with ASEAN in that regard is vital. The situation requires a robust international response, grounded on a unified regional effort. I urge regional actors to leverage their influence to prevent further deterioration and ultimately find a peaceful way out of this catastrophe. My Special Envoy is currently in the region. She stands ready to resume dialogue with the military and the other actors and to contribute to a return of Myanmar to the democratic path and to peace and stability.

Strengthening United Nations partnerships with regional and subregional organizations is an integral part of my vision for a networked multilateralism. Despite the pandemic, my biennial high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional organizations was held virtually last November. Twenty-three organizations participated and helped to institutionalize our collaboration and work better together in crisis contexts.

I am committed to pursuing even closer engagement to promote confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention, management and resolution. We can address our world's current and future challenges, including those exposed and heightened by COVID-19, only through ambitious and coordinated multilateral action.

Annex 2

Briefing by the former Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon

It is my great honour and privilege to speak to the Security Council today. My deep gratitude goes to Viet Nam for its initiative to hold this timely high-level open debate, as well as for extending an invitation for me to brief the Council today. Taking this opportunity, I extend my congratulations to President Nguyen Xuan Phuc on his inauguration on 5 April and wish him great success in the future. My special thanks also go to Secretary-General António Guterres and the other briefers who have shared their insights and expertise on this important topic.

Today the international community collectively faces a plethora of monumental challenges. Those include, but are not limited to, an ongoing and deadly global pandemic, both long-standing and emerging conflict and security crises and a deepening climate emergency. At the same time, the United Nations, and multilateralism more broadly, has faced immense difficulties over the past few years in holistically addressing such crises, as some countries have unfortunately prioritized nationalism and isolationism over cooperation and partnership.

Against that troubling backdrop, the role of cooperative partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as envisioned under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is all the more critical to helping to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security. In particular, regional and subregional organizations have unique and prominent roles to play in enhancing dialogue and confidence-building in conflict prevention and its resolution.

In that context, I commend the prioritization of prevention by Secretary-General Guterres and urge all members of the Security Council to scale up their support for his efforts in addressing the root causes of conflict and enhancing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

During my decade-long tenure as Secretary-General of the United Nations, I worked tirelessly to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations with a view to scaling up conflict prevention and resolution. I worked side by side with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the African Union (AU), the League of Arab States (LAS), the Organization of American States, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other key regional organizations, including attending the majority of ASEAN, LAS and AU summit meetings.

As a result of their geographical proximity and intimate knowledge of local dynamics, regional and subregional organizations are also essential United Nations partners in providing early-warning assessment of atrocity crimes.

I believe that today's Security Council debate is well timed, as both the United Nations and its regional partners now have a fleeting window to cooperate through strong action to halt the ongoing atrocities in Myanmar and prevent a further escalation of violence.

According to rights monitoring groups, more than 700 people, including 50 children, have been killed by security forces since the 1 February military takeover of Myanmar. I condemn the brutal use of lethal force against civilians and the detention of State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint, as well as thousands of protesters.

The worsening situation in Myanmar represents a pivotal moment to showcase the utility of cooperation between the United Nations and its regional partners in maintaining peace and security and saving human lives. While serving

as Secretary-General, I was actively engaged on the situation in Myanmar and its democratic transition from the very start of my tenure. I am still proud to have convened the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General on Myanmar in 2007, which helped spark democratic openings.

After the deadly Cyclone Nargis caused unparalleled human suffering in Myanmar in 2008, no one could engage with the junta and time was slipping away to provide urgent humanitarian aid. Through concerted diplomatic efforts, I was able to gain entry to the country and scale up United Nations actions to the required level. I had a series of meetings with General Than Shwe and then Prime Minister General Thein Sein, who later became the President of Myanmar.

That was possible only thanks to the full engagement of ASEAN in the process. Now, at a more decisive moment of need, I am sincerely appealing to ASEAN leaders to step up together with the United Nations to help the people and the country of Myanmar.

I have been exploring with leaders in the region, as well as members of The Elders, a group of global leaders founded by Nelson Mandela, possible ways to help find a solution to the crisis. Based on those consultations, I recently made a request to the Myanmar authorities to visit the country, meet with all parties and try to help de-escalate the situation and find a route towards constructive dialogue. Unfortunately, my request was not accepted. The Myanmar authorities informed me that “the proposed visit will not be convenient at this moment due to the recent domestic situation”.

To deal with the Myanmar situation, an effective and regional-led approach requires both unity and action. But, to date, ASEAN has been divided in its response to the situation in Myanmar. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States should not be used as a pretext for inaction in the face of serious human rights abuses.

ASEAN must make it clear to the Myanmar military that the current situation is so grave that it cannot be regarded only as an internal matter. The military’s use of lethal force and the gross violations of human rights being perpetrated against civilians are not compatible with the ASEAN Charter. Those actions are clear violations of international law and constitute a threat to the peace, security and stability of the region.

According to news reports, General Min Aung Hlaing of Myanmar will attend the ASEAN special summit on Myanmar, to be held in Indonesia on 24 April. I urge ASEAN leaders to take immediate and concerted actions at the summit. As a minimum, they should agree that a high-level ASEAN delegation will visit Myanmar to engage with all the relevant parties.

It is equally vital that the Security Council move beyond statements to collective action, as has been stated by countries around the world. After the ASEAN special summit, the Council should monitor the situation closely to take follow-up actions. The Security Council cannot neglect its basic obligation to prevent a situation in which so many innocent people are being killed from deteriorating. As the former Secretary-General, I urge the Council to take immediate actions to halt the violence and bloodshed and initiate a process to restore peace and democracy in Myanmar.

In particular, the permanent members should focus their attention on actions that can be taken to respond to the situation in Myanmar. The Security Council has the responsibility to protect Myanmar’s civilian population in a context where the atrocities being committed may constitute crimes against humanity. The principle of the responsibility to protect should be seriously considered in ways that are appropriate to the Myanmar context, using a range of tools at the Council’s

disposal. Given the gravity and urgency of the situation, I believe the Secretary-General himself should use his good offices to engage directly with the Myanmar military to prevent an escalation of violence. The task ahead is daunting. It will require the collective and coordinated efforts of the United Nations, ASEAN and the wider region to avert catastrophe and instead help return Myanmar to the path of a peaceful, democratic transition.

Let me conclude. As the coronavirus disease pandemic continues, it is now more important than ever to pursue multilateral and multilayered solutions to the security problems that we face, borne out of robust partnerships with the United Nations, its Member States and, particularly, regional organizations all working together. As regional conflicts continue to both emerge and deepen, the United Nations can no longer deal with all these crises on its own. This is why I believe that a partnership approach can best bear fruit for both conflict prevention and resolution. Now is the time for the Security Council and its regional partners to not only act together, but act decisively to prevent the worst — in Myanmar and beyond.

I once again thank the Viet Nam presidency for convening this high-level open debate and inviting me to brief the Security Council today. Again, I count on your leadership.

Annex 3**Statement by the State President of Viet Nam, Nguyen Xuan Phuc**

I thank the Secretary-General and the other briefers for your insightful and comprehensive remarks.

Trust, confidence and dialogue lay the solid foundation for international relations. Rising from the ashes and sorrows of the Second World War, the United Nations has become the very symbol of our deep conviction and mutual trust in multilateralism and multitiered international cooperation.

Guided by such faith, many regional organizations were established and have since thrived. Our briefers today, representing organizations from various regions, will give us an overall picture of their active contributions to conflict prevention and resolution and the facilitation of dialogue, peace and reconciliation processes.

As an active member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), having just fulfilled its role as the 2020 ASEAN Chair, Viet Nam takes great pride in ASEAN's success in building a region of peace, cooperation, trust and dialogue, and a cohesive and responsive ASEAN Community, striving towards an open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based regional architecture.

ASEAN has established a partnership with the United Nations and created several mechanisms and forums for political and security dialogues with other countries, including the five permanent members of the Security Council. In January 2020, Viet Nam presided over the Council's open debate (see S/PV.8711) on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN in maintaining international peace and security.

Setting confidence-building and dialogue as priorities, ASEAN has been working with China to negotiate the establishment of the code of conduct in the South China Sea, with a view to maintaining peace, stability, maritime security and safety in the South China Sea.

ASEAN is also playing a central role in seeking an adequate solution to help stabilize the situation in Myanmar through dialogue and reconciliation.

While peace, cooperation and development continue as the prevailing trend and fervent aspirations of all countries and peoples, the world that we live in today is riddled with challenges. In the past five years, conflicts have taken away half a million lives across the globe. In 2020 alone, the world recorded 20 million refugees, over 50 million people displaced due to conflicts and around 170 million in need of humanitarian assistance. These are the people who are left behind and call upon our Council to take action.

Against the backdrop of major challenges, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), natural disasters, severe climate change, border and territorial disputes and conflicts, frictions and geostrategic competition, increased international unity is more crucial than ever.

Yet the paradox at present lies in our waning trust in one another and in multilateral institutions. The strengthening of unity is of great necessity, starting with the cooperation of the United Nations and the Security Council with regional organizations in our joint efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts through dialogue and confidence-building.

In this important debate, I would like to underscore three proposals.

First, the interactions and complementarities between the United Nations and regional organizations are inherent. They offer a two-way linkage to share

knowledge and coordinate joint endeavours. The United Nations should take the lead in increasing cooperation activities and exchanges of experience and best practices in confidence-building and dialogue to prevent conflicts. On the other hand, regional organizations, with their unique strengths in practical experience, resources and diverse demands, should bolster cooperation with the United Nations, engage in dialogues and share experience at various forums to enhance capacity in preventing and resolving conflicts.

Secondly, we should further promote the role of multilateralism and uphold the Charter of the United Nations and international law, for this is the most concrete and solid foundation on which to build trust and promote dialogues.

Moreover, early conflict prevention requires inclusive and comprehensive solutions to address the root causes of conflicts, such as poverty, hunger, inequality and violence. The international community should strive to fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global security and development strategies and initiatives led by the United Nations, while paying greater attention and giving adequate assistance to developing countries that face serious resource constraints.

For their part, regional organizations need to have comprehensive agendas and integrate the United Nations development frameworks and initiatives into their national and regional development plans. They should also strive to narrow political, economic and cultural gaps among themselves. In South-East Asia, ASEAN is making every effort to fulfil the goal of building an ASEAN Community united in politics, diverse in culture, connected in economy and with increased cooperation with external partners. As an active ASEAN member, Viet Nam has effectively brought COVID-19 under control, enjoyed a high economic growth rate and actively engaged in international integration.

Thirdly, we need to continue enhancing cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations through dialogue and cooperation frameworks and early-warning mechanisms for volatilities.

The Security Council needs to continue acknowledging and respecting the perspectives, roles and contributions of regional organizations. We also need to mainstream conflict prevention and resolution strategies via dialogue and confidence-building in United Nations missions and create favourable conditions for regional organizations to uphold their central role.

In response, regional organizations should further strengthen their proactive and leading role in preventing and resolving conflicts in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. This can be achieved only when each and every Member State has strategic trust in one another and shares a common political resolve.

Viet Nam is honoured to assume the presidency of the Security Council for the second time. With the aspiration of becoming a peaceful and prosperous nation, a reliable partner and a responsible member of the international community, Viet Nam remains steadfast in its foreign policy of independence, sovereignty, diversification and multilateral relations, promoting international integration and actively contributing to the efforts of the United Nations and the Security Council.

Faithful to our motto — “Partnership for sustainable peace”, Viet Nam will spare no effort to strengthen the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including ASEAN, and elevate such ties for peace, security and development around the world.

Annex 4**Statement by the President of Estonia, Kersti Kaljulaid**

I extend my warm greetings to you in Hanoi and to the people of Viet Nam. I also welcome the former Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, as well as the representatives of regional organizations.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has clearly demonstrated that you can overcome global challenges only through joint and coordinated action. Here, regional organizations play a crucial role, and the European Union (EU) leads by example. The EU is the biggest donor to the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility, a global initiative to ensure safe and effective vaccines for all the countries in the world.

I also welcome the support by regional organizations for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire.

Besides the strong partnership with the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Security Council also holds annual consultations with the African Union Peace and Security Council, the League of Arab States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Regional and subregional organizations often know better how to mitigate tensions and deal with the aftermaths of bloody confrontations. They have a key responsibility in preventing violent conflicts and atrocity crimes and can build pressure to stop atrocities and open a door for negotiations. And for that, they must not stay silent when freedoms are suppressed.

There must be accountability between a State and a society. This is the only road to a less violent world. The unfolding tragedies in Belarus, Yemen, Syria and Myanmar are clear proof of that.

The entire world observes with pain the army killing its own citizens, including children, in Myanmar. In that regard, ASEAN has a critical role in pressuring the army to stop the atrocities. It is important that ASEAN be able to organize a summit dedicated to the grave situation in Myanmar.

Drawing on the messages of our briefers today, it is also democratic governance that reassures the peaceful coexistence of States. Multilateral cooperation founded upon democratic debate, transparent information-sharing and confidence-building measures is a way towards more peaceful co-existence.

These universal values are the reason that democratic governance has been embraced across the world on every continent. The number of people in the world living under democracies has increased from 1 to 4 billion over the past 65 years.

The European Union is recognized as one of the best examples of effective regional multilateral cooperation. The EU is committed to multilateralism with the United Nations at its core. This method of diplomacy is part of our DNA.

Respect for territorial integrity and the prohibition on the use of force are fundamental principles of international law at the core of the United Nations, the EU, ASEAN and other regional organizations.

And yet we observe with the deepest concern threats of the use of military force here in Europe as well. We are witnessing an increased military build-up by Russia along the Ukraine border and in occupied Crimea. Most recently, Russia announced that, under the pretext of military exercises, it will block parts of the Black Sea — namely, the Kerch Strait — restricting navigation by foreign military and official ships until October. The situation is aggravated by the fact that Russia does not engage in risk-reduction and confidence-building measures in the OSCE.

Russia failed to explain its military build-up along the borders of Ukraine and in occupied Crimea last week at the OSCE. This runs counter to the letter and spirit of OSCE confidence-building mechanisms, including in particular of the Vienna Document, which is aimed at addressing concerns and reducing risks.

In conclusion, Estonia believes that multilateralism, which we see in Europe — born from the ashes of two World Wars — can help to secure and keep peace through active cooperation with the United Nations and other regional organizations. I encourage all regional organizations to take a bigger role in securing regional stability and work actively with the United Nations, which is and remains the cornerstone of our multilateral world order and is a forum where everybody has a voice.

Annex 5

Statement by the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta

Let me first and foremost take this opportunity to congratulate Your Excellency, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, on your recent election as President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Your country's remarkable history has inspired Kenya and many nations around the world. I also applaud the extraordinary leadership Viet Nam has shown in effectively combating the coronavirus disease crisis.

Let me also thank Their Excellencies Mr. António Guterres and Mr. Ban Ki-moon and the Heads of regional organizations for their informative briefings.

With nearly half of all global peace operations taking place on the African continent, the African Union has put the peace agenda high on its priority list and established several institutional structures to address conflict prevention and resolution.

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which I am currently chairing, is the decision-making organ of the African Union for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Working in close collaboration with regional blocs such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Economic Community of West African States, the Council has facilitated a number of peace agreements and reduced the escalation of conflict in several countries.

Regrettably, there are still too many conflicts brewing in Africa that require our concerted effort to contain. Why is this so? Because conflict is destructive: it destroys lives and livelihoods and erodes the socioeconomic gains a country may have made; and overall, it deters our forward progress. I want to propose that the time has come to scale up our conflict-resolution efforts, particularly in Africa. Let me propose five recommendations for your consideration.

First, we need to recognize and support regional peacekeeping organs. The Security Council, and particularly the presidencies and penholders, should undertake more comprehensive consultations and build on regional efforts. History and experience remind us that, the closer you are to a problem, the better you understand its complexity and its workable solutions. Regional and subregional organizations have a greater stake in a conflict and provide proximity and insights that are critical in conflict resolution.

Secondly, we must do better in appreciating cross-border dimensions of conflicts, for it is not enough to focus on a single file in the Security Council to the exclusion of neighbouring countries. Resolving conflicts should not shift the threat to neighbouring countries, particularly when insurgent and terrorist organizations are part of the problem. The United Nations should indeed consult closely with neighbouring States in their endeavours in these countries.

Thirdly, we should do a better job at disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating fighters. Returning fighters to lawful civilian life guarantees sustainable peace and successful post-conflict reconstruction. The United Nations should treat this as a priority and become more innovative in the demobilization and reintegration of groups that have been ideologically derailed. Kenya has developed one of the most far-reaching disengagement and reintegration programmes in Africa. Our disengagement programme is nationwide and assists individuals newly recruited into violent extremism and others who are returnees from foreign battlefields. We have designed the programme so that it is a platform that can offer capacity-building and training to others. To this end, we welcome the United Nations to support and make use of this facility.

Fourthly, without a competent Government, fragile countries, or those emerging from conflict, will not secure peace and development. Therefore, the United Nations must be at the forefront in assisting countries that are emerging from conflict and develop a more competent and inclusive civil service. In this context, Kenya has provided such support to States in the region that have appealed for our assistance. Our South Sudan Liaison Office, for example, has trained hundreds of public servants for South Sudan.

Fifthly, we must do a better job at burden sharing. I greatly appreciate the assistance in response to humanitarian crises. The conflict-resolution pillar must attract the same level of urgency if we are to truly bring cycles of violence to an end.

We will have fit-for-purpose Security Council peacekeeping mandates in Africa only if they have adequate and predictable funding through United Nations-assessed contributions. It is these that will protect peacekeepers, allow their mission to be fit for purpose, and enable quicker and more lasting success.

In conclusion, I stand eager to join hands with you to build a more ambitious collaboration between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations.

Annex 6**Statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph E. Gonsalves**

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines thanks the briefers for their insightful comments, and we commend Viet Nam for its leadership in initiating this debate on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. This subject is of immediate relevance to my country in the context of a massive natural disaster, against the backdrop of the multifaceted challenges of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the predicted active Atlantic hurricane season that begins in six weeks' time. Please permit me a little latitude for a minute or two.

For 11 days now, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has been in the throes of a series of explosive volcanic eruptions on the island of Saint Vincent. As a consequence, nearly one-fifth of the island's population has had to be evacuated to safer areas. A monumental challenge of humanitarian relief, inclusive of security considerations, recovery and reconstruction, faces us. Without effective cooperation between our country, the United Nations and our regional and subregional organizations, our life and living would be wholly unbearable. Without enhancement by such cooperation, the relief effort would be stymied and the prospects for our recovery and reconstruction dismal.

The United Nations and its agencies have been actively at work, and the personal leadership of my friend Secretary-General António Guterres has been outstanding. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, the Regional Security System, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, the Association of Caribbean States and their allied regional agencies have been at the forefront, with their magnificent efforts. Still, much more is required to be done. Across our land, the faces of men and women are strained and anxious; they are hurting badly. The global community is being summoned to action to our aid in the name of humanity and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and it cannot allow itself to make haste slowly. Tomorrow, under the auspices of the United Nations, a global appeal fund for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will be launched. I appeal for Member States to be generous in their solidarity.

Turning now, more specifically to conflict-affected settings, it has become a ringing truth that regional institutions, in concert with the United Nations, are often best-suited to facilitate the pacific settlement of disputes through mediation, confidence-building, observation and verification missions, and other measures that promote stability, build trust and create an environment conducive to development.

Indeed, any dispute that is likely to endanger international peace and security should first be addressed through these peaceful means, with the assistance and participation of relevant regional arrangements, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Let us restate foundational principles. Security is, at its very core, a collective endeavour, which can be achieved only as parties build trust and stable relationships. In this regard, lasting peace can never be imposed; it must emerge organically from among all relevant stakeholders.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines believes that regional arrangements, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union and our very own CARICOM, are often better placed to support peace processes than entities far removed from the unique and specific histories, cultures, politics and material circumstances of development.

The Security Council is required always to lend its full support and encouragement to all regional mechanisms and refrain from any actions that may circumvent or undermine the legitimate role of regional bodies. We welcome the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys and Special Representatives to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and various regional and subregional organizations. The convening platform of the Peacebuilding Commission also proves useful in providing a coherent, multi-stakeholder strategy to assist conflict-affected countries to overcome their challenges. Greater efforts must be made to further enhance this comprehensive whole-of-system approach, and regional arrangements must be included at every step of the process.

Conflict-prevention and -resolution activities are most effective when complemented by targeted peacebuilding and development initiatives that address the root causes of insecurity, improve lives and livelihoods, and bolster national ownership over peace processes. The norms and principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence must always serve as a guidepost for conflict prevention and resolution. In all situations, the mandates of regional organizations ought never to be subverted by hegemonic self-interests or eroded through unilateral action, but always to serve as platforms to enhance sovereignty and promote solidarity and cooperation. Still, none of these vital precepts ought ever to blind us to egregious abuse or violation of elemental human rights and the consequential need for appropriate collective action through the Security Council.

I close respectfully with a reminder — please help Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in its midnight hour of need.

Annex 7**Statement by the Special Representative of President Xi Jinping,
State Councilor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China,
Wang Yi**

[Original: Chinese]

China supports Viet Nam's initiative to convene debate this high-level debate on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. It welcomes Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc to preside over today's meeting, and thanks Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a clear requirement of the Charter of the United Nations and an important manifestation of multilateralism. As the world struggles with the shockwaves from the profound changes in the international landscape, compounded by the pandemic, we face pronounced challenges in the field of international peace and security and a complex interplay of traditional and non-traditional security issues. This calls for joint efforts at the global and regional levels. It is necessary for the United Nations and regional organizations to work together to assess experience and lessons learned, maintain useful traditions and innovate, uphold multilateralism and contribute to world peace and development. In that context, I wish to share a few thoughts.

First, we must observe norms and build a solid foundation for peace. The Charter of the United Nations is the embodiment of these norms and the cornerstone of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Regional organizations carrying out peace operations must conform to the purposes and principles of the Charter, in particular by respecting national sovereignty and territorial integrity and avoiding interference in the internal affairs of other countries. We must strive to resolve disputes peacefully whenever possible and reject the wilful imposition of sanctions and the threat or use of force. The core role of the Security Council as an international collective security mechanism must be upheld and self-serving practices abandoned. We must advocate openness and inclusiveness and reject geopolitics, bloc politics and ideological confrontation. Only in this way can the actions of regional organizations succeed and be sustained.

Secondly, we must prioritize prevention and diversify the tools for upholding peace. The United Nations and regional organizations should promote a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and diversify the toolkit for maintaining peace, with preventive diplomacy as a priority. Peace talks should be encouraged in order to narrow differences through dialogue, use good offices to mediate and settle disputes, and find political settlements to hotspot issues. We must also make good use of United Nations peacekeeping operations, uphold the principle of impartiality, and respect the wishes and choices of the people of the countries involved. Enforcement operations must be authorized by the Security Council.

Thirdly, we must complement each other's strengths and create synergy for peace. The United Nations and its Security Council should play a useful overall coordination role and provide more assistance to regional organizations, which in turn should leverage their own advantages and help resolve regional disputes in a manner suited to regional realities. Both parties can share their respective experiences and best practices and engage in flexible and pragmatic cooperation. In recent years, the United Nations has been moving in the right direction by strengthening coordination with the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other regional organizations. The United Nations should help Africa to improve its own peacekeeping capacities, stability and counter-terrorism capabilities, accelerate

the development of the African standby force, rapid-response forces and the early warning mechanism. It should provide sustainable and predictable financial assistance for the African Union's peace and security operations and help silence the guns in Africa. The international community should respect and uphold ASEAN's central position in East Asian regional cooperation. At present, it is necessary to help ASEAN to participate constructively in Myanmar's domestic reconciliation process in an "ASEAN manner" and to de-escalate tensions in Myanmar as quickly as possible, in the interests of the people of Myanmar and the international community.

Fourthly, we must pursue common development and prepare the ground for peace. Many regional hotspot issues will ultimately be resolved by development. The United Nations and regional organizations must embrace the concept of promoting peace through development, adopt an integrated approach to peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-war reconstruction, and help countries in need to access development funds and resources in a timely manner. Fundamentally speaking, implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, promoting the improvement of people's livelihood and employment, and narrowing development gaps among different regions are the best policies for sustained peace and security. In this regard, it is undoubtedly of great significance to vigorously promote the development of interregional cooperation and interconnection and help post-conflict countries integrate into regional development so that everyone can enjoy the peace dividend.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the restoration of China's lawful seat in the United Nations. For 50 years, China has been an active supporter of and participant in the cause of the United Nations and a firm defender and practitioner of the Charter of the United Nations. We have consistently supported and actively contributed to strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Indeed, a significant portion of the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund is used to support regional and subregional efforts. China has announced that it will donate 300,000 doses of coronavirus disease vaccine to United Nations peacekeepers, which will be used first in African mission areas. We also support the use of these vaccines in the peacekeeping operations of regional and subregional organizations.

China has established strategic partnerships with such regional organizations as the African Union, ASEAN and the League of Arab States. The partnerships are based on our common understanding of a shared future and are consistent with the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Guided by the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, our partnerships are aimed at achieving win-win cooperation. They never target any third party.

China has consistently promoted cooperation with the African Union in the spirit of pursuing the greater good and shared interests and on the basis of the principle of sincerity, real results, affinity and good faith. A few months ago, we signed a Belt and Road cooperation plan with the African Union and will continue to forge synergy between the Belt and Road initiative, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China supports the African Union's leading role in the process of African integration and encourages the African Union to find African solutions to African issues and to continue to contribute to regional peace and development.

China has been enhancing its relations with ASEAN on the basis of the concept of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness. It will continue to work for progress on the political, security, economic, trade and socio-cultural fronts, support ASEAN's central position in regional cooperation and build a closer China-ASEAN community with a shared future.

China is actively building Belt and Road cooperation with the Arab League, setting out the guiding principles of peace, innovation, leadership, governance and integration, China is a committed builder of peace, a promoter of development, a facilitator of industrialization, a supporter of stability and a partner of people-to-people exchanges in the Middle East. We will continue to deepen economic and trade cooperation with the Arab League, increase political trust, promote mutual learning among civilizations, and jointly build a community with a shared future based on common convictions and the pursuit of peace, harmony, development and prosperity.

In the face of the unprecedented changes the world is experiencing, China is ready to further strengthen cooperation with regional organizations, work in the same direction to uphold peace together, and building a community with a shared future for humankind.

Annex 8**Statement by the Minister for External Affairs of India, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar**

At the outset, let me convey our best wishes to Your Excellency on your election as the President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. I also thank the Vietnamese delegation for organizing this high-level open debate on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Excellency, your chairing of today's debate has brought a special focus to this very important issue.

Regional and subregional organizations have demonstrated their important role in the maintenance of international peace and security. With their deep knowledge of local factors and complexities, regional and subregional organizations are uniquely placed to contribute to finding better solutions to conflicts in their respective regions. We therefore support engagement between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

The world order that we built following the Second World War is under serious stress. The nature of threats facing Member States has also changed since the United Nations was founded 75 years ago. Contemporary security challenges are not limited to territorial or political disputes, but transcend physical or political boundaries. In today's globalized world, terrorism, radicalization, drug-trafficking and organized crime have a growing salience. The security implications of new technologies cannot be disregarded.

To face such diverse challenges, we need coordinated and concerted action across borders. We think that enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations will be an important factor in successfully addressing contemporary challenges and conflicts. In this context, a rational evaluation of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations during the last 75 years will provide a good basis for our future engagement.

India has traditionally maintained close and friendly cooperation with regional organizations. India's relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a key pillar of its foreign policy and the foundation of its Act East Policy. India's vision of the Indo-Pacific as a free, open and inclusive region, underpinned by international law and a rules-based order, is premised upon ASEAN's centrality and the common pursuit of progress and prosperity.

India remains committed to further building on the momentum of regional cooperation under the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation framework and to making that organization stronger and more vibrant, effective and results-oriented. Our relationship with Africa spans centuries, and we have had close cooperation with the African Union, especially for development-partnership initiatives. In addition to our large peacekeeping presence in Africa, India has been deeply committed to peacebuilding and sustaining peace through large United Nations peace keeping operations in Africa.

Let me conclude by reiterating our strong support for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We believe that this partnership is inevitable for responding collectively, coherently and decisively to effectively prevent, manage and resolve violent conflicts and promote peace and development.

Annex 9

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense of Ireland, Simon Coveney

I would like to thank Viet Nam for having organized today's debate, highlighting the critical need to cooperate in support of conflict prevention and resolution.

Like others, I also offer my solidarity to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who have spoken eloquently about the unique partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations.

I welcome the adoption of a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/9) on this important issue.

We in Ireland do not have to look far beyond our shores to see the impact of regional organizations in building and sustaining peace. From the ashes of the Second World War, the European regional experiment became a reality. Across the European neighbourhood, the contribution of regional cooperation to coherence, stability and growth is felt on a daily basis.

Referring to the architects of today's European Union, the Nobel Peace Laureate from Ireland, John Hume, said they

"spilt their sweat, and not their blood, and by doing so broke down the barriers of distrust of centuries".

That experience also informed the journey towards peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland. Partnerships built at the local, regional and international levels led to and continue to underpin the success of the Good Friday peace agreement.

Drawing on that experience, and learning from the European Union (EU) and other regional organizations, I would like to make three points today.

The first is that regional organizations can bring a unique understanding to ensuring that confidence-building measures are inclusive and context-specific. Regional organizations, through their work in promoting cooperation and engagement among their members, are themselves powerful examples of confidence-building.

The European Union put building bridges between people at the centre of its approach to supporting peace on the island of Ireland. They literally built and funded a bridge in one of the conflict areas. The aptly named EU PEACE cross-border funding programme, for example, focused on the creation of constructive human relationships across all layers of society, including survivors, young people and women's groups.

Looking across the world, we see examples of regional organizations successfully applying contextual knowledge to address challenges to peace and security. Recently, the Council's Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security heard about the important work of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the Economic Community of West African States on climate-related risk assessments in West Africa.

I underline Ireland's strong support for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) continuing efforts in Ukraine. The commitment of all sides to the principles of the OSCE must be upheld.

By enhancing engagement with regional organizations, the Council can draw from country and thematic experience built on local understanding and expertise.

That brings me to my second point: that regional organizations can and must work together in support of the United Nations and that regional approaches to confidence-building measures and dialogue require sustained investment over time. The EU-United Nations partnership in the area of peace operations and crisis management is a good example.

Just as we are committed to United Nations peacekeeping missions across the globe, Ireland is proud to have members of our Defence Forces participating in EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mali and the Mediterranean. All those missions operate in support of Security Council resolutions. Irish experts are also currently serving in EU civilian CSDP missions in eight countries.

Trilateral cooperation has also proved effective in a number of areas. The EU, through Operation Althea, mandated by the Council, works closely with the OSCE to promote stability in the European neighbourhood.

Similarly, through Operation Atalanta in Somalia, the EU cooperates with the United Nations and the African Union to leverage local and international skills and experience. Those strategic partnerships allow each organization to engage more effectively and to ensure a real and targeted impact on the ground, which is what really matters.

The recent establishment of the European Peace Facility will enable the EU to contribute to the financing of military peace support operations and assistance measures globally. The Facility will, for example, support the increasing role in peacekeeping played by the African Union and subregional organizations to prevent, mediate and settle conflicts on the African continent. I also commend the African Union's efforts to increase the effectiveness of the African Peace and Security Architecture.

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), meanwhile, continues to play a key role in its region. I welcome the recent progression to a strategic partnership between the EU and ASEAN. That demonstrates the shared commitment between our two organizations to a rules-based international order and effective multilateralism. ASEAN can and should play an important role in an issue that concerns all of us — ensuring the protection of human rights and facilitating dialogue and a peaceful solution to the current crisis in Myanmar.

We look towards the upcoming ASEAN Summit and are hopeful of a tangible outcome. That would be a positive manifestation of the potential of regional organizations the likes of which we are discussing here today. There is scope here for the strengths of the United Nations and ASEAN to align.

My final point is that peace is made by people — by courageous individuals such as Monica McWilliams and Pearl Sagar, who worked on a cross-community basis to ensure women's representation in the Northern Ireland peace process.

We have learnt that to be sustainable, peace must be inclusive. Regional organizations have a vital role to play in giving space to grass-roots and community actors and in elevating the voices of civil society.

We see the invaluable role of regional women's mediator and peacebuilding networks, particularly in conflict-affected contexts. Groups such as FemWise Africa and the Arab Women Mediators Network are showing the way for all of us.

There is more that we can do — on the Council, within United Nations-led peace processes and through the work of regional organizations to ensure that women are both in the room and at the table when decisions are made. We must also ensure that the voices of young people, too often marginalized, are both heard and heeded.

Primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Council. Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations enhances our ability to prevent and resolve conflict and to advance the broader goals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations.

We are, as we know, already doing much together. Let us commit to realizing the full potential that those unique partnerships have to offer.

Annex 10**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón**

[Original: Spanish]

Mexico thanks the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen Xuan Phuc, for having convened this debate. I welcome the statements by Secretary-General António Guterres and former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. I also acknowledge the presence of Heads of State and Government and other ministers.

Allow me first of all to express Mexico's solidarity, in the framework of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), with the provision of support to the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which is experiencing an exceptional situation as a result of the recent volcanic eruptions, which have had serious impacts on its people. I reiterate to the Prime Minister the support of the CELAC community and the fact that this week we will be sending support, medicine, food and other items.

It must be recognized that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is vital to efforts to maintain international peace and security, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mexico, as a country committed to effective multilateralism, has backed regional approaches to mediation and the peaceful resolution of disputes in order to address conflicts early and prevent them from escalating. We are aware that various regional and subregional organizations have created effective peaceful-settlement mechanisms that build trust between the parties.

In that regard, the efforts of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to find a peaceful solution to the situation in Myanmar are to be highlighted and recognized. We trust that with the active participation of ASEAN, a peaceful solution will soon be reached in Myanmar as well as a return to democratic normality.

I would also like to acknowledge the growing leadership of the African Union. Its commitment to finding a solution to the worrisome situation in Tigray and its efforts to ease tensions related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam are a clear indication of its regional capacity and leadership. We also commend the Economic Community of West African States, whose intervention was key in reaching an agreement with a view to a democratic transition in Mali.

Likewise, full credit must be given to the League of Arab States for its constructive participation in the quest for solutions to the various conflicts in the Arab world and to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) with respect to the European continent.

Today regional organizations must play a central role in the context of the current coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and join forces in order to achieve the effective implementation of resolution 2565 (2021) and General Assembly resolution 74/274 so as to ensure truly equitable access to vaccines, which are recognized as a global public good and given, without any exclusions, in all countries, including, of course, those that are conflict-affected.

The need to present a common front against the pandemic has led to an impetus for the integration of Latin America and the Caribbean that has taken shape in the framework of CELAC, of which Mexico has held the pro tempore presidency since January 2020.

At the helm of the Community, we have cooperated with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in carrying out a complete study of the economic impact of the pandemic, and we have designed and implemented an unprecedented comprehensive vaccine and drug self-sufficiency plan that is aimed at strengthening health-related production and distribution chains in the region.

The cooperation carried out in the face of the pandemic among CELAC countries has made possible the creation of a network of virology specialists; the regional production of the Astra-Zeneca vaccine against COVID in the context of a combined effort by Mexico and Argentina; and, in a very important and outstanding development, the promotion of projects to develop vaccines in universities and research centres in the region, which involve, at the pre-clinical or clinical stages, vaccines developed by Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Chile and Mexico. Our strategic objective is to have our own approved vaccines to ensure vaccination in all the countries of the Community as soon as possible, in view of the severe restrictions that we are facing with respect to access to vaccines, which have led to an unbelievable, unprecedented concentration in terms of vaccine access.

CELAC has also been a conducive forum for countries that wish to do so to speak out against greed and hoarding, which have intensified inequality, commercial barriers to supplies to combat the pandemic, and the lack or scarcity of vaccine availability in the region.

We have tried to ensure that the Community engages in effective multilateralism that produces real, tangible benefits for our peoples and contributes to their sustainable development. I say this because regional organizations can bolster or complement United Nations efforts where obvious limits exist, such as in the area of vaccines and medicine.

The magnitude and diversity of the adverse consequences of the current health crisis require an in-depth process of reflection in order to consider the strategic nature of multilateral organizations in the context of addressing the multidimensional challenges of international security, which endanger the lives of large population groups.

Owing to their familiarity with the realities of their respective geographical areas and their experience and knowledge of local dynamics, regional organizations must be a first instance for prevention and for attention to potential conflicts and crises that can spill over a country's borders. We trust that this timely debate will contribute to strengthening ties on the ground between the local, national and regional levels and the entire collective security system established in the Charter of the United Nations.

Annex 11

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad of Tunisia, Othman Jerandi

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, I should like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his valuable briefing on supporting communication and cooperation with regional organizations, enhancing the role of the United Nations and multilateral action.

I welcome former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who at the very start of his term laid the foundations for mechanisms and frameworks for coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I also thank Viet Nam for its on-target choice of the important topic that is the focus of the Security Council today. It reflects the importance we all place on strengthening cooperation and integration between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly in the area of preventing, managing and resolving conflicts around the world under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

During its Council presidency in January 2021, Tunisia had the honour of holding a high-level briefing (see S/2021/66) on cooperation between the Security Council and the League of Arab States, which was marked by constructive proposals and a rich discussion. That meeting culminated in the adoption by the Security Council of presidential statement S/PRST/2021/2, which reflected the consensus on the need to advance cooperation between the Organization and regional organizations, given the major roles played by regional organizations in political, economic and development matters. Such organizations are also cornerstones of maintaining security and peace and proactive platforms for defusing tensions.

In that regard, I would be remiss if I did not mention the meeting (see S/2020/1179) held on 4 December 2020 during the Council presidency of South Africa concerning cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

The importance of today's meeting lies in our belief that the role of regional organizations must be integrated into United Nations and Security Council efforts to lay the foundations for international peace and security. That requires a meshing of efforts and a consolidation of visions in a unified, coordinated and integrated international approach. In that regard, we call for stepping up coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations to a higher level. That will lead to greater effectiveness in addressing various situations and will help to facilitate the resolution and prevention of conflicts and crises.

Crises and security, economic, humanitarian and development challenges around the world have been compounded by the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. That makes it all the more urgent for the international community to join forces and coordinate regional and local actions to resolve those crises with a view to ensuring global security, stability and peace.

Tunisia is committed to serving the interests of international peace and security and addressing global issues, especially those affecting Arab and African countries. It therefore places special importance on consultation and cooperation between the Security Council and both the League of Arab States and the African Union. The two latter organizations are the most important actors in their respective regions, the most capable of understanding regional specificities and complications and the best positioned to deal with regional conditions. Such cooperation will contribute to a common understanding of the underlying causes of the various conflicts and crises

plaguing the Arab and African regions, thereby making our approaches to dealing with them more practical and effective.

Even as we express our satisfaction with the cooperative relations that have been forged between regional organizations and the United Nations over the past 20 years, we stress here today that such efforts must be redoubled in order to achieve a quantum leap in those relationships and realize the highest possible level of coordination, integration and shared responsibility. Regional organizations are aware of local specificities and understand the underlying drivers and causes of conflicts and the background to relations between the parties to regional tensions. They are therefore well-positioned to play effective roles in mediation, confidence-building and the promotion of political dialogue and reconciliation between the parties involved.

It is important today to act to prioritize intervention by regional and subregional organizations to help address crises and create solutions that spring from within regions, as the African Union is trying to do in a number of places. In that regard, we look forward to the Secretary-General's proposals in his upcoming reports on ways to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of confidence-building and the promotion of political dialogue as a tool for resolving disputes.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that the magnitude of the challenges facing the world and the emerging risks that are targeting humankind and threatening our collective security demand that we review our approach to international peace and security from a collaborative perspective. With that in mind, we call for strengthening existing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to address common challenges, above all conflicts and terrorism, and to address the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with resolution 2532 (2020), which was adopted unanimously on 1 July 2020 pursuant to a Tunisian-French initiative.

Strengthening and promoting cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will help to enhance our common understanding of the root causes of crises. It will allow existing conflicts to be comprehensively and permanently settled and their causes to be effectively addressed, and thereby enhance the role of preventive diplomacy as a mechanism for maintaining international peace and security.

Annex 12**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations and Member of President Biden's Cabinet, Linda Thomas-Greenfield**

Allow me to join others in congratulating you on Viet Nam's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We thank Viet Nam for its extraordinary leadership during this month.

Today I would like to offer a top-line overview of some of the world's most important regional organizations, share our views on their important work and offer plans for coordination and collaboration.

We have worked with the African Union (AU) across Africa to address many crises, from Somalia and Darfur to the Ebola response in West Africa. And as you heard from the Secretary-General, as well as from the President of Kenya, we continue to have many challenges on the continent. At this very moment, a strong United Nations-AU partnership is crucial to addressing the conflict in Tigray and the unfolding humanitarian and human rights crisis. The conflict has already caused hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. Working together, with the support of the international community, the United Nations and the AU are positioned to press for free, safe and unhindered humanitarian access, an end to violence, accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and a peaceful solution.

Confidence- and security-building measures are another important tool that the United Nations and regional organizations can use to foster cooperation and trust. The United States commends in particular the Organization of American States (OAS) for its long history of using these measures across the hemisphere. They have successfully identified traditional and non-traditional measures to effectively address new threats, concerns and challenges in the hemisphere. The OAS has helped broker agreements to resolve territorial disputes between Belize and Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as Costa Rica and El Salvador. The OAS has also participated in several conflict-resolution and national-reconciliation activities, including disarmament and demobilization in Colombia. These confidence- and security-building measures have contributed to transatlantic military stability, predictability and transparency.

The Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also plays a vital role in reporting on daily activities of violence on the ground in Ukraine. We owe it to their leadership — all of the brave monitors and everyone with an interest in a strong European security environment — to ensure that the Mission can operate freely and without hindrance.

We also deeply appreciate the deployment of civilian and military missions by the European Union (EU) in support of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The EU's military training missions in the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia directly support United Nations peacekeeping efforts. We thank the EU for its willingness to take on these challenges inside and outside of its region.

The United States also looks to regional organizations like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to play a strong role in encouraging conflict prevention, mediation, preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding. While the ultimate responsibility to address threats to international peace and security lies with the Security Council, this month in particular we in the Council eagerly await the outcome of the ASEAN meeting on Burma, which deserves serious and immediate attention. ASEAN-led forums, including the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit, provide a space for countries of the region to engage in constructive

dialogue about pressing regional and international issues, including good governance, counter-terrorism and maritime security. We will continue to actively participate in these forums in order to foster constructive engagement with Indo-Pacific countries.

Through our contributions to the preventive diplomacy agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum, we have seen great strides in the inclusion of women, youth and civil society organizations. Increasing the meaningful participation of women in all political processes is a priority at other regional organizations too, like the OSCE. It is yet another reason to coordinate with those organizations, as the Security Council does everything it can to promote the women and peace and security agenda.

Finally, we would also like to recognize the leading role that the Pacific island countries regional organizations play in advancing economic development and security cooperation. Our partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum enhances regional security cooperation and supports the implementation of applicable Security Council resolutions, in collaboration with Pacific Governments and their shipping registries.

Regional organizations are essential partners in working towards peace and security. They are engines of diplomacy. We at the United Nations have to be in close contact with them in order to ensure our success. We therefore look forward to continuing to coordinate and collaborate with all of these organizations, as well as others, in the days, weeks and years to come.

I once again thank the Vietnamese presidency for hosting this important debate.

Annex 13**Statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, Audun Halvorsen**

I would like to join others in warmly congratulating President Phuc on his recent assumption. We would also like to thank Viet Nam for placing this important issue on the agenda and taking the initiative to draft the presidential statement that we have before us (S/PRST/2021/9).

Regional and subregional organizations are an integral part of the global multilateral architecture. We need more — not less — cooperation to confront global challenges that affect us all. Regional and subregional organizations play an important role in the prevention of conflicts and bring added value to conflict resolution. They are uniquely placed to build trust and promote dialogue among parties concerned within their respective regions.

Norway favours strengthened institutional cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations in order to make the most of our combined resources for sustaining peace. Norway remains a committed and long-term partner of key regional and subregional organizations, particularly in the area of peacemaking and mediation and in the promotion of the women and peace and security agenda.

When a crisis erupts in a particular part of the world, we as Security Council members look to the region for information about the root causes and dynamics of the conflict and for concrete ideas to address and resolve it. Regional organizations have the advantage of geographical proximity and strong local networks. Let me offer a few examples.

In Myanmar, we support the efforts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to play a constructive role in the current dire situation, which is posing a grave threat to regional peace and security. We believe that ASEAN is well-placed to facilitate the dialogue needed to bring an end to the violence and compel the military to restore civilian rule.

The situation in and around Ukraine is another case in point. We have called on the Russian Federation to reverse its recent military deployments. The presence and reporting of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is essential. We urge all parties to provide the SMM unhindered access to all parts of Ukraine, in accordance with its mandate.

The African Union and subregional organizations are key actors in preventing conflicts and building trust, dialogue and confidence throughout the African continent. The active role of the Economic Community of West African States in promoting a peaceful transition in Mali is one of many notable examples. The work of the African Union (AU) to address the situation in the Horn of Africa, including the conflict in Tigray and the situation on the border between the Sudan and Ethiopia, is another case in point.

Here too, the key lies in the region itself. And here too, we encourage continued close cooperation between the AU, including the AU Peace and Security Council, and the Security Council in the time ahead. In addition, we would like to see more information-sharing, joint discussions on mandates and joint field visits in order to actively address these situations.

Regional organizations are also valuable partners in promoting key thematic priorities on the Council's agenda. In February, we called for the United Nations to lead by example in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of

women in United Nations-led peace processes. That is equally important in regional and subregional organizations, and we encourage all our partners to place gender equality and the empowerment of women high on the agenda.

At the Council's meeting with the League of Arab States in January (see S/2021/66), we welcomed the launch of the Arab Women Mediators Network, which promotes greater participation by women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping. At our meeting with the OSCE in March (see S/2021/256), we stressed the need to incorporate a focus on gender equality at all levels of OSCE's work.

Regional and subregional organizations play a crucial role in addressing the effects of climate-related security risks. We acknowledge the work of these organizations and encourage the inclusion of the adverse effects of climate change in regional dialogues as a means to increase stability and as a starting point for cooperation.

Annex 14

Statement by the Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon

I thank Secretary-General Guterres, Mr. Ban Ki-moon and all of the briefers for their poignant reminders of the challenges we collectively face.

As we all recognize, conflict has a devastating impact on people. We know it hits hardest among the poorest and the most vulnerable. By the World Bank's reckoning, by 2030, two thirds of the world's extremely poor could be affected by fragility, conflict and violence. The Security Council's agenda, sadly, is a tragic testimony of that. In the past two weeks alone, we have discussed conflicts in Yemen, Mali, Syria and the Great Lakes region, among other places.

We therefore welcome the adoption today of a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/9) under Viet Nam's leadership. We hope it will serve to strengthen confidence-building measures and, indeed, dialogue mechanisms with regional, subregional and, importantly, civil society organizations, on which peace processes so heavily depend.

I would like to highlight three ways that we believe we can strengthen the vital role of those organizations.

First, regional and subregional organizations can restore trust between conflict-affected communities. In particular, the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has reduced tensions and prevented conflict across the OSCE region. As regional organizations develop their technical capacity, they should seek to follow this very example. And we should seek to boost their willingness to use confidence-building measures when required.

Secondly, confidence-building and dialogue must be part of a broader strategy coordinated through the good offices of the United Nations.

We recognize the unique role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in addressing the crisis in Myanmar. The United Kingdom further welcomes ASEAN's readiness to support positive and constructive efforts. We therefore look forward to close cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN in order to resolve the conflict and serve those who are suffering and those who are in need.

We also applaud the 2017 United Nations-African Union Joint Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which was instrumental in the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic between the Government of the Central African Republic and 14 armed groups, and we call upon all political actors to remain committed to it.

Thirdly, regional bodies need to include civil society organizations in a meaningful capacity at all levels of dialogue. If we are truly to build inclusive and enduring peace, civil society organization should be — have to be — pivotal in all aspects of conflict prevention and, importantly, conflict resolution.

As others have said — including my good friend the Foreign Minister of Ireland — it is important that women play a key role in peacemaking. Regional women's networks in particular, such as the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry and the African Union's Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation, also known as FemWise-Africa, are vital actors in the pursuit of a lasting and sustainable peace.

I assure the Council that the United Kingdom is absolutely committed to protecting and promoting women peacebuilders, and we are proud to have supported the International Civil Society Action Network's protection framework. I urge others to support and implement its expert and effective recommendations.

On our shared path to peace, we need a more open and inclusive approach for a stronger and more coherent international response. The nature of conflict has changed. Increasingly, we see intra-State conflicts, which have the potential to destabilize peace and security on a global level. We also see how marginalization and human rights violations can totally isolate communities and perpetrate violence.

To tackle these conflicts' driving forces, we must — and need to — combine our humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts. The Peacebuilding Commission is key to that endeavour, and we are grateful for the Peacebuilding Fund's support, which builds trust among communities, because ultimately, if and when national and regional efforts fail, it is the Security Council that has the primary responsibility to ensure international peace and international security.

We do that best when we have a clear view. The United Kingdom supports regular and coordinated early-warning capabilities, which help the Council to prevent escalation. Regional organizations can strengthen that capability by sharing early-warning assessments and bringing emerging situations to the Council's direct attention. Accurate and timely information needs to be coupled with effective early engagement and support at the community, State, regional and continental levels.

If, and when, prevention fails or there is no regional consensus, it is the Council that should lead the international community — not just to discuss and debate, but to act. The United Kingdom stands ready to support regional and subregional organizations as they continue to strengthen confidence-building and dialogue efforts.

Only by mobilizing all the tools at our collective disposal can we avoid the escalation of violence and secure the lasting, sustainable peace that we all desire.

Annex 15**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nathalie Broadhurst Estival**

[Original: French]

I would like to thank Viet Nam for organizing this very important debate and to congratulate it once again on its presidency of the Security Council in April.

We need effective multilateralism now more than ever. In order to deal with the crises around the world, the United Nations must work closely with regional organizations. That is the whole point of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which sets the framework for that cooperation.

Because they are closest to the ground, regional organizations are the first witnesses of crises. They know the deep roots of crises, and therefore understand how to prevent them and effectively resolve them.

It is not possible to mention all the crises here, but I will focus on a few current examples.

First, I would like to mention the active role of the European Union. We are working concretely with the United Nations in all crisis areas. That includes the development and implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, which must be preserved. It also includes the resolution of the Libyan crisis and the deployment of the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI to implement resolution 2292 (2016). In the Sahel, the European Union is training the local army and police, while the United Nations plays a key role in the peace process and the protection of civilians. Finally, I would like to highlight the European Union's action in Kosovo to promote the rule of law and political dialogue.

Secondly, I would like to commend the role played by African regional organizations. They know how to put in place rapid and appropriate measures to resolve political crises. That is particularly the case in West Africa with the Economic Community of West African States, which was able to mobilize last year after the coup in Mali. It is also the case, of course, with the African Union, which is currently acting in the context of the conflict in Tigray and in the Central African Republic, in conjunction with the Economic Community of Central African States and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. In addition, the financing of African peace operations, including mandatory United Nations contributions, remains essential.

Thirdly, I would like to support the ongoing efforts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to try to resolve the violent crisis that is ravaging Burma. We will be paying close attention to the outcome of the upcoming ASEAN Summit. I would also like to acknowledge the role of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy on the ground, as well as the efforts of Mr. Ban Ki-moon in that connection.

Fourthly, I would like to underline the very important role that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is playing at the moment with regard to the situation in Donbas and near the Ukrainian border and in Crimea, which is of great concern to us. The OSCE provides an appropriate framework for Russia to engage in de-escalation.

Fifthly, I would like to mention the contribution of the League of Arab States in facilitating various political processes, especially in Libya, Yemen, Syria and the Middle East overall. We call for greater cooperation between the League and the Council in that regard.

Finally, I would like to pay a heartfelt tribute to the work of the International Organization of la Francophonie, particularly in terms of electoral observation and political dialogue, as is currently the case in Haiti.

We are convinced that the United Nations and regional organizations complement one another. Together, they can continue to invent a multilateralism that is close to the ground and produces results, to meet the challenges of our time.

Annex 16**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry**

[Original: French]

Let me begin by expressing my sincere thanks to the President of the Security Council and the Government of Viet Nam for organizing today's important meeting on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the field of conflict prevention and resolution. Indeed, conflict prevention remains a core responsibility of the Security Council's mandate, even if history shows us that this body is more focused on immediate crisis management and the resolution of conflicts that have already started.

The many modern threats to international peace and security, such as terrorism, mass displacement, climate change, cybercrime and health crises — including the current coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic — cannot be met by individual States acting alone. Rather, they require collective action by the international community. To address these challenges in an effective manner, regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations are called upon to strengthen confidence-building measures and their respective partnerships in order to ensure the collective security and development of States Members of the United Nations by promoting better intergovernmental coordination.

The global COVID-19 pandemic, which is undermining the global health system and our common efforts aimed at maintaining international peace and security, proves the relevance of the need for multilateralism and cooperation not only between international organizations, but also between them and States. The value of collective action and solidarity is now seen as a categorical imperative in dealing with the pandemic and its devastating impact on socioeconomic sectors.

In view of the complexity and multidimensional nature of these challenges, as well as their diverse manifestations, depending on the region, these new challenges also require that, in the context of cooperation, primacy be given to regional actors, as they have adapted reference mechanisms, which allows them to have a better understanding of the root causes of conflicts, which then enables them to use preventive diplomacy to deal with the situations with which they are confronted.

Accordingly, the mediation role played by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a perfect illustration of the benefits of the experience and lessons learned from the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in implementing confidence-building measures and promoting dialogue for the resolution of conflicts or other crisis situations. In West Africa, whether it has been a pre- or post-electoral crisis, multifaceted conflicts or other types of crises, ECOWAS has proven its ability to manage complex situations despite limited human and financial resources and to develop differentiated strategies, taking into account the most imminent threats to peace and security in each of the countries in its area, in close collaboration with the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

With regard to the African Union (AU), I would like to acknowledge the efforts made to set up a peace-and-security architecture specific to the AU, in accordance with the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by Year 2020. Its realization will undoubtedly give full meaning to and flesh out the concept of African solutions for African problems, to which all of us at this meeting adhere. We continue to maintain that it is important to combine our efforts to revitalize and reform cooperation between these two organizations, just as we

find the reform of the multilateral system as a whole to be necessary, in view of the many upheavals that the world has experienced, in order to respond effectively to the security challenges that arise in the world in general and in Africa in particular.

Obviously, this cannot be achieved in a sustainable manner without addressing the profound issue of the governance of the United Nations, starting with the reforms that we are calling for. In accordance with the common African position, we call for the full representation of Africa in the Security Council, with at least two permanent seats, and a single status for all permanent members, including the right of veto.

Even if it must be acknowledged that cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations has grown and developed in recent years, particularly in Africa, it is still far from having reached its full potential. To this end, I would like to make the following observations as we look for ways to strengthen the complementary partnership between these institutions.

First, we must establish a sustainable funding mechanism for the peace operations led by regional organizations, including the African Union. In this regard, we would like to thank all contributors to the African Union Peace Fund. Secondly, cooperation between the Security Council and these organizations must be strengthened, with an emphasis on harmonizing their agendas and objectives through more regular meetings, so as to establish effective and permanent coordination. Finally, it is important to ensure that countries on the Security Council's agenda or in conflict play a central role in the discussions and decision-making process concerning them at the Council level. This is all the more necessary for African countries insofar as African issues constitute the majority of the subjects dealt with by the Council.

The Niger firmly believes that strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has become an urgent necessity today for providing effective and appropriate responses to the crises and conflicts that the world is facing.

Annex 17**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Anna Evstigneeva**

[Original: Russian]

We thank the President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for convening today's debate. We also thank the incumbent Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, and former Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon for their substantive briefings.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is an inalienable part of the current agenda of the Security Council. We favour strengthening interaction between these entities, on the basis, first of all, of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, according to which the activity of regional organizations must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

One can hardly imagine how crises could be resolved without the participation of regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union (AU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the League of Arab States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The aforementioned mechanisms should complement the efforts of the United Nations, while working within the scope of their areas of responsibility and their effective mandates. In most cases, they have a better knowledge of the situations on the ground than the United Nations does, and they should therefore play a leading role in finding ways out of conflict.

We would like to underscore that priority should be given to settling disputes by peaceful means, with any coercive measures having to be duly authorized by the Security Council.

In view of the fact that more than half of the issues on the Security Council agenda are related to Africa, a further coordination of efforts of the United Nations and the African Union seems only natural. We therefore welcome the adoption, in 2017, of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, as well as the convening of annual consultations of the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa and New York by rotation.

We fully support the "African solutions for African problems" approach. Specifically, we commend the mediation efforts undertaken by the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to stabilize the domestic political situation in the Republic of South Sudan. We welcome the successful completion of the United Nations-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur and keep close track of the activity of the African Union Mission in Somalia, which is operating in unprecedentedly harsh conditions. We fully support the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in its fight against the terrorist threat in the Sahara-Sahel subregion.

The cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN deserves great praise. We welcome Viet Nam's efforts aimed at promoting this cooperation, particularly in its capacity as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. ASEAN ranks among the most efficient integration associations and a key driver of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. We support promoting ASEAN's central role in regional affairs. We note that the Association is currently preparing for a special summit and hope that the event will yield tangible results.

There is a great potential in terms of ASEAN-SCO cooperation within the United Nations framework to explore. Since the two organizations are both focused on similar tasks related to promoting security and sustainable development in Asia, we believe it is important that their dialogue and practical cooperation be enhanced. It would be reasonable to consider convening a special high-level ASEAN-SCO meeting at the United Nations with a view to addressing security issues.

In addition, we have a positive view of the level of cooperation that exists between the United Nations and the SCO. Still, we believe these two organizations should further step up and diversify their ties and preserve and carry on the tradition of having the United Nations leadership participate at key SCO events.

We also have a positive view of the interaction of States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) at the United Nations. We traditionally favour enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO on the peacekeeping track, and we reiterate our readiness to create conditions that would enable the CSTO to join the United Nations peacekeeping operations in practical terms. Furthermore, it is important to note that the CSTO should interact with regional organizations and mechanisms in accordance with the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, rejection of confrontation and conflicts, and the peaceful resolution of international disputes.

We attach great importance to fostering constructive interaction between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The activities of the Commonwealth are designed to promote decision-making at the international level, which confirms our shared commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The Russian Federation consistently advocates strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE on the basis of Chapter VIII of the Charter and the OSCE Permanent Council Declaration of 2006 on cooperation with the United Nations. This organization is faced with very difficult tasks, including resolving the internal Ukrainian conflict, promoting the Nagorno Karabakh settlement and giving new impetus to the 5+2 negotiations on Transnistria. We hope that the OSCE will carry on with the role it is playing as a fair broker.

We will not respond to the inappropriate remarks made by our Estonian colleagues at the beginning of today's meeting (annex 4). Estonia is apparently trying to play the role of chief Russophobic State in the European Union.

In conclusion, Russia is an unflagging supporter of full-fledged cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations across the globe. It is our understanding that these organizations can and should play a meaningful role in promoting multilateralism as a fundamental building block of international relations and in developing truly equal relations and partnerships between States.

Annex 18**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations**

I am very pleased to participate at today's open debate on behalf of Brunei Darussalam and as the 2021 Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

At the outset, I wish to convey our appreciation to Viet Nam for inviting Brunei to today's debate, and we congratulate Viet Nam on the initiatives it has undertaken in the presidency of the Security Council this month. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey to the President my warm congratulations on his recent election as President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

Brunei is pleased to address the Security Council, alongside the Chairs of other regional organizations, on our cooperation with the United Nations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution.

For us in South-East Asia, 2021 has been an important year with many challenges, as we look to swiftly recover from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, advance towards the shared goals we set forth in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and contend with regional developments of shared concern. It is during such times, however, that we in ASEAN have learned to truly value the benefits derived from over 50 years of community-building efforts that foster confidence, trust and unity in our region.

In that regard, Brunei Darussalam has chosen the theme of "We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper" for our chairmanship of the Association, under which we are focusing on harnessing the caring nature of our peoples, preparing ASEAN for the future and enabling sustainable prosperity in a resilient region. We are essentially striving to overcome challenges together, find new opportunities for the region and build our collective resilience to better respond to future uncertainties.

ASEAN has withstood the test of time and, over the years, has touched millions of lives, lifting many out of poverty and ushering in decades of prosperity, development and peace. Much of this was achieved as a result of the continuous engagement and dialogue between ASEAN member States at all levels.

The United Nations has played an important role in ASEAN's history, particularly by supporting our work to stave off conflicts through preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures. An example of this was the peacebuilding that was undertaken between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Indeed, such situations have occurred on numerous occasions in our region and show the need for close and coordinated ASEAN-United Nations efforts aimed at realizing the shared goal of peace and stability.

It is my sincere wish that similar close cooperation with the United Nations can continue, especially as we observe the current developments in one of the member States of ASEAN, namely, Myanmar. For ASEAN's part, we have called on all parties concerned to seek a peaceful solution and pursue constructive dialogue, reconciliation and a return to normalcy, in accordance with the will of the people of Myanmar and in the interests of the people of the country. ASEAN is ready to assist Myanmar, including through the good offices of the Chair of ASEAN and of the Secretary-General of the Association, in a positive, peaceful and constructive manner. We hope that the States Members of the United Nations and the Organization itself will also continue to support ASEAN in this work.

ASEAN's work with the United Nations is robust, wide-ranging and comprehensive, as articulated in the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration

on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations (2021-2025). We also have secretariat-to-secretariat cooperation and a road map to guide our joint efforts aimed at fulfilling the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Looking to the future, there is much potential for ASEAN-United Nations cooperation in further supporting confidence-building measures and conflict prevention in the region. However, as all regions are unique in their own ways, allow me to highlight key areas where ASEAN and the United Nations can place greater emphasis so as to achieve shared benefits.

To keep the region safe and secure, ASEAN, with the support of the United Nations, can continue to promote and uphold the rule of law and a rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at its centre. It is vital for countries to strengthen multilateral cooperation in order to effectively address current as well as emerging global and regional challenges of common concern and pursue areas of mutual interest. Among other things, that includes upholding the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to maintain peace, security and stability.

ASEAN's ability to overcome challenges comes from its shared commitment to engaging in dialogue and cooperation with its partners to that end. That is why, under our chairmanship, Brunei Darussalam has proposed a leaders' declaration on upholding multilateralism. We hope that this can be an inspiration for all to reaffirm the importance of upholding multilateralism for the overall benefit of our peoples, as well as ensure the continuity of peace and prosperity. We must not only recognize that global problems require global solutions but also act upon that.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us just how interconnected the world we live in is and how no country can face such challenges alone. Its impacts have cut across all facets of life, affecting our socioeconomic development while also exacerbating non-traditional security threats, such as cyberthreats and poverty. Amid the uncertainties that the pandemic has brought, our people, especially young people, have become more vulnerable, as they feel the weight of its impact more immensely, ranging from the loss of jobs to mental health issues. With those vulnerabilities, it opens up more opportunities for them to be exploited and influenced by extremist groups and radicals, and possibly even be recruited to carry out their work.

In that regard, it is important for countries to work together to ensure that they do not feel disillusioned or isolated in order to prevent such threats from happening. Specifically on mental health, ASEAN aims to leverage the experience of its external partners in addressing that issue, especially as we observe the psychological toll that multiple quarantines and restricted movements, as well as lockdowns, have had on the mental health of people due to the pandemic. Under the ambit of the East Asia Summit (EAS) this year, Brunei Darussalam is therefore proposing an EAS leaders' statement on mental health cooperation and will also convene an EAS Workshop on Mental Health to promote regional cooperation on the issue.

With more than half of ASEAN's population being under the age of 30, we are seeing the emergence of a new generation who recognize the value of peace within communities and between countries. Looking ahead, under the ASEAN Regional Forum, Brunei Darussalam will place greater emphasis on the role of young people in the future maintenance of peace and security. We are therefore planning to issue a joint statement on the youth and peace and security agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum this August and to convene a workshop on the youth, peace and security agenda later in the year, which we hope will be supported by United Nations experts.

The involvement of young people today will help to ensure that we build confidence for the future and have people who are always ready to engage in dialogue.

Over the years, much has been said about ASEAN, with some even calling the Association a talk shop. Nevertheless, that has not stopped us from communicating with one another. In fact, ASEAN's strongest attribute is that it is able to provide an inclusive platform for all to discuss issues of common interest and concern. It is when people stop communicating that misunderstanding and conflict can arise. We must not, and cannot, underestimate the importance of continued and measured dialogue.

That is why ASEAN will continue to engage each of its members and with all its partners positively and in good faith in order to continue strengthening its collaboration across all sectors for global peace and stability. We hope that our work during our chairmanship will take us forward to that end.

Annex 19

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ann Linde

I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to speak at the Security Council today. As underlined in the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 75/1), regional organizations play a crucial role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. They are often the first to identify risks of potential conflicts and systematic human rights violations. They bring an important understanding of the issues at stake.

Building on the experience of Sweden's tenure on the Security Council for the period from 2017 to 2018 and in line with our long-standing commitment to multilateralism and a rules-based international order built on international law, as Chairperson of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), I want to further strengthen the partnership between the OSCE and the United Nations.

Our focus as Chair is firmly on the OSCE principles and joint commitments, as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris For a New Europe and underpinned by international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Upholding them is a shared responsibility and should be in the interests of all States members of the OSCE, as they contain the elements needed to resolve conflicts and prevent future crises.

The women and peace and security agenda remains a key priority for both the United Nations and the OSCE. To build confidence in peace efforts, we need to ensure women's meaningful participation in political and conflict-related processes. That is an area where we need to change. As we committed to doing at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, we must place women and girls at the centre.

The OSCE's concept of comprehensive security acknowledges that security has politico-military, economic, environmental and human dimensions. The shared commitment of the 57 participating States of the OSCE to respect for international law, human rights law, democracy and the rule of law is central to maintaining lasting security and building confidence within and between States.

The Vienna Document 1990 of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and the Treaty on Open Skies enable transparency and confidence-building among participating States. This month, the value of the Vienna Document for military risk reduction was illustrated when its Mechanism for Consultation and Cooperation as Regards Unusual Military Activities was activated by Ukraine to seek information from the Russian Federation. That mechanism is an example of the value of active confidence-building through transparent exchanges. It is a mechanism that all participating States have agreed to apply.

The OSCE's autonomous institutions — the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities — all play important roles relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Their confidence-building, monitoring and reporting efforts are directed not only at State actors but also between civil society, communities, people and Governments.

The coronavirus disease pandemic further stresses the need for such confidence-building measures. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire and the adoption and implementation of resolutions 2532 (2020) and 2565 (2021), which are key to avoiding the exacerbation of conflicts as a consequence of the pandemic.

Close cooperation with the United Nations in the OSCE's field presences is crucial. They assist host countries in putting OSCE commitments and principles into

practice and fostering local capacities, thereby contributing to early warning and conflict prevention.

In the visits that I have made as Chairperson-in-Office, I have seen first-hand examples of the difference that our cooperation makes on the ground. Our largest field operation, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, enjoys a close working relationship with the United Nations agencies present in the country, in this case particularly related to the humanitarian and human rights situation, as well as gender equality.

The Geneva International Discussions, which address the situation following the 2008 armed conflict in Georgia, is another example of United Nations and OSCE collaboration to promote dialogue and confidence-building. Within that framework, the United Nations and the OSCE, together with the European Union, co-chair a dialogue and de-escalation mechanism, which has maintained dialogue, forestalled the re-emergence of armed hostilities and kept a vital focus on conflict-affected populations on the ground, not least through the women and peace and security agenda.

Listening to the discussion today, we are reminded that regional and subregional organizations are crucial partners to the United Nations in preventing conflict. In that regard, the Security Council can count on the OSCE's continued close collaboration with the United Nations in achieving our common objectives.

Annex 20**Statement by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States,
Ahmed Aboul Gheit**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, allow me, Mr. President, to thank you sincerely for your generous invitation to the League of Arab States to take part in this Security Council meeting, and also for presiding personally over this debate, which I am sure will contribute to strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and our regional organizations to safeguard international peace and security under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

We highly appreciate all efforts to strengthen such relations, and we value any sincere activity that recognizes and promotes the concept of complementary action between the United Nations and regional organizations to help maintain peace and security in their geographical areas, including the League of Arab States.

Today's meeting comes in the wake of another high-level meeting (see S/2021/66) presided over by the Republic of Tunisia in January on cooperation between the Council and the League. It also follows last November's dialogue with the heads of regional organizations, hosted by the Secretary-General, whom we thank for his sincere efforts to advance the peace, stability and development agenda around the world, including in our Arab region.

As noted by the speakers who preceded me, we are meeting today amid a common crisis-ridden and challenge-laden agenda that has been further complicated by the coronavirus disease pandemic. These exceptional circumstances have placed enormous burdens on our States and societies. They have greatly damaged the security and stability of many already fragile or troubled locations.

The pandemic has hit our Arab region — already burdened by wars, armed conflicts, refugees, internally displaced persons and other structural challenges — and affected the security and stability of several of its States. That requires all of us to redouble our efforts and complementary action to address the roots of these crises and put an end to the fighting that is tearing apart the social fabric of the States mired in conflict, as well as to maximize international solidarity to deal with the repercussions of the pandemic and the many human, economic and social losses it has left in its wake.

We invite the Security Council and other relevant United Nations agencies to establish strategic working partnerships with the League of Arab States and its member States to lay the foundations for security, stability and sustainable development in the Arab region, given our fundamental understanding of the problems afflicting our region and the United Nations system's fundamental responsibilities with respect to peacekeeping and international security.

The war in Syria has now entered its tenth year. The Syrian people continue to suffer from fighting, displacement, a refugee problem and unprecedented foreign and regional interference in this important Arab country. We all know that the chances of getting Syria out of this troubling cycle of conflict will only erode with time. The cost of rebuilding what has been destroyed by war is climbing by the day. The risk of the unrest spreading to neighbouring countries will continue to loom in the absence of a fundamental and integrated political resolution of this crisis.

The Yemeni people are also suffering a humanitarian tragedy that has become the world's biggest. The Houthis have stubbornly rejected all resolution efforts in recent years, most recently the Arab-backed Saudi initiative. Meanwhile, regional

interventions have made Yemen a platform to threaten the security of its Gulf neighbours, energy facilities and regional sea lanes.

By contrast, we have a degree of optimism in the wake of positive developments in the Libyan situation following the signing of the ceasefire agreement, the selection of the new executive branch and the setting of a date for national elections at the end of the current year. I have every confidence that we can take further joint action to support our Libyan brothers on their journey through coordinated action with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, as well as through the Libya quartet, which I shall have the honour of inviting to hold a meeting tomorrow at the level of the leaderships of the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the African Union and the European Union.

I would be remiss if I did not reiterate the commitment of the League of Arab States to supporting security, stability and recovery efforts in Somalia and advancing efforts to extract that country from the political situation it is going through. We also look forward to stepping up our joint action with the Council to support the important transition taking place in the Sudan and reinforce the Juba Peace Agreement between the Government and the armed movements.

The Palestinian question will remain a paramount priority for the League of Arab States and the collective Arab agenda. I would also be remiss here if I did not remind the Council of its fundamental responsibility for bringing about a just peace in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, based on a two-State solution, the enforcement of all resolutions already adopted by the Council concerning ending Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, the repudiation of all settlement activities, which are reprehensible and in violation of international law, and getting the peace process back on track to open up a horizon of freedom and independence for Palestinians.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate our appreciation for your initiative in holding this meeting and express our wholehearted welcome of the presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/9) agreed upon by the Council on expanding joint action with regional organizations. That is the approach that the League will continue to promote in addressing the crises and issues on our common agenda.

Annex 21**Statement by Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, in its capacity as observer**

I would like to congratulate Viet Nam on organizing this important debate and to thank you, Sir, for the invitation to the President of the European Council, His Excellency Charles Michel, to brief the meeting. He was unfortunately not able to be here today, but I will deliver the following statement on his behalf.

The European Union (EU) is a strong proponent of an effective multilateral system with the United Nations at its centre. We believe that everyone is best served by a rules-based international order where international law and international humanitarian law are upheld, human rights in all their dimensions are respected and conflicts are resolved peacefully through dialogue and diplomacy.

In that spirit, and as we speak, we are facilitating talks in Vienna on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action within Iran's nuclear dossier. Everything that we do is in close cooperation with, and always reinforces, the mission and the objective of the United Nations and its Charter. I want to pay tribute to all regional organizations represented here today and say how much we appreciate our cooperation. Regional and subregional organizations play a unique role in preventing and resolving conflict. With cultural proximity, strong networks with the parties to a conflict and, in many cases, legitimacy based on cooperation, trust and confidence, regional organizations are uniquely placed to catch early warning signs and add value in mediation.

I want to echo the words of the Secretary-General this morning with regard to Myanmar and the crisis driven by the military leadership there and give strong support to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in its efforts.

The very foundation of the EU is in its efforts to overcome division and promote peace. We have 64 years of finding and building consensus. To match the new realities and raise our level of ambition globally, the EU adopted the new Concept on EU Peace Mediation at the end of last year. It provides a solid basis for reinforcing our mediation efforts in support of multilateral and regional responses to crises, drawing on the EU's diplomatic reach and multifaceted presence around the world.

Many of our efforts, such as training and stabilization missions, in addition to financial support, including to the African Union Mission in Somalia, have been referred to by other speakers today. I am honoured to share some examples of our work with Member States, looking first to the Western Balkans. In the context of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, we have come a long way over the past decade. Bringing the two parties together through dialogue, we have now arrived at a stage where the EU is working with the parties to finally conclude the process.

In the EU's eastern neighbourhood, the recent hostilities in Nagorno Karabakh have highlighted the urgency to dedicate serious efforts and attention to so-called protracted conflicts. We have been reminded that protracted animosity is not synonymous with genuine peace. Continued confidence-building and dialogue efforts are essential. That is why the EU is undertaking complementary stabilization and peacebuilding actions to restore trust throughout our neighbourhood in cooperation with regional and international partners.

In Georgia, since the 2008 EU-brokered agreement, the EU has steered and co-chaired, with the United Nation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Geneva International Discussions — a unique dialogue mechanism involving Georgia, Russia, the United States, as well as the de

facto authorities of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These efforts are complemented by the EU Monitoring Mission, present on the ground since 2008, ensuring daily monitoring of the administrative boundary lines and holding regular Joint Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meetings on both sides, improving living conditions and contacts among people across the dividing lines.

In Ukraine, the EU together with its member States is the biggest contributor to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, monitoring the implementation of the Minsk agreements. The EU also assists the Ukrainian National Platform on Dialogue for Peace and Secure Reintegration Support, which enables exchanges on national unity and transitional justice.

Building on this experience, the EU is actively supporting peace processes around the world, from Yemen and Syria to the Central African Republic and Mali, to Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia, where the EU has been actively working through the International Contact Group to create conditions for a peaceful and democratic solution.

The EU is a partner of the Middle East Quartet and closely involved in the Libya quartet, which in itself is an illustration of the important role that regional organizations can play, bringing together the United Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the EU. With the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI, the EU is the only international actor monitoring the United Nations arms embargo.

Let me close by stressing how the success of any efforts to build confidence through dialogue is dependent on their inclusivity. Regional actors have a particularly important role to play in making sure that the voices of all groups in society, including women and youth, are listened to and taken into account in the interests of achieving sustainable peace.

Annex 22

Statement by the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Fatima Kyari Mohammed

On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission who could not join because of prior engagements, I wish to extend my appreciation to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for organizing this timely high-level open debate and for bringing together representatives of regional and subregional organizations to discuss our cooperation in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution.

I take this opportunity to express my very best wishes to His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of the Council, for a successful term in leading the Security Council. Also permit me to extend our solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We pray that they will be able to quickly recover from this tragedy.

I also thank Secretary-General António Guterres and former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for their briefings.

Given the complexities of the challenges we have faced with the ongoing global pandemic, it is even more crucial for us to identify how we can improve our cooperation through stronger multilateralism and confront our shared threats with a global, coordinated and united voice and common action.

Since the signing, by His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission and His Excellency António Guterres Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the Joint African Union-United Nations Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security in 2017 and the subsequent development framework, the institutionalization of joint efforts between the United Nations and African Union (AU) has been strengthened. These mechanisms and legal frameworks have indeed helped us to enhance our collaboration and coherence to the extent that today, consultation and coordination among the AU, regional economic communities/regional mechanisms and the United Nations to harmonize strategies and approaches have become the rule rather than the exception. This has enabled us to move from an ad hoc approach to a more structured and predictable one. With the relevant frameworks in place, we have effectively addressed in many cases the complex peace and security challenges in Africa.

Our enhanced partnership continues to be anchored on the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantages. Africa has achieved important milestones towards realizing the objectives of the AU flagship initiative — “Silencing the Guns: Creating conducive conditions for Africa’s development”, in line with the vision in Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations. The African Union has prioritized deepening its cooperation with regional economic communities and regional mechanisms on regional peace and security issues. Sustained efforts at the national, regional and continental levels have continued to be deployed in an attempt to address the fundamental root causes of violent conflicts.

We have increased operational cooperation and coordination by working in support of peace processes in the Sudan, Mali, the Central African Republic, Darfur and Somalia. Furthermore, our organizations continue to work together to support free, fair and credible electoral processes, strengthen good governance, promote the protection of human rights and prevent electoral violence across the continent. We will continue to foster national cohesion and inclusive political and electoral processes.

Increasing incidences of violent extremism, particularly in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin, Somalia and Cabo Delgado in Mozambique, have called for the need for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and AU mechanisms and regional bodies in our fight against the growing threat of terrorism and violent extremism. In this regard, the AU has underscored the importance of sharing experiences and best practices, as well as lessons arising from continental and regional mechanisms deployed against terrorism, violent extremism and other related transnational organized crimes. An overview in all regions, the Sahel in particular, shows every day massive killings of innocent women and children. The Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria face awful scenes of devastation. It is imperative that these countries benefit from a genuine, active and efficient solidarity. The Security Council has a fundamental responsibility in that regard. The African Union has huge hopes that it will undertake urgently appropriate measures to alleviate millions of people exposed to daily massacres.

One of the key challenges facing the United Nations-AU partnership has to do with United Nations-mandated AU-led peace support operations and the growing need to provide a sense of ownership to the African Member States of the United Nations. The Security Council should create the opportunity and a dispensation that will allow Africa to access predictable funding from United Nations-assessed contributions.

Though significant progress has been made between the AU and the United Nations at the highest level, challenges remain at the level of cooperation between the two Councils. While increased efforts of engagement between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council have helped the organizations achieve greater strategic convergence on issues that are of mutual importance, more needs to be done.

Almost 70 per cent of the agenda of the Security Council pertains to issues of peace and security in Africa. African States comprise nearly 28 per cent of the United Nations overall membership, providing significant regional political backing to the three African members of the Security Council (A3), presently comprised of Tunisia, the Niger and Kenya. The role of the A3 is to reflect and defend the views and concerns of the continent and the decisions of the African Union Peace and Security Council in the United Nations Security Council. It is, therefore, important to strengthen and unify the roles played by the A3 in channelling the Peace and Security Council-provided positions on peace and security issues in Africa and enhance the coordination between positions taken in Addis Ababa and New York.

The lack of clarity on how to operationalize the principles of non-interference and subsidiarity continue to inhibit the AU's ability to respond to and intervene in emerging crises across the continent. Member States continue to invoke the principle of non-interference on the basis of sovereignty, limiting the ability of the AU to address or prevent conflicts in a timely manner. The principle of subsidiarity, on the other hand, recognizes the primacy of regional organizations in leading interventions in Member States. The continued lack of clarity around these two principles has posed a critical challenge to coordination among the United Nations, the AU and regional economic communities/regional mechanisms.

I wish to conclude by thanking once again the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for convening this important meeting and calling upon the AU and the United Nations, together with other multilateral and regional organizations, to bolster our joint efforts aimed at sharpening our understanding of the challenges we collectively face and enhancing our partnership and collaboration to respond to these shared threats.

Annex 23**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations, Adela Raz**

At the outset, I would like to thank His Excellency the President of Viet Nam, Nguyen Xuan Phuc for presiding over today's very important meeting on the role of regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue, and in doing so, also thank his delegation for its efforts in organizing this very timely discussion. I also want to extend my appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres and former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for their insightful briefings.

Afghanistan has always stressed the value of multilateralism through regional and international cooperation as a fundamental element for the advancement of peace and security at home, in our region and the world.

The United Nations, as a trusted, democratic and representative body, has promoted powerful change on many issues, helped prevent the outbreak of war and provided a forum for the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is an example of how multilateralism can promote consensus, understanding and dialogue.

But the United Nations alone should not be the only forum to solve all issues. The current structures are at times limited when targeting specific problems that may require different working methods and approaches than those exhibited by the Organization.

In these circumstances, regional and subregional structures can complement and are complementing the work of the United Nations. But, as identified by many in this meeting, there is a need for the United Nations and particularly the Security Council to improve and redouble efforts to empower and engage with regional and subregional organizations to improve collaboration to solve our modern challenges and prevent conflicts.

Afghanistan, as a country affected by conflict, realizes the importance of multilateral cooperation between the United Nations and other organizations and the power of fruitful regional cooperation.

The advancement of our current peace efforts, the sustainable development of our country and the overall strengthening of the regional security architecture are dependent on close and coordinated cooperation at the regional and subregional levels. We strongly believe that without regional support and consensus for peace, we will not experience an enduring peace in Afghanistan, and as long as we do not see peace in Afghanistan, the region will continue to suffer from the spillover of conflict and instability. Regional cooperation and dialogue are, therefore, cornerstones of our foreign policy.

Located at the heart of Asia, Afghanistan is well aware of its potential as a hub of regional connectivity and a centre of integration. We have sought to capitalize on our potential through the launch of tangible Afghan-led processes, supported by regional and international partners, notably the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) and the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference. These efforts have created platforms for enhancing confidence-building through dialogue and discussion while delineating opportunities for regional economic development and security that can lead to long-lasting peace and stability, not only in Afghanistan, but in the wider region. These platforms are great examples of cooperation that involve not only Member States, but also the United Nations and regional and international organizations.

Despite challenges and setbacks, our efforts have already resulted in tangible results. The Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process has served as a proactive platform for the promotion of regional security, economic and political cooperation centred on Afghanistan through a set of eight clearly defined confidence-building measures. RECCA has seen the implementation of economic development initiatives, infrastructure and connectivity projects, such as the Central Asia-South Asia power project; the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline; the Lapis Lazuli corridor; the Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan Energy Supply Improvement Investment Program; the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan 500-kV powerline; the Chabahar Port; and the Five Nations Railway.

In addition, Afghanistan has also been engaged and active through its membership or observer status in other regional and international organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia and others beyond the region. The diversity of platforms that currently exist to target the many challenges that continue to face the region underscores the abundance of expertise and knowledge available on the ground.

The United Nations could further benefit from this expertise when engaging with issues that affect the region. Likewise, the United Nations capability and wealth of experience from around the world could prove vital to better operationalize these mutually reinforcing mechanisms. We see a great potential for a natural synergy for effective management, mitigation and preventive measures to address the current and emerging challenges around the world.

As we are tackling the many crises facing the world, including coronavirus disease, conflict and climate change, there is a need for coherent and coordinated efforts and strategies at the national, regional and international levels.

Finally, as States Members of the United Nations, we should continue to emphasize the need for greater cooperation among the Organization and the actors and institutions on the ground. The Secretary-General's reforms have created a blueprint for progress by energizing the role of regional and country offices. We must work to achieve consistency in our efforts, reduce overlaps and continue to work to achieve a more efficient United Nations.

Annex 24**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Viet Nam for organizing this open debate, as well as Secretary-General António Guterres, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the various representatives of participating regional and subregional organizations for their briefings.

In this regard, we wish to recall that, during its presidency as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Argentina organized, on 6 August 2013, an open debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security (see S/PV.7015), at which presidential statement S/PRST/2013/12 on the subject was adopted.

Our country considers the promotion and strengthening of regional partnerships to be of utmost importance for the settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Regional and subregional organizations can complement the work of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security as provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter, which invites the international community to make use of those fundamental tools in the promotion and pursuit of peace.

Regional and subregional organizations are in a better position to grasp the root causes of conflicts and take steps to open the door for dialogue, given their in-depth knowledge of regional context. As such, they can help forge a prompt response to emerging controversies and crises, contributing to the prevention or resolution of such conflicts. Such organizations constitute a natural recourse for States seeking to solve their differences.

Argentina values the space regional and subregional organizations provide for conflict resolution. It is there that the cultural affinities linking neighbouring and brotherly countries are most in evidence, thereby facilitating the dialogue necessary for reaching understanding and resolving conflict.

The United Nations and various regional and subregional organizations have already long engaged in prolific cooperation in field missions. However, both in the 2015 report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) and in the most recent statement of commitments under the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative highlight the need to continue improving collaboration, planning and coordination among the Organization's peace operations and those of regional and/or subregional entities authorized by the Security Council under Chapters VII and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations present in the same theatres. In this regard, we reiterate the need for a clear division of labour among the respective operations, particularly when the latter conduct counter-terrorist activities.

Likewise, Argentina highlights the relevance of the various alternative approaches pursued at the regional and subregional level with regard to matters of peace and security, in particular zones of peace and the positive contribution they can make at the international level. In this regard, we are part of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone, recognized in 1986 by General Assembly resolution 41/11, comprising three States of South America and twenty-one of Africa.

That resolution calls on all the States members of the Zone to promote regional exchange for social and economic development, environmental protection, the conservation of living resources, and the consolidation of international peace

and security. It also urges all States of all other regions, especially those States of military significance, to scrupulously respect the South Atlantic region as a zone of peace and cooperation, in particular by reducing and eventually eliminating their military presence in the region, refraining from placing nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction there, and refraining from extending rivalries and conflicts external to the region into it.

It should also be noted that the Zone has addressed the sovereignty dispute that the Argentine Republic maintains with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime spaces, calling on both parties to resume negotiations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX) and other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly on the question of the Malvinas Islands in order to reach a peaceful just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute as soon as possible.

Argentina actively participates in the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and consistently maintains a position of clear support for the establishment and consolidation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on the understanding that such zones significantly contribute to peace and security for the States they encompass.

Since its inception, OPANAL has maintained a strong commitment to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, starting with the Treaty of Tlatelolco, seeking to ensure compliance with the obligations arising from that instrument. The contribution of the Treaty of Tlatelolco has been real and effective, strengthening our regional commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament and, through its system of Protocols, effectively binding nuclear-weapon countries from violating the nuclear-weapon-free zone status of our region.

However, we must continue working for the withdrawal or revision of the interpretative declarations of the protocols to the Treaty in line with the text of the Treaty. In this regard, Argentina highlights OPANAL's continued efforts on this front.

At the same time, it is also appropriate to mention the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), as this year marks the thirtieth anniversary of its establishment. ABACC is the fruit of a strategic approach and confidence-building process that ultimately led to the signing in Guadalajara of the Agreement between the Republic of Argentina and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Exclusively Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy, establishing the Agency. It was a milestone in the history of bilateral and regional relations, establishing a binational safeguards institution unique in the world, which, in turn, reinforced the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free Latin America.

The safeguards work conducted by ABACC through an innovative mechanism for reciprocal inspections of nuclear facilities in both countries, in close collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, constitutes a central element of Argentine nuclear policy. As a nuclear non-proliferation body, ABACC provides concrete guarantees to the international community about the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programmes of both countries.

In terms of preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, regional and subregional organizations play an important role, as clearly reflected in the example of the Americas. In this regard, we highlight the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacture of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA), a binding multilateral agreement promoting the establishment of controls and regulations on the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms. Adopted in 1997, it is the first

such regional instrument and has been ratified by 31 of the 34 OAS member States, with Argentina among its member countries. Under its auspices, regular conferences of its States parties and meetings of its Consultative Committee are held.

Moreover, we must highlight the efforts of the Working Group on Firearms and Ammunition, founded in 2000 by the Southern Cone Common Market and its associated members, with the participation of Argentina. Since its establishment, the Working Group has provided a subregional platform for the sharing of experiences, harmonization of legislation and policy coordination. In this regard, it is timely to recall the thirty-seventh meeting of the Group will soon be held, under Argentina's pro tempore presidency.

Argentina's contributions, through our relevant ministries, to the regional and subregional groups mentioned and to conflict prevention in this context are based on our own experiences and capacities developed at the national level. This enabled us, in turn, to lead the negotiation and adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, which strengthened existing regional and subregional mechanisms.

When it comes to security and defence, Argentina has worked with determination and commitment to strengthen its national capacities to implement the agreements, treaties and conventions to which it is party. At the inter-American level, under the various existing bodies and programmes of the Organization of American States (OAS), Argentina submits its annual declaration on confidence- and security-building measures required of OAS member States, according to its consolidated list.

Subregional confidence-building processes facilitated the shift from a stance of confrontation to one of cooperation, making South America a zone of peace. Confidence- and security-building measures promoted trust among countries of the region, helped gradually eliminate conflict readiness and contributed to institutionalizing regular mechanisms for bilateral meetings on matters of defence and security.

Although women and girls account for a significant percentage of the victims of armed conflict, they continue to be excluded from peace negotiations and agreements and still do not enjoy equal participation in political decision-making. They are thereby underrepresented, their situations are invisible and their interests and needs ignored, putting them at greater risk of rights violations. Since women play essential roles in conflict prevention and resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction, regional and subregional organizations must harness their potential so as to ensure that women and gender are fully integrated across activities relating to peace and security.

As regional organizations have a major responsibility in this regard and must address it in depth, my region has taken very important actions in this regard. Argentina is thus part of the regional Quito Consensus (2007), that of Brasilia (2011) and that of Santo Domingo (2013), the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 (2016), and the Santiago Commitment (2020). Those instruments represent a regional commitment among the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to ensuring women's physical, economic and decision-making autonomy. In particular, under the Santiago Commitment it was agreed to promote measures to ensure the full and effective participation of women at all levels and in all stages of peace processes and mediation initiatives, as established in resolution 1325 (2000) and other resolutions relating to the women and peace and security agenda.

In the same vein, on 26 March in Buenos Aires my country launched the Southern Cone Regional Network of Mediators, incorporating countries of the

Southern Cone having presented or working towards national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In conclusion, as we did in 2013, we once again highlight the relevance of continuing to establish effective collaborative partnerships between the United Nations and relevant regional and subregional organizations with a view to swiftly responding to emerging disputes and crises, and to strengthening the conflict-prevention role of the United Nations. In this regard, the Security Council recognized, in the aforementioned presidential statement (S/PRST/2013/12), the important role of the good offices of the Secretary-General, and encouraged him to continue making use of mediation wherever possible to contribute to the peaceful settlement of disputes, coordinating efforts and collaborating closely with relevant regional and subregional organizations in this regard.

Annex 25

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

I would like to commend the presidency of Viet Nam for convening the open debate on the topic of “Enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution”. The presence of the President of Viet Nam, Nguyen Xuan Phuc, underscores the importance Viet Nam attaches to the theme of this Security Council meeting. I thank Secretary-General António Guterres, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the other distinguished briefers for their presentations on the contribution of regional organizations to promoting the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes through confidence-building and risk-reduction measures in cooperation with the United Nations.

Regional organizations, as regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, are entrusted with a crucial role in advancing peace and security and promoting conflict prevention, crisis management and conflict resolution through their unique toolbox of dialogue, mediation and confidence- and security-building measures.

Strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is key to addressing challenges to security, such as the threat or use of force in the face of destabilizing military build-up in violation of legally binding commitments in the field of arms control and involving foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries in conflicts, committing hate crimes on ethnic and religious grounds. These challenges have been further exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and its humanitarian, human rights and security implications. By magnifying violence, hate speech, intolerance and discrimination, the pandemic has posed a serious threat to peacebuilding gains and risks reinstigating conflicts or fomenting new ones.

We highly value cooperation in the framework of regional organizations, particularly within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in promoting and facilitating dialogue, cooperation, sharing best practices and building stronger capacities to effectively address threats to peace and security.

The OSCE — with its concept of comprehensive and indivisible security, wide array of military and non-military confidence-building measures, arms control and verification mechanisms, and tailor-made approach to conflicts through appropriate mediation formats — has been called to promote peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region.

We will also continue to support and contribute to the regular interaction and exchanges between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization aimed at responding to a wide range of threats and challenges, including combating drug-trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime and countering international terrorism, including the problem of travel of the foreign terrorist fighters to conflict zones.

While in many parts of the world, the Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire has led to a reduction in tension, in our region the global crisis caused by the pandemic has been instrumentalized to unleash violence, mass atrocities and destruction. The premeditated large-scale war launched by Azerbaijan in September 2020, with the direct support of Turkey and the involvement of foreign terrorist fighters, has been the biggest military escalation amid the pandemic.

There was no shortage of early warning signs of the long-standing objective of Azerbaijan to resolve the conflict by force. Instead of committing in good faith to the

peace process under the auspices of the internationally mandated negotiation format of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship, Azerbaijan resorted to an uncontrolled and unabated military build-up and unnotified, large-scale military exercises jointly with Turkey, in violation of its obligations under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document of 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, promoting anti-Armenian hatred and glorifying hate-crime perpetrators.

Azerbaijan has continually failed to respect its obligations under the ceasefire agreements of 1994 and 1995 with Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia, rejecting the proposals of the Minsk Group co-Chairs on risk-reduction and confidence-building measures, in particular the establishment of an investigative mechanism into ceasefire violations, the expansion of the number of international monitors and their activities, refraining from provocative actions, including the use of snipers and subversive groups, and advancing positions along the line of contact and the State border.

We value the continual support by the United Nations for the central role of the OSCE Minsk Group co-Chairs in addressing the consequences of the aggression against the people of Artsakh.

It is important to call for and demand full compliance by Azerbaijan with its obligations under international humanitarian law and the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, particularly with respect to the immediate and unconditional return of all prisoners of war, civilian hostages and detained persons.

The consolidated engagement of the internationally mandated format of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship is paramount for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict on the basis of the principles and elements developed over the years, including the equal rights and self-determination of peoples.

Annex 26**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations, Mitchell Fifield**

Australia thanks Viet Nam for its leadership in promoting cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, both in the Security Council and as the immediate past Chair of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2020. Australia wishes to underline the importance of continuing and enhancing the engagement between the United Nations and all regional organizations that play a key role in upholding the rules-based multilateral system.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has shown, profoundly, the importance of international cooperation through the rules-based multilateral system. That shared crisis is a reminder that many problems are best solved or, indeed, can be solved only through cooperation.

Our multilateral institutions — global and regional — are experiencing strain from shifts in global power, technological disruption and complex security, health and economic challenges. Australia is committed to working in and with multilateral institutions to ensure that they are fit for purpose, effective, open and transparent and accountable to Member States, and promote dialogue and cooperation that support the rules, norms and standards that underpin our shared peace, stability and prosperity.

Australia is a country of the Indo-Pacific region. South-East Asia is on our doorstep and sits at the heart of the Indo-Pacific — strategically, economically and diplomatically.

For more than 50 years, ASEAN and the ASEAN-led regional architecture have played a critical role in facilitating dialogue on pressing regional challenges, creating habits of cooperation and reinforcing rules and norms of behaviour and of free and open markets that support a peaceful, inclusive, resilient and prosperous region. The conclusion of the ASEAN-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in 2020, the world's largest free-trade agreement, will support a stable, predictable economic environment for the recovery of trade and investment in the Indo-Pacific and serves as just one example of ASEAN's leadership to support the rules-based multilateral system.

As ASEAN's longest-standing dialogue partner since 1974 and a strategic partner since 2014, Australia remains committed to enhancing dialogue and deepening practical cooperation with ASEAN. We warmly welcome the efforts of ASEAN and the United Nations to deepen cooperation and further strengthen the multilateral system through the Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations, as articulated by ASEAN leaders and the United Nations Secretary-General at the ASEAN-United Nations Summit held in November 2020.

Through the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership, practical cooperation and Australia's active engagement in ASEAN-led regional forums, including the East Asia Summit as our region's premier forum for leader-led discussion of strategic challenges, Australia stands ready to support enhanced ASEAN-United Nations cooperation.

Australia stands with ASEAN as it leads the regional response to the crisis in Myanmar. Australia is deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in the country and condemns the violence being perpetrated against its people. We welcome ASEAN's plans to hold a leaders' meeting on Myanmar this week and hope that this leads to a positive outcome for the people of Myanmar.

Annex 27**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, Yashar Aliyev**

At the outset, I would like to commend Viet Nam for having convened this important open debate and for submitting the concept note on the topic (S/2021/297, annex).

Peoples throughout the world continue to suffer from wars and their devastating consequences, often aggravated by racist ideologies, incitement to ethnic and religious hatred and the dissemination of fake historical narratives. Terrorist and related activities, transnational organized crime, the current coronavirus disease pandemic and the hazards of climate change are also exacerbating the challenging security environment.

Most conflicts and post-conflict situations are regional, and cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations is essential for the promotion of the purposes and principles of the Organization. At the same time, as the concept note points out, a great number of preventive measures have not been able to show their full potential owing to the absence of political will on various occasions. Each situation requires an impartial and thorough analysis and assessment to prevent or mitigate the risks of resurgence of conflicts and crises.

Thus the causes of failed peace efforts at the regional level include instances of the apparent misuse of regional organizations by violators of international law as a shield for consolidating military gains. In that regard, it is critical that the regional and subregional arrangements involved in conflict-settlement processes strictly comply with the established principles of effective mediation, such as respect for international law and agreed mandates, the consent of the parties concerned and the impartiality of mediators. It is abundantly clear that mediation does not take place in a legal vacuum and that the mediators do not have totally free rein.

As is well known, at the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992 Armenia unleashed a full-scale war against Azerbaijan. As a result, a significant part of the territory of Azerbaijan was occupied, tens of thousands of civilians were killed, all captured areas were ethnically cleansed of more than 700,000 Azerbaijanis, and hundreds of cities, towns and villages in my country were plundered and razed to the ground.

In 1993, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), condemning the use of force against Azerbaijan and the resulting occupation of its territories, reaffirming respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory and demanding the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from all the occupied territories. A series of Security Council presidential statements adopted between 1992 and 1995 and numerous documents of other authoritative international organizations are framed along the same lines.

The aforementioned resolutions of the Security Council also formed the basis of the mandate of the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) — later the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — and its co-Chairs and provided the framework for the settlement of the conflict. Thus in their decision adopted at the CSCE Budapest Summit, held on 5 and 6 December 1994, the participating States, including both Armenia and Azerbaijan, inter alia

“confirmed their commitment to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and welcomed the political support given by the Security Council to the CSCE’s efforts towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict” (*A/73/835, annex II, p.3-4*).

However, Security Council key demands, including in the first place the withdrawal of the occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, have not been implemented by Armenia, and the mediation efforts conducted within the framework of the CSCE/OSCE have yielded no results.

On the contrary, Armenia has deliberately disregarded the resolutions of the Security Council and has never engaged faithfully in negotiations but instead has directed all its efforts at colonizing the seized territories under the cover of ceasefire and peace process. Moreover, the leadership of Armenia has regarded and publicized the aggression against Azerbaijan as a “glorious victory”, venerated war criminals and convicted terrorists as national heroes, overtly promoted the outrageous ideas of ethnic incompatibility and incited the youth and future generations to new wars and violence.

The lack of adequate international reaction to the acts of aggression and unlawful activities committed by Armenia; attempts to maintain “a reasonable balance” instead of calling a spade a spade; and the notorious double standards and selectivity applied with regard to the universally recognized obligations and commitments under international law have only encouraged Armenia to continue to stick to its guns and contributed to its sense of permissiveness.

Another act of aggression, committed by Armenia on 27 September 2020, was the logical consequence of the impunity it has enjoyed for more than 30 years. Even the devastating impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic has not prevented Armenia from engaging in armed provocation. The combat actions that followed lasted for 44 days.

As a result of the counteroffensive operation undertaken and successfully accomplished by the armed forces of Azerbaijan in the exercise of the inherent right of self-defence, some 10,000 square kilometres of the territory of Azerbaijan, along with more than 300 cities, towns and villages of Azerbaijan, were liberated from occupation.

The statement made by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation, signed on 10 November 2020, has put an end to the almost three-decade-old armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and set agreed parameters for establishing a durable peace in the region. On 11 January 2021, the leaders of the three countries signed another joint statement aimed at implementing a number of practical steps to remove obstacles to economic and transport links in the region.

The new situation paves the way for hundreds of thousands of forcibly displaced persons to return to their places of origin in safety and dignity and for building peace, consolidating stability and restoring peaceful coexistence. Our priorities include the restoration, reconstruction and reintegration of the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan and ensuring equality among all their residents, including those of Armenian origin, without distinction of any kind, within the constitutional framework of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The end of the war also offers real prospects for the normalization of inter-State relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan based on mutual recognition and respect for each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders. Azerbaijan expects that the international community, including the relevant regional organizations, will support those efforts, which are aimed at consolidating peace, security and stability in the region.

Annex 28**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations**

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to extend my wishes to it for a very successful tenure.

I thank you, Mr. President, for this timely reflection on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution. This is an issue that we see as central to enhancing the reach and effectiveness of the United Nations and one that has its roots firmly grounded in the letter and the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Regional and subregional organizations continue to play a unique role in the peaceful settlement of disputes, thus fulfilling a key role with respect to the United Nations, including through preventive diplomacy, confidence-building and mediation. In many situations they have proved to possess deep knowledge, unique insights and strong local networks, which have been critical to building lasting peace. Meanwhile, the United Nations has a universal membership and legitimacy, long experience and operational capacity. A synergetic relationship between them represents a natural basis for moving forward in the process of fulfilling the shared global objectives of a safer and more peaceful world for all.

In that connection, it is imperative to learn from the lessons of the collaboration between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to build ever more innovative and flexible partnership arrangements that draw on one another's respective strengths, leverage comparative advantages and enhance complementarities.

In that regard, United Nations reforms must put an end to silos, duplication and fragmentation of efforts as well as ensure greater coherence within the United Nations system, at a time when the Organization needs to respond to multifaceted security challenges. Achieving such objectives within the United Nations system can only serve to better the scope and effectiveness of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

Egypt attaches great importance to all efforts aimed at deepening and expanding partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. During its recent chairmanship of the African Union, Egypt launched the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development as an inclusive platform for exchanges between a wide range of stakeholders aimed at formulating actionable recommendations to further, inter alia, the African Union-United Nations strategic partnership.

Last March Egypt hosted the second edition of the Aswan Forum under the theme of "Shaping Africa's New Normal: Recovering Stronger, Rebuilding Better". The Forum was attended by high-level United Nations officials and discussed means by which Africa can rechart its course towards achieving peace and development post-coronavirus-disease through decisive leadership, innovative solutions and robust partnerships. It also reaffirmed the imperative to accelerate a paradigm shift from crisis management towards nationally owned prevention and resilience in the face of the systemic risks and structural weaknesses.

Such an approach, we believe, creates a solid platform for the development of the capacities of regional organizations so as to make them more efficient in regional conflict prevention and more effective partners in cooperating with the United Nations.

As the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Egypt has included partnerships among its priorities. The PBC, under our chairmanship, is committed to continuing to invite representatives of regional and subregional organizations to share their perspectives and enrich its deliberations.

The role of the Peacebuilding Commission cannot be overstated. With its unique advisory role and its bridging and convening powers, the PBC is well positioned to bring together partners inside the United Nations and outside, including regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions. By doing so, the Commission contributes to enhancing cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with a view to ensuring better strategic, policy and operational coordination and coherence of efforts for better, more effective and sustainable results.

Despite the progress achieved thus far, more needs to be done to achieve meaningful cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, particularly with regard to addressing the capacity and resource gap between the two institutions. The lack of adequate financing and resources remains a critical challenge to the realization of the full potential of that cooperation, to which we are fully committed.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate our thanks to the Vietnamese presidency for convening this important open debate.

Annex 29

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, Taye Atskeselassie Amde

Let me first congratulate you on Viet Nam's recent assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and thank you for organizing this important open debate on "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security". We also thank Secretary-General António Guterres, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and representatives of regional and subregional organizations for their insightful briefings.

The importance of multilateralism and robust global cooperation has never been greater. The coronavirus disease pandemic has ravaged our societies and economies. It has also made clear our collective vulnerability and interdependence. The need for greater cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is especially important in the African continent.

We take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres and the Council for their continued commitment to strengthening the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU). We hope our debate today will build the necessary momentum for translating our stated commitments into concrete action, including in the context of post-pandemic rebuilding to protect and sustain hard-won development gains towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Recent discussions about the AU-United Nations partnership have focused largely on the issue of financing for AU peace support operations. Indeed, the United Nations and the AU have disparate conflict prevention, management and resolution capacities. It is only through complementarity that we can sustainably resolve the many conflicts that make up the bulk of the Council's agenda. To that end, AU member States share the burden by mobilizing resources for the AU Peace Fund. It remains critical to translate our commitments into action and ensure predictable, flexible and sustainable financing for AU peace support operations. We urge the Council to take concrete steps in that regard.

However, it is equally important to underline that the financing issue is but one aspect of the United Nations-AU strategic partnership. As we continue to seek innovative financing solutions, we must also consider the full range of possibilities for cooperation between the two organizations across the range of possible responses to the conflict cycle. The African Peace and Security Architecture has five pillars across the peace continuum, including mediation and preventive diplomacy. The United Nations and the AU can do more to boost the institutional capacity of the AU and subregional organizations in order to strengthen those tools.

In that regard, we urge closer collaboration and strategic dialogue, partnerships and more regular exchanges of views at the working level in order to strengthen our preventive diplomacy capacities. More needs to be done to enhance the early-warning, conflict-prevention and preventive-diplomacy efforts of the AU and subregional organizations like the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

In that context, we take note of continued progress on the annual consultative meeting with the AU Peace and Security Council, as well as in joint field visits by senior officials, more regular exchanges of information, enhanced consultations on mandates and mandate renewals and greater collaboration between the Secretariat and the AU Commission. In responding to challenges, we must always be guided by the Charter of the United Nations, which, among other things, calls for parties

to “resort to regional agencies or arrangements” as the first step in the settlement of disputes. In recent years, in recognition of the AU’s comparative advantages and in deference to the principle of subsidiarity, the Council has expressed support for African solutions to African problems. It is important that the AU’s comparative advantages be used optimally as a first recourse in responding to conflicts in Africa. The Council must therefore always strive to ensure that this noble motto is not forgotten and reduced to a mere slogan.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to say a few words about the situation in my country.

First, let me underline that the Ethiopian Government understands its primary responsibility of ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens, as obligated by its Constitution. It must also be crystal clear that the Government has a duty to protect and enforce the constitutional order. It is often forgotten that Ethiopia was forced to conduct a law-enforcement operation after our national defence forces were attacked and demobilized.

Secondly, the Ethiopian Government takes seriously allegations of human rights violations and sexual violence. In that regard, a multi-agency task force has been set up and deployed to investigate the allegations. Furthermore, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission signed an agreement with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to jointly conduct investigations in order to ensure accountability and bring perpetrators to justice. Those found responsible for abuse will be held accountable to the full extent of the law. We must await the results of the investigations without prejudging and must refrain from declaring or assigning blame until then.

Ethiopia is determined to rebuild the region by addressing the humanitarian needs of the people of Tigray, restoring infrastructure and services and, most important, deterring conflict-related sexual violence and providing the necessary support to victims. We call on the international community to rally behind the Government in its effort to respond to the ever-increasing humanitarian needs throughout the country by scaling up a wide range of assistance in order to meet the needs of the affected population.

Above all, we urge the members of the Council to respect the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity of Ethiopia. In the content of today’s open debate, we appeal to all to recognize and support the positive steps taken by the Government of Ethiopia and by regional leaders and organizations.

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

We thank the presidency of Viet Nam for convening today's high-level open debate.

Regional organizations have a special role in conflict prevention, post-conflict recovery, reconstruction and development, as they are better equipped for dealing with the peculiar challenges posed by regional and subregional contexts. Enhanced coordination between regional organizations and the United Nations can serve as a cornerstone for developing a peaceful and secure world.

When it comes to our region, deepening practical cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is of vital importance. As the world's largest regional security organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE has at its disposal a useful toolbox for preventive and early-warning purposes.

The role of the Council of Europe in monitoring and identifying needs related to the protection of human rights is also critical in the regional context, especially in conflict and post-conflict situations where the risk of grave human rights violations can jeopardize post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding. Having said that, we highly value the consolidated reports provided by the Council of Europe's Secretary General, as well as the decisions adopted by its Committee of Ministers' Deputies on the security and human rights situation in the Russia-occupied regions of Georgia.

Russia's aggressive behaviour towards its neighbours over the past three decades has significantly damaged Europe's security architecture. The ongoing illegal military aggression and subsequent occupation of certain regions of Georgia, as well as the occupation and annexation of integral parts of Ukraine's sovereign territories, remain a cause for alarm for the international community.

In that context, we are extremely concerned about the growing number of ceasefire violations by Russia recently, including incidents in eastern Ukraine that resulted in fatalities, and the unprecedented military build-up of the Russian military forces along Ukraine's eastern border and in the illegally occupied Crimea, Ukraine. Russia's refusal to provide sufficient information about these unusual military activities, as required in chapter III of the Vienna Document, is yet another attestation of Russia's disregard for its international commitments.

Russia's destructive behaviour in the region is further reflected by its hampering conflict prevention and conflict resolution, including blocking international security and monitoring mechanisms on the ground. Soon after the full-scale military aggression against my country, Russia withdrew support for the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia — despite the Missions' invaluable work in conflict prevention and conflict resolution, as well as in creating fertile ground for confidence-building between the conflict-torn communities.

Moreover, Russia has also refused to allow access to international security mechanisms established pursuant to the European Union-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement, namely, the European Union Monitoring Mission. Despite the mandate established to monitor compliance with the agreement by both sides on the whole of Georgia, within its internationally recognized borders, the Russian Federation — exercising effective control over the occupied territories — is denying the Mission access to Georgia's Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions.

Another area where Russia demonstrates its resistance to conflict resolution is the Geneva international discussions — a format co-chaired by the European Union (EU), the United Nations and the OSCE, and launched in order to implement the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement between Russia and Georgia. Despite the ongoing efforts of Georgia, the co-chairs, their respective organizations and the United States over the past 13 years, no progress has been made due to Russia's lack of political will. Moreover, Russia has been deliberately hindering the potential for progress by politicizing purely humanitarian issues and obstructing meaningful discussions.

Unfortunately, the Geneva international discussions format has not yet been fully utilized, including with respect to United Nations-OSCE cooperation in conflict resolution. Despite this grim context, Georgia remains committed to peaceful conflict resolution and confidence-building measures.

In conclusion, let me once again use this important platform to call on Russia to cease its aggressive actions and provocations against my country and the wider region and to comply with the fundamental norms and principles of international law — first and foremost by beginning to implement the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement. That can happen only by increasing international pressure on Russia.

Annex 31

Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, Carolyn Oppong-Ntiri

Ghana joins other Member States in congratulating Viet Nam on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We also welcome the topic for this debate and are convinced that the focus on the theme “Enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution” is apt and will contribute to strengthening the international community’s resolve to address peacekeeping challenges.

As a top troop- and police-contributing country with a long and proud tradition in United Nations regional peacekeeping from 1960 to date, Ghana values cooperation and partnerships between United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in addressing peacekeeping challenges.

We recognize the progress made thus far to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers and peacekeeping, as a whole, through various reforms and initiatives. However, we remain challenged by existing and emerging threats, including complex and protracted conflicts, terrorism, cybercrime and climate change. Much more needs to be done in the light of the recent escalation of tensions and conflicts in many regions of the world, including the Sahel. The coronavirus disease pandemic has also exacerbated the humanitarian situation in conflict areas and further increased the hardships faced by our peacekeepers.

Ghana is concerned about the recent casualties among peacekeepers in various conflict zones, including the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad. The regrettable loss of lives among our peacekeepers should serve as a stark reminder of the importance of investing in peace operations and deepening cooperation and partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in order to protect our peacekeepers. Ghana pays tribute to the brave peacekeepers who lost their lives in the line of duty. Our hearts also go to all those who, amid these threats, give their lives to save the lives of others.

Conflicts are better managed when their specific context is understood. It is therefore our considered view that regional organizations have a crucial role to play in translating the general United Nations guidance into their specific regional contexts so as to ensure the peaceful resolution of conflicts. We therefore wish to emphasize the importance of enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in dealing with peacekeeping challenges. Enhancing cooperation in the current partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, like the African Union (AU), the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to mention but a few, remains paramount. These partnerships are key for the successful implementation of peacekeeping mandates.

We also note with appreciation the presidential statement of the Security Council on 4 December 2020 (S/PRST/2020/11), which underpinned the relevance of “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”. The statement recognized the efforts of African member States and subregional organizations, with the valuable support of the United Nations and other international partners, in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, notably through the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia, the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad basin and the Group of Five for the Sahel Joint Force, as well as the Nouakchott and Djibouti processes.

Furthermore, we support the view that the African Union's determination to rid the continent of conflicts can be realized if cooperation is sustained between the United Nations and the AU, as well as other regional and subregional groups on the continent. We recognize and welcome the support of member States of both organizations, which has contributed to significant gains in finding sustainable solutions to conflicts in Africa and moving the continent on a path towards achieving the goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the African Union Agenda 2063.

While recognizing the modest progress made in peacekeeping operations, we also note with concern the escalation of tensions in some conflict regions in recent times, which could partly be attributed to the absence of political will among the actors. Undoubtedly, one of the critical ingredients to effective cooperation and partnerships in peacekeeping is the primacy of politics. We therefore acknowledge the progress made in peacekeeping following the launch by the Secretary-General of the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative in 2018, and we also welcome the launch of A4P+ in March 2021, to further build on the progress made.

We endorse the priorities set out in the A4P+, including guaranteeing collective coherence behind a political strategy, ensuring the right capabilities and mindsets for peacekeepers and delivering accountability for the peacekeepers. The cooperation and support of Member States, regional and subregional organizations with respect to the new priorities will further accelerate progress in the realization of all the eight thematic areas of the Declaration of Shared Commitments.

Another critical factor in the peaceful resolution of conflicts is through the promotion of confidence-building measures (CBMs) and dialogue among the conflicting parties. CBMs involve agreements between the parties with regard to exchanges of information and verification of military, cultural and political activities in relation to the conflict. This kind of mechanism provides an opportunity to lessen fear, anxiety and suspicion among conflicting parties and is critical to deepening cooperation and partnerships towards the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

While calling for the renewal of commitments to CBMs in all their forms, we believe the political aspect of CBMs should not be ignored as they build confidence in the political system through such measures as power sharing, electoral reform and power decentralization. They foster inclusion and enable political exchange and learning among parties in conflict, which contributes to peaceful resolution of conflicts.

At the subregional level, as the current Chair of ECOWAS, Ghana continues to cooperate and lead interventions to bring stability to the subregion, including our role in the establishment of the transitional Government in Mali, which has brought some appreciable level of normalcy to the country. The mediation role played by His Excellency President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, with the support of other Heads of State, during the political crises in the subregion constitutes an example of what leadership, cooperation and partnership among stakeholders can do in solving regional impasses for the greater good of the subregion and the continent as a whole.

Going forward, Ghana welcomes the call to consider convening a dialogue with United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs officials and heads of various regional organizations to discuss ways to build synergies between the mediation structures in the United Nations system and regional organizations. That will allow for cross-fertilization of ideas in relation to the various regional methods including the ASEAN confidence-building approach to conflict resolution and those promoted by the AU and ECOWAS, just to mention a few.

Inclusiveness is essential to deepening cooperation and partnerships. In this regard, we endorse the full integration of women and gender perspectives into all

peace and security efforts. We therefore encourage Member States to increase the deployment of female personnel in peace operations in order to help in the peaceful resolution of conflicts and to give meaning to the two landmark decisions on women empowerment, namely, resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In conclusion, Ghana commends Viet Nam for organizing a debate on this very important topic. We assure the Vietnamese presidency of the Council and the international community of our commitment as current Chair of ECOWAS to continuing to promote and support initiatives and efforts aimed at deepening the cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and other regional groups. It is indeed the surest way to achieving peaceful resolution of conflicts and other global challenges of our time.

Annex 32**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations**

Guatemala would like to thank the delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam as President of the Security Council during the month of April 2021 for convening today's high-level open debate via video-teleconference. We would also like to thank all the briefers for their briefings.

My delegation takes this opportunity to highlight Article 2, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations, which paved way for dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes and which has influenced regional and subregional organizations from that point on. Guatemala considers the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to be critical to the prevention of the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict. Global and regional forums have provided important platforms for coordinating international responses to threats to peace and stability.

Regional and subregional organizations have shown that they have greater understanding of situations on the ground and therefore may be seen to be more legitimate mediators and conveners, given that local actors are likely to have a stronger commitment to reaching agreements and implementing their outcomes than more distant actors. These organizations also contribute to the joint analysis and effective strategic planning for conducting peacekeeping missions or special political missions, allowing for strengthened coherence between their political strategies, improving coordination in peacebuilding and ensuring the coherence and the complementarity of such efforts.

Guatemala highly values the role played by confidence-building measures, which are essential for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States. For this reason, on 7 September 2005, under the auspices of the Organization of American States, Guatemala signed the Agreement on a Framework for Negotiations and Confidence-Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala. This Agreement contributed to the fact that, on 7 June 2019, through a special agreement, Guatemala and Belize submitted *Guatemala's Territorial, Insular and Maritime Claim* before the International Court of Justice.

Thirty years ago, the Central American Integration System (SICA) was established with the fundamental objective of achieving a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, and it has, with the support of the United Nations, assisted the process of pacification and democratization in our region and traced the path towards sustainable development. Through its Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, it also contemplates a permanent programme of confidence-building measures for the States of the region.

During the second half of 2021, Guatemala will hold the presidency pro tempore of the SICA, which will concur with the celebration of the bicentenary of the independence of Central America, a historical milestone from which our modern, free, democratic and sovereign countries emerged. It will be an opportunity to intensify our efforts aimed at integration, and it will therefore be an opportunity to enhance our capacity to respond to the challenges of these difficult times.

Annex 33**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Mohammad Koba**

Allow me to thank Viet Nam for organizing today's meeting. We also thank the briefers for their insights.

Today's meeting provides us with the opportunity to better understand and learn best practices used in various regional and subregional organizations to enhance confidence-building and dialogue. Regional and subregional organizations are important building blocks for regional and global peace, security and development. Accordingly, Indonesia attaches great importance to the critical role the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plays in ensuring peace and stability in our region. On this note, allow me to highlight three pertinent points.

First, with regard to ASEAN's collective contribution to peace and security, the Association has played an indisputable role in preventing any of the situations arising in our region from becoming a conflict. ASEAN has developed a culture of dialogue and consensus-building as a means of reducing distrust and preserving peace and stability. The promotion and maintenance of peace and security, as well as cooperation in addressing traditional and non-traditional challenges, are undertaken through several ASEAN-led mechanisms.

ASEAN is also committed to resolving territorial and maritime disputes peacefully in accordance with international law. This is the so-called ASEAN Way. For this reason, we believe that much can be learned from ASEAN, and that the organization will be able to adapt to new challenges through strengthened dialogue with the United Nations and other regional organizations.

Secondly, with respect to promoting partnerships and the ASEAN Way, as our world becomes more interconnected, partnership between countries of regions in question and those outside the regions is vital. In this regard, I am pleased to say that the ASEAN partnership with the United Nations encompasses not only the political pillar, but also the economic and sociocultural pillars. I look forward to a strengthened ASEAN-United Nations partnership on various issues of common interests.

We seek to engage countries outside our region to cooperate with ASEAN on their contribution to maintaining peace, stability and prosperity in the region. We are also pleased with the accession of States to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, which serves as the code of conduct in governing inter-State relations in the region.

Indonesia also attaches great importance to the effective implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and its Plan of Action, as outlined by the ASEAN Vision 2025. The adoption of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which Indonesia initiated, embodies our resolve to ensure ASEAN unity, centrality and leadership in the evolving regional architecture.

Thirdly, with respect to the need for a comprehensive, constructive and strategic approach, the third Declaration of ASEAN Concord, adopted in 2011 and known as the Bali Concord III, emphasizes ASEAN as an integral part of the global community which seeks to respond to key global issues of common interest and concern. Nevertheless, building our sociocultural identity as a region is not an instant process, and the implementation of such a vision requires countries within and outside a region to work together on complex and delicate issues.

ASEAN follows the situation in Myanmar with utmost concern. ASEAN remains committed to and will continue its utmost efforts to helping find a solution

and assist Myanmar in a positive, peaceful and constructive manner, in accordance with the Charter of ASEAN and the Charter of the United Nations.

It is important for the United Nations, including the Security Council and the international community, to work in synergy with ASEAN to find solutions by creating conditions conducive for all parties to start communication, dialogue and reconciliation. Over the years, ASEAN has proved that it can bring peace, prosperity and solidarity in its own region and at the global level.

In the way forward, we envisage a larger role in sharing the ASEAN Way to address issues of common concern. We are part of the global community. As responsible members of global society, we will continue to contribute to finding solutions to global challenges.

Annex 34**Statement by the Office of the Permanent Observer for the International Organization of la Francophonie to the United Nations**

[Original: French]

As enshrined in the Charter of the Organization of La Francophonie (OIF), the States and Governments members of the OIF have entrusted La Francophonie with the mission of assisting in “the establishment and development of democracy, conflict prevention, management and resolution, and support for the rule of law and human rights”.

This action, which is designed to prevent and respond to crises and conflicts in the countries of the French-speaking world, is conducted in close cooperation with international partners, first and foremost the United Nations.

The contribution of the OIF to international peace and security was highlighted at the first open debate of the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and the OIF, held on 8 September 2020, under the Niger’s presidency of the Security Council (see S/2020/893). The introductory briefing by Her Excellency Ms. Louise Mushikiwabo, Secretary-General of La Francophonie, highlighted the following points.

The OIF is a regional organization within the meaning of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, but in reality is transnational since it brings together 88 States and Governments present on the five continents. It is a melting pot of cultural diversity, which has made cooperation and solidarity the guiding principles of its action, particularly in the political and diplomatic fields.

La Francophonie has specific assets: knowledge of the sociocultural and political contexts of French-speaking countries, the ties of trust established with local actors, and diversified networks of expertise that enable it to intervene with agility and as closely as possible to the needs.

In the context of the Security Council’s 8 September 2020 open debate, the Secretary-General of La Francophonie called for everyone to get involved to ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity is fully considered as a cardinal value of the multilateral system. Accordingly, in the context of today’s high-level public debate, the OIF is honoured to share the following thoughts and priorities as a contribution to reflect on the ways and means of strengthening trust and dialogue with a view to making preventive diplomacy more effective.

The importance of linguistic and cultural issues in international action in support of the prevention and peaceful resolution of crises and conflicts needs to be re-emphasized. The vitality and effectiveness of multilateralism depend on its capacity to allow for real dialogue among States. Multilingualism is at the heart of effective multilateralism because it allows the various human specificities and experiences, which are the basis of the richness of the multilateral system, to be valued. It is necessary to maintain balance, dignity and equality for all. International bodies are therefore essentially dedicated to dialogue and negotiation.

Good geographical and linguistic representation, as well as equality between women and men, are the conditions for confidence in multilateral action. They are the conditions for international action that is truly understood and accepted by host countries, as well as local populations and civil societies.

Languages are an essential tool for bringing international action closer to the people. They have an impact on substance and policy and are the precondition for national ownership of international commitments.

Crisis prevention and management efforts must be integrated into the collective and complementary dynamics for greater efficiency. The understanding of the strengths of the work of each international and regional organization should be deepened, and partnerships among organizations should be developed. Awareness of the specific characteristics and added value of each international and regional organization is a key element for deepening partnerships between organizations and for effective international action in preventing and resolving crises and conflicts.

The coordinated approach advocated by the French-speaking world is fully consistent with developing the networked multilateralism called for by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is precisely on the basis of such values that the Secretary-General of the OIF conducts preventive diplomacy actions, either directly or by deploying special representatives and envoys, to prevent the escalation of tensions and to facilitate dialogue among the parties.

The OIF has therefore been involved in the Central African Republic for several years in order to contribute, alongside its subregional, regional and international partners, to supporting the peace process since 2012. That commitment is ongoing and is being stepped up in the form of international support for the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, signed in Bangui on 6 February 2019.

Also in that spirit, the Secretary-General of the OIF took the initiative of involving the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth in the efforts of French-speaking countries to promote a peaceful settlement of the crisis in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon. The three leaders therefore made a joint visit to Cameroon in November 2019 to encourage the continued momentum of the dialogue initiated by the Cameroonian authorities through the Major National Dialogue of September to October 2019 and to support their Cameroonian partners. Those concerted efforts are continuing, together with the United Nations.

Since 2019, the French-speaking world has also been involved in seeking ways to support Haiti in overcoming the multidimensional crisis affecting that founding member of the OIF. A recent fact-finding and contact mission, sent by the Secretary-General at the beginning of March, met with all Haitian stakeholders to call for a constructive dialogue with a view to organizing the upcoming elections.

Finally, the French-speaking world is also working alongside Mali to support the ongoing transition process. The Secretary-General has appointed a Special Envoy to monitor the situation in the country. The OIF is acting in close cooperation with international partners on the ground — the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the European Union.

In the Sahel more broadly, the OIF has focused its efforts on close cooperation with the Permanent Secretariat of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) in the areas of governance, stability and combating radicalization and violent extremism. That partnership includes the establishment in 2021 of a youth radio station in the Sahel, which will broadcast to young people in the five G-5 Sahel countries to strengthen citizenship and the participation of young people in public debate.

With regard to supporting the democratic processes of States by drawing on the potential for local cooperation, the OIF provides structural support to the institutions of its member States that foster democracy, the rule of law and good governance. It promotes local cooperation, drawing on a pool of French-speaking experts, which has been strengthened in particular through its institutional networks.

That is a unique system, bringing together judicial, regulatory and mediation bodies, as well as organizations for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The aim is to enable the OIF to draw permanently on a large pool of skills and expertise that can be rapidly made available to member States in a spirit of sharing good practice. That substantive work helps to strengthen the institutional frameworks that are essential to democratic development.

The OIF is also very involved in supporting electoral processes in the French-speaking world. In many member States, electoral deadlines generate tensions that can lead to major political crises. The OIF has therefore developed a dedicated programme to support and structurally strengthen the capacities of the actors involved in preparing and holding elections — electoral commissions, constitutional courts, media regulatory authorities, political actors and civil society. The IOF's efforts seek to strengthen the capacities of those actors to manage the key phases of electoral processes, such as compiling electoral registers and reporting results and election disputes, thereby contributing to the holding of free, fair and transparent elections.

Annex 35**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Majid Takht Ravanchi**

The maintenance of international peace and security has a prominent place in the Charter of the United Nations, which, in turn, attaches great importance to the prevention of threats to the peace and the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Even though the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is conferred on the Security Council, a role is also reserved, under Chapter VIII of the Charter, for “regional arrangements or agencies” for dealing with such matters.

Taking into account the growing threats to regional and international peace and security, the use of the capacity of regional organizations in the prevention and peaceful resolution of international disputes and conflicts should therefore be duly taken into account. In our view, neither can the Council disregard the potential of regional arrangements in conflict prevention and resolution nor can such arrangements substitute for the Council. Therefore, resorting to regional organizations must be considered as a subsidiary and complementary means for the Security Council in discharging its Charter-based duties.

While we can recall the exemplary role played by certain regional organizations in confidence-building, promoting dialogue and preventing, or settling, international disputes at the regional level, it is quite obvious that the success of such efforts is, inter alia, dependent, to a large extent, on the actual technical, professional, legal and political capacities of the regional agencies concerned. Likewise, the independence, impartiality, professionalism and rules-based approach of the regional organization concerned is also key to the success and effectiveness of its efforts to enhance regional confidence and dialogue.

Accordingly, all regional arrangements or agencies that intend to undertake activities authorized under Chapter VIII of the Charter must act in full conformity with the Charter, strictly observe the principle of transparency and seriously avoid politicization and selective approaches. It must also be stressed that, according to Article 52, paragraph 2, of the Charter, activities authorized under Chapter VIII can be undertaken only with respect to members of the regional arrangements or agencies concerned and, of course, with the explicit consent of the relevant members.

Furthermore, such arrangements must not be abused by those members seeking to impose their will on the countries of the region concerned — both members and non-members of the regional agency concerned. Instead of building confidence, in practice that will lead to mistrust. In the same vein, as stipulated in Article 53, paragraph 1, of the Charter, “no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council”.

In addition to regional organizations, individual regional countries also have an important role to play in launching regional dialogue, building trust and confidence, settling disputes and preventing and resolving conflicts. That is of the utmost importance in a volatile region such as the Persian Gulf, where there is no regional organization encompassing all regional countries.

In that context, during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed the Hormuz Peace Endeavour, known as HOPE, the objective of which is to launch a genuine dialogue within the region, with the active and constructive engagement of all regional countries, based on mutual respect, inclusivity and adherence to common principles, such as dialogue,

mutual respect, respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders, the peaceful settlement of all disputes, rejection of the threat and use of force, non-aggression and non-intervention in the internal or external affairs of other States and rejection of, and non-participation in, coalitions and alliances against fellow States.

That initiative, which has so far received positive reactions from a number of regional countries, can indeed create a proper venue for all States of the Persian Gulf region to work together towards establishing a safer and more stable and prosperous region. The Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to fully engage in dialogue with countries of the region and the United Nations, within the context of resolution 598 (1987), to discuss all aspects of the HOPE initiative.

Annex 36**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations**

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union (annex 21).

Italy thanks the Government of Viet Nam for organizing this open debate. Redoubling conflict prevention efforts in the challenging times of the coronavirus disease pandemic requires focusing on the comparative advantages that make regional and subregional organizations better prepared for activating early-warning mechanisms and promoting confidence-building measures and dialogue.

Italy strongly believes that building strong partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, based on Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is key to an effective and efficient peace architecture. The partnerships with the African Union (AU) and the African regional economic communities are especially crucial, as the crises on the African continent still represent the majority of the issues on the Security Council agenda.

Italy has consistently underlined the importance of further strengthening the link between the United Nations and the African Union based on mutual respect, shared values and comparative advantages. Finding sustainable and long-term solutions requires strengthening African ownership. That is the reason that the United Nations should help to make the African Peace and Security Architecture stronger. It is worth noting that Italy is fully committed to supporting the Peace and Security Architecture with financial assistance, training and capacity-building programmes.

In that regard, it is also important to recall that Italy remains in favour of using United Nations assessed contributions for African-led peace operations, provided that appropriate standards are met in terms of troop preparedness, training, equipment, financial transparency, human rights compliance, conduct and discipline.

In that context, the issue of Africa's presence in United Nations institutions should be addressed. It is time to end the historical injustice against Africa in the Security Council. Italy, as a member of the Uniting for Consensus group, recognizes the basis of the African claim to be better represented in a reformed Security Council and wishes to strengthen cooperation with African countries on the important issue of reforming the Security Council in order to make it more representative, democratic, accountable, transparent and effective.

While fully supporting the strengthening of the United Nations-AU strategic relationship, Italy would also like to stress the importance of the triangular United Nations-EU-AU cooperation, which has already proved very effective on the ground. That triangular cooperation needs to be further deepened.

The United Nations and the European Union have a long history of cooperation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The EU and its member States have played a vital role in supporting the United Nations since its creation, promoting a rules-based international order. Italy fully supports the strengthening of that relationship, taking into account the complementarity of their actions, in the framework of the strategic partnership on crisis management and prevention.

Italy believes in a strong partnership between the United Nations and NATO, the relevance of which was most recently recalled in the statement issued by the Foreign Ministers of the States members of NATO on 23 and 24 March, as well as in closer cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which we actively promoted during our presidency of the OSCE in 2018.

It is also important to recall the long-term cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. There is a clear complementarity between the values and goals of the two organizations, particularly in the struggle for democracy, the rule of law and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In assuming the presidency of the Committee of Ministers later this year, Italy will work to further strengthen that relationship.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has proved to be an important actor in promoting trust and confidence among its member States and with other partners. As a development partner of ASEAN, Italy stands ready to support closer cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN.

In conclusion, it must be noted that effective collaboration between the United Nations and regional bodies should increasingly focus on the dimension of prevention. In that regard, we would like to reiterate Italy's full support for the Secretary-General's reform action and for the implementation of his Agenda for Peace in a coherent and global vision, yet based on a holistic approach that covers the pillars of security, human rights and development. Only a strengthened United Nations can effectively exercise its pivotal role in the multilateral system in promoting peace and security, human rights and sustainable and inclusive development.

Annex 37

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

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting, and I am grateful to the briefers for their insightful remarks.

More than a year has passed since the outbreak of the coronavirus disease, which continues to pose a serious threat to human security. Given the enormous impact of the pandemic, one of the most pressing actions for the international community to take should have been the full implementation of the global ceasefire that was called for by the Secretary-General and by subsequent Security Council resolutions. Sadly, in too many places, that has not happened. As one of the co-initiators of the statement in support of the Secretary-General's appeal, which was joined by 172 Member States and observers, Japan once again calls on all parties to conflicts to faithfully implement the global ceasefire, with the help of regional and subregional organizations, as appropriate.

In fact, important synergies in the pacific settlement of local disputes can be achieved if the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations work in a complementary manner, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Even during the pandemic, notable efforts have been made in that context. For instance, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) provided good offices in response to the situation in Mali last summer while working closely with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in Darfur and Somalia is another good example. Japan commends the African Union and subregional bodies in Africa, such as ECOWAS and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, for their strenuous efforts to realize peace and stability on the continent in partnership with the United Nations and other international partners.

Japan supports the enhanced role of regional and subregional bodies in the maintenance of peace and security, in line with the principles of the United Nations, such as the peaceful settlement of disputes and the rule of law. We believe these entities, together with the people and the Governments of the countries concerned, can and should play an indispensable role in sustaining and strengthening peace and stability by facilitating confidence-building measures and contributing to capacity- and institution-building.

Since its launch at the seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 2019, Japan has promoted the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA) and supported African regional and subregional bodies. Joining the Coalition for the Sahel, we announced a new humanitarian and development assistance package of about \$80 million at its ministerial meeting last month. Japan also supports peacekeeping training centres and extends assistance for human resources development in police and justice sectors in many African countries. Looking ahead to TICAD VIII, to be held in Tunisia next year, Japan will further support Africa's efforts under NAPSA.

In 2019, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) published the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific", which is intended to build strategic trust in the region. Japan and ASEAN have reaffirmed that the outlook and Japan's concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific region share fundamental principles, and Japan fully supports the Outlook. Japan and ASEAN will work together closely for peace and stability, including on conflict prevention and resolution, in the region. This month, Japan and Viet Nam co-hosted the meeting of the Experts Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations in the framework of the ASEAN Defense Ministers'

Meeting Plus. Both countries plan to hold a joint exercise on peacekeeping operations in 2023, which will contribute to United Nations peacekeeping. Japan has also supported the establishment and functioning of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management over the last decade, which has steadily contributed to peace and stability in the region.

Last but not least, Japan appreciates and welcomes the efforts made by ASEAN to resolve the ongoing situation in Myanmar. Japan is committed to playing its part, in close cooperation with partners in the region and beyond, in bringing about the early recovery of peace and the democratic process that reflects the wishes of the people of Myanmar.

Annex 38**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, Magzhan Ilyassov**

We express our gratitude to the Vietnamese presidency for organizing and presiding over this open debate on the theme “Enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution”.

Resolving issues of peace, security and conflict prevention has always been a priority for Kazakhstan, including during its membership of the Security Council in the period 2017 to 2018. Our country considers the issue of United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations a key priority in the area of international security and conflict prevention. This cooperation is of particular relevance against the background of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and amid a significant increase in international tension.

Therefore, the leading role of the United Nations in matters of world order must be strengthened and mobilized. In this regard, effective United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the area of conflict prevention plays important role. The issues of building confidence and mutually beneficial cooperation among continents and large regional organizations under the auspices of the United Nations are being updated.

Kazakhstan is the Chair of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA) for the term 2021 to 2022. CICA is unique multilateral platform aimed at creating a secure space on the Asian continent through dialogue, cooperation and confidence-building measures among member States. Presently CICA has 27 member States, accounting for nearly 90 per cent of the territory and population of Asia. Eight countries and five international organizations, including the United Nations, have observer status.

With regard to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, as an intergovernmental forum, CICA aims to help maintain international peace and security. We would like to confirm CICA’s full adherence to the principles of the Charter and international law, fixed in the Almaty Act. CICA has been an observer at the General Assembly since 2007. CICA signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and regularly participates in the activities of such United Nations agencies as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Environment Programme.

Versatility and inclusiveness are proving to be of the highest relevance after the times of one-sidedness obviously failed to lead the international community during the unprecedented threats that the world is currently facing. The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are just two of the many global problems that cannot be resolved unilaterally. Building trust as a tool of preventive diplomacy, the peaceful settlement of disputes and multilateral cooperation lie at the heart of CICA’s approach to contributing to the achievement of the United Nations goals in the field of global security.

Kazakhstan, as Chair of CICA, pays special attention to the implementation of the Catalogue of Confidence-building Measures in order to mobilize funds and efforts for structural economic transformation, the diversification of exports and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Catalogue is a fundamental tool for promoting the goals and objectives of CICA. The issues of developing cooperation in the area of epidemiological security, public health protection, pharmaceuticals, digitalization, as well as expanding humanitarian and social interaction in the CICA format, are being updated in the light of recent developments.

In the light of the changing situation in Asia, CICA will promote the global processes and the United Nations agenda, in particular the 2030 Agenda, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the decade of accelerated action for the implementation of the SDGs, focusing on promoting the empowerment of women and youth as well as climate change mitigation. Therefore, the measures taken by CICA member States will contribute to United Nations efforts in this direction. Critical in that regard is the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, mentioned by the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, in his video message to the participants of the conference organized by the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to United Nations and CICA on the theme “How to build stronger confidence in Asia and make CICA more responsive to the challenges of 21st Century”, which brought together CICA member countries and observers as well as the Asia-Pacific Group.

CICA member States are already in the process of negotiations to finalize the CICA action plan for the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We are confident that the proposed CICA action plan will allow member States to coordinate their efforts to combat terrorism.

No less meaningful are the new agenda for peace of Secretary-General António Guterres, the disarmament agenda and peacekeeping reform, considering the importance of these issues for the CICA region. Kazakhstan has planned to hold discussions to exchange views on the new agenda in the field of disarmament and peace reform.

We believe that the interaction of CICA and the United Nations has the potential to reach a higher level of cooperation in the context of the United Nations joint action with regional and subregional organizations in the area of conflict prevention.

As the initiating State and Chair of CICA, Kazakhstan will make efforts to strengthen the unifying role of mutually beneficial cooperation between the United Nations and Asian countries.

Annex 39**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, Amal Mudallali**

We thank the Permanent Mission of Viet Nam for convening this open debate, and we take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the President of Viet Nam for presiding over this debate. We also thank Secretary-General António Guterres and former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for their valuable briefings.

A staunch supporter of multilateralism for peace, Lebanon believes that enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is an essential component. Regional arrangements, as provided in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, are part of the toolbox for the maintenance of peace and security. As former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali once said,

“Regional action could not only lighten the burden of the Security Council, but also contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in international affairs”.

Strengthened cooperation can better further active prevention and compliance with international obligations and can be more conducive to conflict resolution. History, since the creation of the United Nations, has been punctuated with examples of such cooperation by regional organizations in conflicts across all regions of the world. Suffice it to mention the decisive role of the League of Arab States in concluding the Taif Accords in 1989, which put an end to 15 years of a bloody civil war in Lebanon. More recently, this cooperation and solidarity was best observed in the aftermath of the tragic Port of Beirut explosion.

As consistently expressed by many, regional and subregional organizations have specific knowledge and unique insights, and strengthened partnerships have proven useful and valuable.

In further promoting active prevention, confidence-building measures and conflict-resolution efforts, cooperation must seek to address root causes of conflict and promote institution-building. It must ensure inclusive participation, and such cooperation should extend to civil society, women and youth-led organizations, as well as academia. They play a key role in promoting a culture of prevention.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the multilateral system has not lived up to its expectations. The Charter of the United Nations, envisioned to bolster collective action in times of dire need and acute crisis, such as the one we have been going through, is undermined every day with the lack of a robust response to the pandemic, evidenced by the two speeds in the global vaccination roll-out.

Vaccination roll-out is without a doubt an area where the enhancement of cooperation is ever-more relevant today, ever-more needed and ever-more urgent. Regional cooperation can facilitate and make global cooperation more robust and fruitful. The coronavirus disease pandemic has shown us that only by working and cooperating at a regional level can solutions happen globally. This is a defining test of our times, and we cannot afford to fail.

Annex 40**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations, Georg Sparber**

The effective work of, and cooperation with, regional organizations is essential to the Security Council's effectiveness. As mentioned in previous submissions to the Council, a sea-change is needed in how this body conceptualizes its approach to conflict prevention and resolution, as well as the means through which it does this work. The Council, considering the whole of the conflict cycle, can do prevention earlier and better by applying a more comprehensive paradigm of security in its work. Upholding human rights, encouraging progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and combating climate change must all be seen as early investments in ensuring that each individual can be more secure, and therefore an investment in peace.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has served to further emphasize the necessity of seeing human security as a starting point for the Security Council's work. It has also underlined the need for solidarity, unity, transparency and intensified effective international and multilateral cooperation in addressing the pandemic and its consequences. Never have so many people felt so insecure simultaneously. Work to this end could include Council contributions to system-wide discussions on negative security impacts of the pandemic, including, but not limited to, the areas of climate and biodiversity, poverty and hunger, health, education, gender, freedom of expression and information and privacy.

The holistic approach associated with human security requires the Security Council to take on a greater field of vision. To this end, close cooperation with regional and subregional organizations is an indispensable component. Solutions grounded in local contexts, at the earliest stage possible, have the best chance of ameliorating tensions and reducing conflict. We see this in the example of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), whose comprehensive approach to security encompasses all stages of the conflict cycle. In particular, Liechtenstein wishes to highlight the work of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, who, by identifying tensions early can address potential issues before they result in the outbreak of conflict. With regard to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Liechtenstein appreciates its key role in addressing the deteriorating situation in Myanmar, a role that was also supported in recent Council products. Regional and subregional organizations can also work in concert with the Council to magnify shared thematic priorities — for example, on women and peace and security, which is a priority of the current Swedish OSCE chairpersonship.

Liechtenstein has long had a particular interest in preventing and resolving conflicts that relate to questions of self-determination, which often emerge from tensions between communities within a State. Conflicts relating to self-determination have accounted for around 50 per cent of armed conflicts since the 1960s. The necessity of addressing questions of self-determination as a potential source of conflict is therefore clear. Paying attention to upholding the human rights of minority groups, finding — where necessary — appropriate forms of self-governance within a State and ensuring the engagement of relevant communities in preventing conflict in an inclusive manner are all ways in which the international community can help to address this highly prevalent, but often politically sensitive, aspect of conflict. Early engagement and dialogue by regional and subregional organizations is an important factor in that regard; their capacity for early action as well as their understanding of the nuanced historical contexts and perspectives involved in relevant situations can lead to more sustainable forms of conflict prevention and resolution.

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

Malta thanks Viet Nam, as President of the Security Council, for holding today's open debate on the theme "Enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution". We also thank today's briefers for sharing their invaluable insights and experiences.

The role of regional organizations in the settlement of local disputes is set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and is mentioned in Security Council resolutions and presidential statements. Malta fully recognizes the unique role that regional and subregional organizations have to play in the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes. They are an integral part of the multilateral system and can contribute in a significant manner through their unique knowledge of their region and its history.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has further underlined the need for more cooperation, the value of a collective response and the importance of trust among countries. In this context, we also welcome the Security Council debates focusing on the relationship between the United Nations and specific regional and subregional organizations held under various presidencies over the past few months.

Multilateralism remains the best tool at our disposal to address existing and upcoming challenges and threats to international peace and security. To optimize our efforts, we need to make sure that the multilateral system operates in a smart and effective way and utilizes the capabilities of all players to complement the work of the United Nations and the Security Council.

The international community must redouble its efforts in the field of conflict prevention in a collective and inclusive manner. Confidence-building measures are of key importance in this area, as they help defuse existing tensions, promote dialogue and build trust. Moving in this direction would strengthen the United Nations capability to prevent rather than react. Regional organizations have an important role to play in building trust among countries and in promoting and discussing important issues, such as human rights, gender equality and the impact of climate change. They can also play a vital role in highlighting and explaining the value of investing in prevention to Governments and citizens. Global peace and security are continuously being challenged, which is why it is important for the Council to continue to work side-by-side with regional security organizations, strengthen partnerships and count on their expertise.

As the backbone of security cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic region, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is an invaluable organization through which dialogue and negotiations can be fostered. This is clearly reflected in the OSCE's leading role in mediation efforts, such as the Trilateral Contact Group, the Minsk Group, the Geneva International Discussions and the "5+2 Dialogue". It is also important to recall that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine is the only monitoring mission in the country whose presence and mandate is accepted by both Ukraine and Russia. Malta lauds the agreement that was reached in December 2019 between the OSCE and the United Nations to supplement the 1993 Framework for Cooperation and Coordination, which commits both institutions to pursuing joint efforts in addressing pressing challenges to peace and security, as well as promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We are pleased to note that over recent years the working relations between African Union (AU) and United Nations envoys, including in field missions and

non-mission settings, have significantly improved. We encourage these developments and hope relations with the AU continue to be further consolidated. The same applies to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which has managed to develop working relations with various United Nations agencies on different thematic areas and issues, such as gender equality, climate change, peacekeeping, human rights, humanitarian issues and development.

Malta stands convinced that regional organizations have a meaningful role to play in the promotion of peace and security. The local know-how and expertise of regional organizations can definitely assist the work of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution through the regional promotion of confidence-building measures. We consider such initiatives essential to further enhancing cooperation, which could generate new ways to remain responsive and relevant in peacekeeping, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Annex 42**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Munir Akram**

I would like to thank Viet Nam for convening this open debate of the Security Council.

Today's deliberations regarding the role of confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution will certainly add to the repertoire of available tools and good practices under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which envisages a strong working relationship between the Security Council and regional mechanisms for the maintenance of peace and security.

Over the past seven decades, the role of the regional, cross-regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and early warning, dialogue and mediation, as well as peacemaking and peacebuilding, has increased progressively.

While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security remains with the Security Council, under the framework of the Chapter VIII of the Charter, regional and subregional organizations continue to complement and supplement the Council's role.

Regional and some cross-regional organizations have unique perspectives and a deeper understanding of local conflicts, political realities and cultural norms, often giving them a comparative advantage in preventing and resolving conflicts. In many cases, they enjoy the trust of and hold influence with the parties concerned in a dispute, thereby helping in mediation and confidence-building measures.

At the same time, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations requires a dynamic strategy to address deficits in requisite capacities as well as predictable and sustainable funding. It also often requires close dialogue with the Security Council and United Nations entities for harmonization and synergy among their contributions.

One of the best examples of cooperation between United Nations and regional organizations is the growing partnership between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations on issues pertaining to peace and security in Africa. That partnership continues to play a vital role in addressing conflict situations across the African continent, and has contributed positively to peace processes and mediation efforts in situations, such as those in the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

In the Great Lakes region, the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community continue to collaborate as the guarantors of the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region.

Several Security Council resolutions further reinforce this partnership, especially in the areas of dialogue and mediation. Resolution 2457 (2019), for instance, recognizes the valuable contribution of the AU's mediation capacities and encourages greater cooperation and collaboration with the Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa, including though possible fielding of joint mediation teams.

Indeed, the United Nations-AU institutional mechanisms for discussing issues pertaining to conflict prevention, early warning and mediation, including joint consultative meetings between members of the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, can serve as a template for other regional, cross-regional and subregional organizations.

The Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is another such example, which continues to support United Nations efforts aimed at conflict prevention, confidence-building measures, mediation, crisis management and post-conflict stabilization.

During the Cold War, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the predecessor organization of the OSCE, played an important role in providing a forum for dialogue and confidence building, especially in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

In the light of the broad membership as well as importance of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), there is a need to further strengthen the cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC in promoting peace and security and the resolution of conflicts in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Indeed, General Assembly resolution 75/16, adopted on 30 November 2020, requests the United Nations and the OIC to continue to cooperate in their common search for solutions to global problems, such as questions relating to international peace and security, disarmament and self-determination, among others.

The success of regional, cross-regional and subregional mechanisms in the context of conflict prevention, mediation and confidence-building has, however, varied from one region to another. Regional and subregional organizations in certain parts of the world have been either ineffective or unable to play any meaningful role towards resolving long-lasting and festering disputes as well as situations of foreign occupation. Under such circumstances, the Security Council must discharge its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security by resolving such conflicts.

Pakistan has been fully facilitating the Afghan peace and reconciliation process, including by supporting regional and international initiatives in this regard.

We are also an active member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, which champion dialogue and mediation.

Pakistan has consistently proposed and promoted regional disarmament and conventional arms control, and confidence-building measures at the regional level.

We hope that the Security Council will prepare a compilation of its cooperation and interactions with regional, cross-regional and subregional organizations in order to chart best practices and lessons learned, which could be applied to lower tensions and introduce confidence-building, mediation and other such measures, which could be applied more widely to prevent conflicts and maintain peace and security in various parts of the world.

Annex 43**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

We appreciate the initiative of the Vietnamese presidency in convening this high-level debate and thank the distinguished briefers for their informative statements. Their statements have painted a clear picture of the potential progress that could be made in conflict prevention through more systematic and strategic cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

Cultivating such links could be particularly beneficial in emergency contexts, characterized by increasingly complex and multidimensional conflicts, now exacerbated by the coronavirus disease pandemic, making in-depth analysis of root causes and a more proactive role for the Security Council ever-more crucial.

In this regard, regional integration bodies and neighbouring countries have undeniable comparative advantages in terms of knowledge of realities on the ground, links to the parties concerned and faster and more efficient deployment capabilities. Their geographical proximity to conflicts also provides a powerful incentive to seek their resolution.

To be specific, one of the most obvious examples of the fruit such an approach bears is the bond forged between the United Nations and the African Union, paving the way to the holding of democratic elections in various African countries, a reduction in violent escalations, the resumption of dialogue in situations of tension and the peaceful conduct of transitions.

However, we note that, with regard to several extremely serious matters with major impact, cooperation with regional and subregional organizations could go much further. We are referring specifically to the risks of climate change, as droughts, floods and other aspects of water insecurity continually drive the emergence of conflicts, as the situation in the Sahel seems to clearly reflect. We are also referring to the growing threat of terrorism, which calls for urgent and coordinated action.

Against this backdrop, Peru views it as essential to continue investing effort in early-warning systems due to their significant preventive potential, particularly in territories not on the Council's agenda and in moments of heightened tension, such as in the run-up to elections and other specific political events that could unleash conflict. Sharing detailed information among the various entities of the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations, which may then be transmitted to the Security Council in a timely manner, is becoming crucial in this regard.

Another area in which we encourage closer collaboration is that of horizon-scanning, through, for example, the preparation of joint reports by the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and relevant subregional and regional authorities.

In addition, we stress the importance that strengthened relations must include incorporating sustainable development as an essential means of preventing conflict and building resilient societies, which can be achieved by, among other things, promote synergies for achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related initiatives, such as the African Union's Agenda 2063.

In this regard, we stress there is no better means of prevention than to promote more open and inclusive societies that guarantee the active, positive and innovative participation of women in political and peacebuilding processes, with consequent

gains in legitimacy and effectiveness. We welcome the progress made in this regard by the African Union with the establishment of the Network of African Women for Conflict Prevention and Mediation, and the African Women Leaders Network.

In the same vein, we consider it essential that the Peacebuilding Commission and United Nations country teams step up their support to national and regional authorities in building inclusive institutions that recognize and address the legitimate aspirations and expectations of their populations and protect and promote their human rights.

Moreover, we believe that strengthened cooperation between peace operations and regional integration initiatives can contribute substantially to prevention through joint action, for example, geared towards combating the illegal exploitation of natural resources, which is an exacerbating factor of instability.

In conclusion, Peru encourages closer links between regional and subregional organizations of different continents, which could lead to concrete actions, such as the exchange of intelligence information and of best practices, technical and financial support and capacity-building in the area of security.

Annex 44

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations, Enrique Austria Manalo

As a fellow member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), we commend you, Sir, for your leadership in advancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

As Secretary-General António Guterres said in his 30 January 2020 briefing to the Security Council,

“[a]t this time of increasingly complex challenges for global peace and security, cooperative and inclusive multilateral efforts, including strong partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations, are essential.” (*S/PV.8711, p. 2*)

There are new challenges to promoting and substantiating partnership with the United Nations. Maintaining international peace and stability remains a serious challenge, as many regions and countries in the world still experience tensions and instability, often due to ethnic or racial conflicts, inter-State disputes, transnational crimes and terrorism, among other things. These are further exacerbated by non-traditional security threats and new forms of threat, such as the coronavirus disease pandemic, for which neither individuals nor institutions were prepared.

Security threats are often multidimensional and, as highlighted by the presidency in its concept note (S/2021/297, annex), regional and subregional organizations have the comparative advantage of geographical proximity, experience and in-depth knowledge of local dynamics.

In that context, one challenge for the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, is knowing when to step in and when to step back and when regional and subregional organizations' inputs should be made indispensable before any measure or resolution is put forth to that body.

As can be gleaned from recent events, we may need to institutionalize the practice of involving the relevant regional and subregional groupings when addressing security issues that hit closer to home. We can take advantage of regional and subregional groupings to better help identify sensitivities. We can derive gains from the mutual trust and confidence among the members of regional and subregional groupings to build on support for constructive propositions on conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

Turning to the importance of enhancing confidence-building measures and dialogue, we in ASEAN believe that regionalism and multilateralism are important principles and frameworks for cooperation and that their strength and value lie in their inclusivity, rules-based nature and emphasis on mutual benefit and respect. It is in that manner that ASEAN has achieved a level of success in maintaining peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

We have a shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes without resort to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

However, beyond the political commitment to pursue and promote a cooperative relationship is the evolution of ASEAN regionalism, which is anchored in dialogue and consultations aimed at reaching consensus. The primacy accorded to dialogue and consultations with the aim of arriving at consensus has enabled ASEAN member States to address the issues confronting the region, arrive at approaches that are

acceptable to all and to manage differences, thereby enabling them to move forward notwithstanding the diversity in their political, economic and social systems. In our part of the world, we call it the ASEAN Way — a unique manner of dealing with issues that to some outside observers is difficult to comprehend but is fully understood by us in ASEAN.

In terms of experiences and lessons learnt, we promote sustainable security in the region by reinforcing strategic trust and mutual confidence within ASEAN and in the wider Asia-Pacific region, helped by reaffirming the principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, enabling the bloc to reap the peace dividend. With a combined gross domestic product of \$3 trillion, ASEAN now accounts for 3.5 per cent of the global economy in nominal terms.

There is an opportunity to take advantage of and put into action the ASEAN-United Nations comprehensive partnership through the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations for the period 2021-2025. As the partnership continues to uphold ASEAN's centrality in the evolving regional architecture, it also aims, among other things, to

“develop effective partnership and promote closer cooperation for sustaining peace, in confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, humanitarian affairs and ... peacebuilding”.

We recognize the value of holding annual meetings between the Secretary-General and the Office of the President of the General Assembly during the regular sessions of the General Assembly to further enhance that partnership.

ASEAN's community-building efforts are complemented and supported by its robust external partnerships, including with the United Nations. Beyond being accorded the status of an observer in the General Assembly, there are established modalities for ASEAN-United Nations relations at various levels based on mutual benefit, from Secretariat-to-Secretariat interaction between our organizations and the ASEAN-United Nations Ministerial Meeting all the way to the ASEAN-United Nations Summit, at which ASEAN leaders and the United Nations Secretary-General engage in strategic dialogue. ASEAN and the United Nations can build on these modalities further by continuing meaningful exchanges on security matters, especially on the emerging and non-traditional security threats that we are facing as time goes by.

Concerning measures to form and enhance cooperation among regional organizations, prior to that a determination must first be made of the common and most pressing security threats between and/or among regions that are not catered to by existing modalities of cooperation. If such a void were found to exist, then there would be a compelling need to devise new modes of cooperation among regional organizations.

There are pre-existing modalities of cooperation between and among Member States. We can put to use our resources better through maximizing existing modes of cooperation rather than through exploring new platforms of exchange.

There is indeed value in enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution. A key aspect of that effort is maintaining a vigorous exchange of information and ensuring that any decision that is to be taken is supported by accurate and timely data and informed by the prevailing dynamics among the key actors involved. We also would like to emphasize and reiterate the importance of the primacy and centrality of a particular regional and subregional organization in providing inputs on how to address region-specific issues on conflict prevention and resolution.

Annex 45**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations**

Let me add my words of appreciation to the delegation of Viet Nam for having selected the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations as the focus of today's open debate as well as for having prepared the comprehensive concept note (S/2021/297, annex) on the subject.

Poland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union (annex 21) underscoring a growing recognition of the opportunities for a productive relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

We share the view that the enormous challenges witnessed in global politics have resulted in the increased relevance and role of regional organizations. They are often best positioned and equipped to understand and react adequately to the root causes of armed conflicts in their respective regions. The ongoing efforts of the African Union and of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to help maintain regional peace and stability, inter alia through the development of a United Nations-regional partnership in peacekeeping, clearly illustrate that phenomenon.

We must not forget that subregional organizations play an equally significant role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The vital contributions of such organizations as the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of the Central African States to dealing with political crises and to resolving conflicts in Africa are undeniable.

Europe has the longest and most significant record of building collective security institutions at the regional level. With that being acknowledged, the European Union, NATO, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) continue to play prominent and influential roles in conflict and post-conflict environments.

The OSCE remains the leading regional security arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations in the Euro-Atlantic area. Due to its inclusiveness, experience and instruments, as well as the unique comprehensive and cooperative concept of security, the OSCE continues to be the most proper forum for strengthening the rules-based security order in its zone of responsibility.

Poland strongly believes in the value of regional security cooperation. We commend the efforts undertaken by the Swedish chairpersonship of the OSCE. We also support OSCE-United Nations cooperation, as the contacts between the two organizations contribute to global and regional stability. That is a mutually beneficial relationship based on the coordination of activities and the exchange of experiences.

The OSCE is a frontrunner in promoting confidence-building measures, which have proved to be highly efficient tools to provide predictability, reduce risks and prevent conflicts. We must remember, though, that such measures cannot accomplish much on their own. Political will is absolutely crucial so that those mechanisms can function properly.

Poland made its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2018-2019. Currently we are serving as a member of the Human Rights Council for the 2020-2022 term. As a natural follow-up to that engagement, Poland will chair the OSCE in 2022. At the moment we are working on the detailed priorities of our chairmanship, which will include actions on all three pillars: the politico-military; the economic and environmental; and the human dimension.

The security situation in the OSCE area remains complex. Many conflicts remain unresolved, and new sources of tensions are emerging. Our aim as Chairman-in-Office will be to make every effort to rebuild confidence as well as to act as an honest broker and mediator between participating States.

In closing, let me once again reiterate that close ties between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations are essential to ensuring multilateral approaches and solutions to global challenges. Now, with the ravages of the global pandemic, that appears more relevant than ever before. Poland stands ready to further support such cooperation so that it can fulfil its indisputably untapped potential. It is in the interest of us all.

Annex 46**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations, Francisco Duarte Lopes**

Portugal aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union (annex 21) and, in its national capacity, would like to add the following points.

We would like to congratulate the Vietnamese presidency of the Security Council for having convened this debate, which is a timely occasion to reinforce the continued need to consolidate the shift in the United Nations from a culture of reaction to crises to a culture of prevention, as pledged in 2005 and repeatedly reiterated since then.

The Charter of the United Nations itself champions the concept of prevention, calling on Member States to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace and, first and foremost, urging parties to settle their disputes in a peaceful manner.

In that context, mediation is a fundamental tool in the prevention and resolution of conflicts as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding, as stated in the Concept on European Union Peace Mediation.

The European Union (EU) is and will remain a natural strategic partner of the United Nations in conflict prevention and crisis management, as underlined in the Council Conclusions on EU Peace Mediation, adopted in December 2020. EU Common Security and Defence Policy civilian missions can play a valuable role in mediation support, in coordination with the United Nations.

Confidence-building measures have a crucial importance throughout all parts of the peace process. They create an environment conducive to dialogue and help lay the groundwork for sustainable peace. The United Nations can facilitate the adoption of such measures, making use of its peace operations and United Nations teams on the ground and supporting regional and subregional organizations in that endeavour.

Confidence-building measures and other preventive measures should take into consideration the nexus between security, human rights and development. Furthermore, they should integrate a climate perspective into conflict prevention, recognizing the role that climate change may have in exacerbating tensions and conflicts.

However, no mediation, conflict prevention or confidence-building strategy will be successful and complete if we do not empower young people and women, ensuring that they have a seat at the table throughout all the phases of peace processes. Initiatives such as FemWise-Africa are a good example of how to ensure women's full, equal, meaningful and effective participation in preventive action.

The new level of complexity posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic with respect to global peace and security has further underscored the importance of partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in our collective efforts. Regional organizations help ensure local ownership and add value to preventive action through shared cultural standards and experiences.

In the context of the United Nations, as in the context of the European Union and of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, Portugal reiterates its commitment to the promotion of dialogue and peace, in close cooperation with other regional and international partners.

Annex 47**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, Cho Hyun**

At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's timely open debate.

I thank the Secretary-General and all of the representatives of regional organizations for their briefings. I am especially happy to welcome back former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and I thank him for sharing his valuable support and insight.

My delegation would like to highlight the following three points.

First, given the intertwined and complex nature of today's global crises, the United Nations needs to forge more effective and stronger partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

With their geographical proximity and deeper understanding of regional dynamics, regional organizations are uniquely positioned as a trusted partner with the willingness and ability to act effectively. They are increasingly called upon to take more responsibility, and the cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the League of Arab States has been continually strengthened.

Now we must seek ways to build on that momentum and make such partnerships more constructive, with increased support to match the elevated demand for their role.

A case in point is the African Union. My delegation applauds the AU for its continued efforts to secure peace and stability in the region, including through the Silencing the Guns initiative, and we reiterate our support for the AU's strategic vision of Agenda 2063. We support higher levels of cooperation between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, and we emphasize the need for AU-United Nations cooperation in peace and security to operate on a more predictable, sustainable and flexible financial footing.

My delegation supports the growing cooperation between the Security Council and ASEAN. In that regard, we particularly commend the contributions of the recent ASEAN members on the Council, Viet Nam and Indonesia. Today the importance of that partnership is amplified owing to the situation in Myanmar. As emphasized in Security Council statements, we strongly support the constructive role of ASEAN, including through the upcoming Special ASEAN Summit. We hope that ASEAN will play a pivotal role in stabilizing the situation in Myanmar, ending the suffering of innocent civilians and restoring democracy and peace in Myanmar.

Secondly, the Security Council needs a new level of cooperation with regional organizations to combat new global challenges. In dealing with novel problems whose implications may not seem entirely clear, it is important to have a dialogue mechanism in place at an early juncture aimed at building confidence among the relevant stakeholders. In that connection, the global coronavirus disease pandemic and its impact on matters of peace and security are of growing concern. We need a collective solution to this collective problem, and regional cooperation will prove to be vital in that regard.

That is why the Republic of Korea launched the Northeast Asia Cooperation for Health Security, which held its first meeting in December 2020 and its second meeting in March 2021. It is aimed at enhancing communication and strengthening

coordination in response to cross-border health security crises. My delegation believes that we must continue our search for opportunities for regional cooperation that can contribute to regional and global peace and prosperity and are firmly rooted in the principles of inclusiveness, openness and transparency.

As recognized in resolution 2457 (2019), the effects of climate change on peace and stability should be another area of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We believe that regional organizations' deep understanding of the environment and related dynamics in the region will help in devising a tailored response to climate-related risks.

Thirdly, we emphasize the deeply interconnected nexus between peace and security, development and human rights, as well as the need for a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding that takes into account the multidimensional nature of peace and security challenges. Because they play prominent roles in their respective regions in the areas of peace and security, development, and human rights, regional organizations have much to offer in that regard.

Furthermore, we believe that the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) can also play an important role as an effective channel to mobilize a wide range of relevant stakeholders, with a longer-term perspective and encompassing the full peace continuum. The PBC can thus help strengthen cooperation between the Security Council, regional organizations and the wider membership.

The Republic of Korea will continue to work with the United Nations and the international community to promote more constructive and mutually reinforcing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Annex 48

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations, Ion Jinga

The pandemic has revealed again the essential need for global, regional and bilateral cooperation. It proved once more that we are all living in a highly interconnected world where a local problem can soon become one with global impact that first requires a local and regional ability to respond.

The founders of the Charter of the United Nations were visionary in foreseeing a world where the United Nations and regional organizations worked together to prevent, manage and resolve crises. This unique cooperation between United Nations and regional and subregional organizations has been continuously contributing to enhancing the rules-based international order. Chapter VIII of the Charter is as relevant today as ever, with many regional and subregional organizations having long histories of engagement in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and with others becoming increasingly active in those areas.

Today, the role of regional organizations is unanimously accepted as a way to ensure the coherence of endeavours to promote peace, security and global development. Regional and subregional organizations have deep knowledge, unique insights and strong local networks, which are critical for mediation, planning a peacekeeping operation or building lasting peace.

I would like to recall that the first resolution adopted by the Security Council on the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations — resolution 1631 (2005), of 17 October 2005 — was a Romanian initiative. Recently, Romania, as Chairman of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, promoted resolution 75/12, regarding the cooperation of this regional organization with the United Nations, which was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 23 November 2020.

Since joining the United Nations in 1955, Romania has invested heavily in preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and mediation. Over the past 30 years, my country has participated in 25 United Nations peacekeeping missions, with more than 12,500 military, police and close protection officers. Romania ranks today among the top European Union (EU) contributors of police officers under the United Nations flag, and is the only United Nations Member State that provides close protection units for senior United Nations dignitaries in high-risk areas.

My country has always emphasized that the effective protection of civilians in armed conflicts increases if we engage and cooperate with regional and subregional organizations. Enhancing cooperation between United Nations and different organizations helps to reduce fragmentation and is more effective than work in silos, which too often has slowed down actions and reactions to the needs on the ground. Cooperation adds value not only to the efforts aimed at resolving crises, but also to those meant to prevent conflicts and build confidence.

The special importance that Romania attaches to the subject we are discussing today was also reflected in our priorities as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in the period from January 2018 to January 2019 — promoting a regional approach in the work of the Commission; strengthening partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, particularly the African Union (AU), as well as with international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank, and with civil society organizations; implementing peacebuilding and peacekeeping by supporting conflict-affected countries throughout the process,

from prevention to reconstruction and development. Under Romania's chairmanship of the PBC, the Commission's cooperation with the AU was institutionalized — for the first time — following an interactive dialogue between the PBC and the African Union Peace and Security Council on 18 July 2018.

As a State member of the European Union, Romania is keen to contribute to strengthening synergies between the EU and the United Nations. In May 2019, Romania organized a seminar, entitled “United Nations-EU regional organizations cooperation in the field of peacekeeping operations and crisis management”, in order to identify concrete ways to increase the effectiveness of the interaction between the United Nations and the EU or other regional organizations in the field of peacekeeping operations through better coordination, allocation of resources and complementarity of mandates.

The signing, in September, of the Framework Agreement between the European Union and the United Nations for the Provision of Mutual Support in the context of their respective missions and operations in the field is a concrete step forward in advancing the Organization's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, as strengthened partnerships are vital to effective and efficient mandate delivery.

Strong and effective multilateralism can only exist by leveraging the competitive advantages of regional and subregional organizations. Romania will continue to call for enhancing cooperation between United Nations and these organizations in the quest for peace, prosperity and security for all.

Annex 49

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations

The Republic of Rwanda congratulates the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We thank you for organizing this important debate.

Rwanda pays tribute to the Head of State of Viet Nam and takes this opportunity to commend the skilful way he conducted today's debate. We also appreciate Secretary-General António Guterres and the other briefers for their informative briefing.

This debate comes amid the current international peace and security architecture under great pressure due to the complexity of the peace and security challenges, compounded by the public health challenges caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic.

The pandemic has proved the importance of cooperation and partnership among Member States, the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as well as international organizations, corporations and others. The situation has further demonstrated global disparities in fighting the pandemic.

Building an effective partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations on the basis of equality is of the utmost strategic importance in order to create an environment suitable for effective dialogue and confidence-building measures, with a view to finding mutual solutions.

The price of resolving and mitigating the consequences and humanitarian catastrophes associated with conflicts is far higher than what it would cost to prevent them. Conflict resolution through mediation and dialogue enhances confidence-building measures by broadening the platform of engagement among various stakeholders and actors.

Dialogue is a tool for conflict resolution and political transformation. In Rwanda, over the past several years, national dialogue has brought together our central and local Government officials, as well as members of the private sector, civil society and the diaspora to deliberate on the country's trajectory. Dialogue offers the potential for a meaningful conversation about the underlying issues affecting the socioeconomic progress of the country while crafting ways to holistically address those matters. However, there is no one-size approach that fits all situations. Dialogue facilitates the integration of important aspects of the 2020 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, such as inclusion, transparency, ownership and context-driven peace processes.

Regional and subregional organizations are better positioned to activate early-warning systems in a timely manner, and consultations among subregional member States is more convenient and instantaneous. A better understanding of the often complex regional dynamics helps create an environment conducive to effective confidence-building measures and dialogue. These organizations should therefore be supported and empowered expeditiously before disputes escalate into tenacious conflicts.

The partnership to pursue confidence-building measures and dialogue will be far more effective if it is based at the local level and is able to connect the skills and knowledge of women and young people and harness regional and subregional institutions' expertise and experience.

Efforts to build confidence and pursue dialogue must be based on an overriding desire to bring conflicting parties together to resolve their differences. However,

that should not be confused with supporting one side to the conflict or imposing a solution in the interests of the mediators.

Dialogue and confidence-building measures should enable local ownership of the process. The aim is to bridge communities, share perspectives and discover new ideas without these being imposed on, or dictated to, the people. That makes it possible for diverse voices to be heard and various stakeholders to assume greater responsibility for the outcomes reached. Nevertheless, dialogue must be complemented by other forms of diplomatic or political engagements.

In that connection, the process must be built around the concepts of mediation, compensation, reconciliation and rebuilding, and rooted in the economic environment and sociopolitical, cultural and historical context of each society so as to be more responsive to local realities.

Besides resolving conflict, a vital aspect of owning the dialogue in many settings is the capacity to convene a wide-ranging set of stakeholders for a deliberative process in order to leverage the potential to address the real drivers of conflict.

Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015), respectively, recognize the importance of women and youth participation in rebuilding their countries. Women and young people should be brought into the dialogue process as a means to building confidence, influencing decision-making and facilitating inclusion and empowerment.

Dialogue and confidence-building measures are important tools for conflict resolution and sustainable peace in both conflict and post-conflict settings. When facilitating dialogue and mediation, the partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations must allow the cultural and historical context to define the process.

With a view to recognizing and supporting the efforts of the regional and subregional organizations, Rwanda would like to share four recommendations for the consideration of the Security Council.

First, the Security Council needs to acknowledge and firmly support the efforts of subregional organizations to address cross-border security issues. For instance, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region established the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism as a confidence-building measure for member countries. The Mechanism plays a major role in investigating cross-border incursions and the circumstances surrounding them in order to establish facts for consideration.

Secondly, the Security Council should support regional and subregional efforts to neutralize all cross-border illegal armed groups in the Great Lakes region, particularly in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council's support should reinforce subregional political and diplomatic cooperation in order to prevent further crisis in the subregion. The current situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is mainly attributed to the failure of the United Nations to stop the fully armed soldiers and Interahamwe, who fled Rwanda after committing genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. If efforts had been made in time, it could have averted the crisis we are experiencing today.

Thirdly, the United Nations should support peacebuilding efforts, especially the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants. The challenging aspect in that regard is that disarmament is conducted in one country while demobilization and reintegration are done in another, which complicates the process. DDR is key to reconciliation and sustainable peace in the region. It is the only instrument that enhances sustainable peace and security by breaking the generational chain and recruitment cycle of combatants, including child soldiers. Since 1997, the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission has offered reintegration

support to more than 70,000 ex-combatants, mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the help of the World Bank.

Finally, all peace and security efforts should be backed by the United Nations and regional and subregional political support. Most conflicts start within one country and then escalate to become a regional issue. Recently, the Economic Community of Central African States staged an effort to restore constitutional order in the Central African Republic. The Security Council should therefore leverage regional and subregional initiatives to build concerted and coherent approaches to lasting peace.

Annex 50**Statement by the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Mathu Joyini**

We thank the presidency of Viet Nam for convening this important meeting on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with a focus on enhancing confidence-building measures and dialogue in conflict prevention.

We also thank Secretary-General Guterres and the other briefers for their insightful presentations.

The objective to achieve a peaceful, stable, prosperous world is a vision to which we all aspire, and we should continue to work collectively towards that ideal in multilateral platforms such as the Security Council.

We are pleased that we have been provided an opportunity to participate in today's discussion on conflict prevention and resolution, an issue that resonates with South Africa's key priorities in the pursuit of international peace and security.

South Africa believes that conflict prevention should be regarded as a central pillar of the Security Council's work, in furtherance of its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, the Council should intensify efforts to promote and advance preventive diplomatic mechanisms in conflict and post-conflict situations on its agenda. Regional and subregional organizations can play a greater role to complement the Council's efforts on this important mandate, particularly in matters involving political dialogue, confidence-building measures or State-building.

The critical role and importance of regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution is well established, as codified in Article 52 of Chapter VIII of the Charter. We therefore commend the Security Council for enhancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union. In that regard, we would like to offer the following recommendations.

First, while recognizing the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security, South Africa believes that regional and subregional organizations have a role to play in supporting the Council in the discharge of its duties. We align ourselves with the views expressed in the concept note prepared for today's meeting (S/2021/297, annex) that regional organizations have the comparative advantages of geographical proximity, experience and in-depth knowledge of local dynamics enabling them to detect situations that may lead to instability. It is within this context that we subscribe to the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity in addressing eruptions of conflict. It is of paramount importance that the relevant regions are afforded an opportunity, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, to participate adequately in addressing conflict situations in their regions.

Secondly, we support the continued use of United Nations good offices as a means to settle disputes in the various regions as well as the commitment to strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional groups with a view to assisting parties to address the root causes of conflict and embark on peaceful negotiations. We particularly commend the role played by United Nations special political missions in facilitating political dialogues and confidence-building measures to defuse tensions and resolve conflict-related disputes. For instance, in the past few years the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa have contributed immensely to pacifying tensions in their respective regions in consultations with

the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States. It is necessary that the special political missions continue to cooperate with regional and subregional organizations in conflict-prevention activities.

Thirdly, we strongly believe that confidence-building measures are a significant step towards promoting trust among conflicting parties and strengthening long-term commitments to resolving outstanding disputes and conflict situations. Mutually agreed confidence-building measures are also vital to enhancing implementation of political peace agreements, which can pave the way for stabilization, peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Fourthly, we believe that peacekeeping missions should be more involved in conflict prevention and resolution by working closely with regional and subregional organizations. Consistent with the objectives of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, our peacekeeping operations should be fit for purpose and capable of addressing evolving security threats. Resolving conflicts through political dialogue and tailor-made and situation-specific confidence-building measures agreed to by all parties is necessary. This will enhance collaboration on cross-cutting issues and ensure that multiple challenges are addressed in an integrated and holistic manner. We encourage the Council to continue to support cooperation between peacekeeping missions and regional and subregional organizations.

Fifthly, South Africa attaches great importance to the significant contributions of field visits as a fact-finding tool for assisting the Council to respond effectively to conflict situations. The timing of Security Council visits to conflict areas should be carefully planned in order for its interventions to be timely and so that they contribute to creating conditions conducive to reaching political settlements. In this context, we encourage the Security Council to continue to undertake fact-finding-mission visits to conflict areas, which it should also utilize to monitor the effectiveness of political dialogues and confidence-building measures.

Sixthly, and equally importantly, we believe that the establishment and effective use of early-warning systems are vital to the prevention of conflicts, especially in averting escalation of tensions. The African Union and African subregional organizations are best placed to share best practices with the United Nations and other regions on early-warning systems and conflict prevention because of their well-established continental and subregional early-warning systems.

In conclusion, more needs to be done to strengthen the collaboration between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the pacific settlement of disputes. In this regard, South Africa believes that more attention should be afforded to conflict-prevention mechanisms in addressing emerging and ongoing conflicts.

South Africa wishes to stress the importance of designating African envoys when addressing conflict situations on the African continent. We believe that they have the requisite expertise and that, since they are better informed about conflict situations in their respective subregions, they are able to contribute to resolving these conflicts.

Annex 51**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations, Pascale Baeriswyl**

[Original: English and French]

Switzerland thanks Viet Nam for organizing today's debate. It also thanks the Secretary-General and the other briefers for their briefings.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is "our best option for reducing tensions in Europe and restoring trust". This is how our Foreign Minister describes the world's largest regional security organization. Regional organizations have an important role to play in conflict prevention and resolution. Several contexts on the agenda of the Security Council attest to this. To borrow the Secretary-General's term, a "networked multilateralism" is necessary to anticipate and prevent risks and to formulate adequate responses.

Let me highlight three priorities for action to deepen cooperation between the Security Council and the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in order to enable preventive and confidence-building measures to reach their full potential.

First, complementarity between regional organizations and the United Nations must be strengthened. Good practices developed at the regional level can serve as inspiration for international cooperation and complement it. I am thinking here of the OSCE's comprehensive and cooperative approach, which establishes a clear link between security, respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Regional organizations have instruments adapted to specific contexts so as to prevent the aggravation of tensions and to mitigate their root causes.

Switzerland hosts the Geneva International Discussions, which are co-chaired by the OSCE, the European Union and the United Nations, and which are assisting the political process relating to the 2008 conflict in Georgia. This effective coordination contributes to defusing tensions and meeting humanitarian needs. As a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Switzerland welcomes the enhanced cooperation on confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy provided for in the ASEAN-United Nations Plan of Action (2021-2025). The urgency of the current crisis in Myanmar requires both leading ASEAN action to engage in dialogue and facilitate a return to democracy, on the one hand, and continued commitment by the relevant United Nations bodies, on the other hand.

Secondly, we need to intensify the flow of information between the United Nations, including the Security Council, and regional and subregional organizations. Coordinated action in preventive and cooperative diplomacy starts with information-sharing and joint analysis. In this sense, Switzerland welcomes the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which provides the political basis for a more systematic cooperation, the annual consultative meeting of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, and the joint field visits. Since 2015, Switzerland has supported the yearly high-level seminar on peace and security that brings together the African members of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council and has become a privileged platform for exchanges to foster better coordination. Switzerland also welcomes the recourse to formal Security Council meetings on cooperation with regional organizations to discuss a variety of regions, as it did for the first time in 2020 in the presence of the Secretaries-General of ASEAN and the International Organization of la Francophonie. These meetings provide analyses

informed by the strong field presence of regional organizations and their interactions with all stakeholders, including civil society.

Thirdly, the Security Council must use its mandate and the tools at its disposal to support prevention efforts at the regional level. In speaking with one voice, the Council can play an important role when it comes to strengthening political will to respond to early warnings. The Council must also support conflict resolution and observation mechanisms such as the Trilateral Contact Group and the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. The Security Council mandate for Operation Althea also contributes, *inter alia*, to the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, and through it, to the specific role of the OSCE in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including in arms control and security sector reform in the country.

In conclusion, it is important to underline that complementarity between the Security Council and regional organizations should not mean that one should abdicate its responsibilities when the other takes on a crisis. On the contrary, the Council has important instruments at its disposal to create space for regional efforts, to assist them and to enhance their effectiveness. As a candidate for the Security Council, Switzerland will continue to be committed to prevention and synergies between the United Nations and regional organizations for a more stable and secure world.

Annex 52

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations

Ukraine highly appreciates the initiative of the Vietnamese presidency of the Security Council to hold today's important debate and expresses its gratitude to all the briefers for their briefings.

We deem cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations under the Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter to be an essential contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. As is rightly pointed out in the concept note for this open debate,

“regional and subregional organizations are attuned to the current trends and contexts of their regions and are better prepared for detecting and mitigating the signs and causes of worsening situations” (*S/2021/297, annex, para. 5*).

Indeed, geographical proximity, experience and in-depth knowledge of local dynamics are their comparative advantages.

Ukraine fully supports the Security Council in its efforts aimed at further strengthening interaction with regional organizations to ensure efficiency of the actions geared to prevent and resolve conflict. Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations presents a valuable example in this regard.

Against the backdrop of the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine, it is essential to ensure efficient use of the toolbox of the OSCE, which is the world's largest regional security organization. The OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, based on joint commitments undertaken in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, remains as relevant as ever.

Seven years ago, the Russian Federation effectively abused the Charter of the United Nations and all 10 principles of the Helsinki Final Act by violating Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, illegally occupying Ukraine's Crimea and parts of Donbas and instigating a bloody conflict at the centre of Europe. As recognized by the OSCE, the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and its severe consequences remain among the top threats to European security. It is therefore important that defusing tensions and facilitating conflict resolution have been identified as priorities of every OSCE Chairmanship since 2014.

Re-establishing full respect for the Helsinki principles is the only way to restore the security order based on the OSCE process and the lessons of the Second World War. In this context, over the years of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the OSCE has developed a number of instruments, including its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and its mediating role in the Trilateral Contact Group, with Ukraine and Russia as parties to the conflict. We must agree, however, with the assessment made in the concept note, namely, that the implementation of a great number of confidence-building measures undertaken within the framework of the regional organizations “does not live up to the expectations” (*Ibid., para. 9*).

Unfortunately, this is exactly the case with the Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict, as there has been a very worrying trend of escalation in recent weeks. Despite Ukraine's persistent efforts to ensure tangible headway in the process of negotiating a peaceful settlement, Russia continues to block progress both in the Trilateral Contact Group and in the Normandy format. As if this were not enough, the Kremlin is pursuing a dangerous escalation strategy, amassing its troops along

its border with Ukraine, in the temporarily occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and in Crimea.

Responding to this large-scale military build-up, Ukraine activated the 2011 Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures in Europe and, on 7 April, sent an official request to the Russian side to provide an explanation for its unusual military activity. Regrettably, Russia refused to offer substantial information. Further attempts by Ukraine to engage Russia in consultations aimed at reducing tensions were also disregarded. Similarly, Russia has undermined other attempts to implement confidence- and security-building measures. In particular, it boycotted a meeting convened at the request of Ukraine with other OSCE States participating.

In order to hide its numerous violations, the Russian side continues to restrict the freedom of movement of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in the conflict zone. According to OSCE reports, in 2020, approximately 96 per cent of these restrictions were imposed in the temporarily occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The same trend has continued in 2021.

Most recently, Moscow extended its escalation to the sea, announcing that starting next week and until October 2021, a part of the Black Sea in the direction of the Kerch Strait would be closed for warships and State vessels of other States under the pretext of military training. These actions by the Russian Federation constitute another attempt to usurp Ukraine's sovereign rights as a coastal State in violation of the norms and principles of international law. It is a fact that Ukraine possesses the right to regulate navigation in these maritime areas of the Black Sea. Furthermore, these actions are a gross violation of the freedom of navigation guaranteed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing military build-up along the State border with Ukraine, Russia is transferring warships from the Caspian Sea so as to reinforce its military capabilities in the Azov-Black Sea region. This behaviour clearly indicates Russia's unwillingness to cease its use of military and hybrid methods in its aggression against Ukraine.

Moreover, when this type of behaviour emanates from a permanent member of the Security Council, it becomes a major impediment to both maintaining international peace and security in general and strengthening partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations in particular. A sustainable resolution would include Russia's return to the tenets of international law, reversing its illegal occupation of Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine, halting its current escalation and completely fulfilling its legal commitments.

Annex 53**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations, Bakhtiyor Ibragimov**

First of all, let me commend the Permanent Mission of Viet Nam for convening today's Security Council open debate on such an important topic. At the outset, I would also like to thank all speakers for their insightful and comprehensive presentations. Today I would like to share with you the Central Asian States' experience in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue among themselves aimed at maintaining peace and stability in our region.

For the past four years, one can observe the fundamental changes in Central Asia. Thanks to the political will of the leaders of the Central Asian countries, we have managed to create an atmosphere of good-neighbourliness, mutual trust, friendship and mutual respect among ourselves.

Today the transformation of Central Asia is obvious. For example, the number of meetings between Heads of State significantly increased, the volume of trade notable grew and large-scale joint projects are being implemented. We have achieved many such positive practical results in all realms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the Central Asian States. In other words, we have had breakthroughs in every direction. The following factors have contributed to achieving positive transformations in our region.

First, there are no unresolvable issues; one just needs political will to settle them. Back in 2016, the President of Uzbekistan, Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, made it clear that the principle of "not shying away from resolving acute matters, but rather to seek reasonable compromises on them" would be at the core of Tashkent's regional policy. As a result, the Central Asian States have managed to address very sensitive issues, such as border demarcation and water and energy problems.

Secondly, we gradually came to an understanding of the commonality of our interests and started to talk more about things that unite us. Consultative meetings of Heads of States of Central Asian countries have become a symbol of such a pragmatic approach. Currently, the Central Asian States are working on a joint document on friendship, good-neighbourliness and cooperation in our region in the twenty-first century. One should note that, until now, such treaties were concluded on a bilateral basis only.

Thirdly, a more stable, consolidated and predictable Central Asia has become more attractive in terms of economic and investment opportunities for foreign partners. For example, for just the three years from 2016 to 2019, the flow of foreign direct investment to the region increased by 40 per cent, reaching a total of \$37.6 billion.

Fourthly, the overall improvement of relations among Central Asian States has been conducive to a burgeoning of people-to-people exchanges. For example, Uzbekistan has simplified visa regimes and opened up dozens of checkpoints on its borders with neighbouring States.

Fifthly, the regional convergence has been supported by outside players. From the outset, we made it clear that the process of convergence in Central Asia was not aimed against anyone's interests. As a result of this, we have lately observed increased interest on the part of major partners in deepening collaboration with our region.

In June 2019, the European Union adopted a new strategy on Central Asia. In February 2020, the United States developed a separate strategy towards the Central

Asian region. In October 2020, a statement by the Foreign Ministers of the Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation on strategic directions for cooperation was announced. And, in July 2020, the Central Asia-China Foreign Ministerial Meeting was launched.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our thanks for the current transformation, which has enabled the Central Asian States to significantly improve the overall political situation in the region. In this regard, we believe that the experience of the Central Asian States may serve as a good example in confidence-building for other countries.
