



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

*Provisional*

## 8930<sup>th</sup>

meeting

Tuesday, 14 December 2021, 3 p.m.

New York

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*President:* Mr. Abarry. . . . . (Niger)

*Members:*

China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Lipand
France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
India . . . . .	Mr. Raguttahalli
Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya . . . . .	Ms. Nthoki
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Heimerback
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. Prince
Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Laouani
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
United States of America . . . . .	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield
Viet Nam . . . . .	Mr. Pham

## Agenda

### Non-proliferation

Letter dated 1 December 2021 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/992)

Twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2021/995)

Letter dated 7 December 2021 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/1019)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Non-proliferation**

**Letter dated 1 December 2021 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/992)**

**Twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2021/995)**

**Letter dated 7 December 2021 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/1019)**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Germany and the Islamic Republic of Iran to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to the following documents: S/2021/992, which contains a letter dated 1 December 2021 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/2021/995, which contains the twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015); and S/2021/1019, which contains a letter dated 7 December 2021 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Ms. DiCarlo, His Excellency Mr. Skoog and Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland, in her capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

I now give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

**Ms. DiCarlo:** I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to brief the Council on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015).

On 29 November, diplomatic efforts on the JCPOA resumed in Vienna. The status of the negotiations indicate that the full restoration of the Plan and the resolution will require additional effort and patience. I recall that the JCPOA itself was the result of more than a decade of determined diplomacy. The endeavour, however, was worth it. The Plan, together with resolution 2231 (2015), is widely regarded as a cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and an example of what dialogue and diplomacy can achieve.

The Secretary-General hopes that in their current negotiations, the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran will mobilize the same spirit and commitment that resulted in the JCPOA. There is simply no viable alternative to the full and effective implementation of the Plan and the resolution.

In this regard, together with the Secretary-General, I appeal to the United States to lift or waive its sanctions, as outlined in the Plan, and extend the waivers regarding the trade in oil with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Also important is the extension of United States waivers regarding certain civilian nuclear-related activities taking place at the Bushehr nuclear power plant, the Fordow facility and the Arak reactor. Waiver extensions are also required for the transfer of enriched uranium out of the Islamic Republic of Iran in exchange for natural uranium.

We also call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to reverse the steps it has taken that are not consistent with its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan. In this reporting period, the International Atomic Energy Agency indicated that Iran has continued its research and development activities related to uranium metal production.

While the Agency has not been able to verify the stockpile of enriched uranium in the Islamic Republic of

Iran, it estimates a total enriched uranium stockpile of 2,489.7 kilograms, including 113.8 kilograms enriched up to 20 per cent and 17.7 kilograms enriched up to 60 per cent uranium-235, respectively. That exceeds the limit agreed to in the JCPOA, which is a total enriched uranium stockpile of 202.8 kilograms enriched up to 3.67 per cent uranium-235.

Moreover, on 1 December, the Agency reported that the Islamic Republic of Iran had also begun uranium enrichment using advanced centrifuges at the Fordow fuel enrichment plant. Furthermore, the Agency has reported that its verification and monitoring activities have been seriously undermined as a result of Iran's decision to stop the implementation of its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, including the Additional Protocol. Most recently, the Agency stressed that in the absence of regular access to its verification and monitoring equipment, as agreed to under the Plan, it is now becoming a significant challenge for the Agency to restore its continuity of knowledge concerning Iran's nuclear activities.

The Plan and resolution 2231 (2015) support our common objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and regional and international security. In that regard, the bilateral and multilateral initiatives to improve relationships with the Islamic Republic of Iran are positive developments. It is important for the Islamic Republic of Iran to address concerns raised by participants in the Plan and by other Member States in relation to resolution 2231 (2015). We also call on Member States and the private sector to engage in trade with the Islamic Republic of Iran and to utilize available arrangements, such as the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges, the procurement channel provided for in resolution 2231 (2015) and the Swiss Humanitarian Trade Arrangement, as appropriate.

I will now turn to the measures set out in annex B to the resolution, as outlined in the Secretary-General's twelfth report on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015)(S/2021/995).

First, on the nuclear-related provisions, no new proposals have been submitted over the past six months to the procurement channel. The Security Council, however, has received eight notifications submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 of annex B for certain nuclear-related activities consistent with the Plan. During the reporting period, the Secretariat received information regarding the possible transfer of nuclear-related

dual-use items to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In one instance, the Secretariat confirmed that items exported from Germany were not on the list of dual-use items contained in resolution 2231 (2015) and therefore did not require Council approval before their transfer. In another instance, an individual was charged in Norway with providing technical assistance to four researchers from the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding an item on the dual-use items list contained in resolution 2231 (2015). The trial in that case is pending and scheduled for 2022.

Secondly, with regard to the ballistic-missile-related provisions of the resolution, France, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States provided information to the Secretary-General and the Security Council concerning a ballistic missile launch in May and two space-launch vehicle tests by the Islamic Republic of Iran in June. The information provided reflects divergent views among those Member States as to whether those launches are inconsistent with paragraph 3 of the resolution.

Thirdly, the Secretariat received information from Saudi Arabia and Israel related to paragraph 4 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), which pertains to the supply, sale or transfer to or from the Islamic Republic of Iran of all items, materials, equipment, goods and technology set out in document S/2015/546. That document includes ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicle systems (UAVs) with a range of 300 kilometres or more, including target and reconnaissance drones, and cruise missiles. The Secretariat has examined the debris of six ballistic missiles, one cruise missile and several UAVs used in various attacks against Saudi Arabia. Saudi authorities believe that those weapons systems had been transferred to Houthi fighters in Yemen in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015).

The Secretariat also had the opportunity to examine the debris of an alleged Iranian UAV that was intercepted by the Israel Defense Forces as it entered Israeli airspace via the Jordanian border. Israeli authorities believe that this UAV was launched from either Iraq or Syria. The Secretariat is still analysing the information collected and will report back to the Council on these issues in due course, as appropriate.

Finally, on the asset-freeze provisions, the Secretariat received information from a Member State regarding financial and commercial activities of

two individuals and one entity on the list established pursuant to resolution 2231 (2015), which may be inconsistent with the asset freeze. The Secretariat is currently analysing the information received and will report back to the Council, as appropriate.

In recent days, both Iran and the United States have again affirmed their seriousness in seeking to return to the full implementation of the JCPOA. The Secretary-General is encouraged by these pledges and calls on both countries to expeditiously translate those commitments into a mutually acceptable agreement. He is grateful to the other Joint Commission participants for their continued diplomatic efforts and urges them to maintain an environment conducive to the continuation and completion of the talks in Vienna.

In closing, I would like to thank Her Excellency Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). I would also like to thank the Coordinator of the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission for his continued cooperation.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Skoog.

**Mr. Skoog:** I congratulate you, Mr. President, as well as the Niger, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council, and I thank you for giving me the floor.

It is again an honour to have this opportunity to address the Security Council on behalf of the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

I would first like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and his team in the Secretariat, represented here by Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, for their endless dedication and perseverance in their work related to the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and, in particular, for preparing the report on its implementation (S/2021/995) for today's discussion. My second remark of gratitude goes to Her Excellency Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason of Ireland in her role as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and for her work to keep members informed of the current state of play.

Allow me to briefly set the scene for the developments since we last reported on this matter in June (see S/PV.8811). As we all know, since April, all JCPOA participants and the United States have engaged in intense negotiations in Vienna to bring the JCPOA back on track. The negotiations were paused on 20 June and a new President and Government have since taken office in Iran.

During the five months that followed, the High Representative of the EU, in his capacity as Coordinator of the JCPOA, dedicated significant efforts to impress upon the Iranian side the need to resume the negotiations based on the complex work undertaken and the hard-won compromises already reached by the summer. We have held several rounds of consultations in Tehran and Brussels. We have continued close coordination with other JCPOA participants and with the United States.

We welcome the efforts of all the members of the Council and our partners to support this endeavour and hope to continue working hand-in-hand to restore the JCPOA. Negotiations finally resumed on 29 November in Vienna and the seventh round is ongoing as we speak. Our aim remains to negotiate the return of the United States to the agreement and the resumption of JCPOA commitments by the United States and Iran. We remain convinced that we are much better off with the JCPOA in place. No better alternative exists for the international community to be reassured in a verifiable way that Iran's nuclear programme is dedicated solely to peaceful purposes and that, through the lifting of sanctions, Iran can also reap economic benefits.

The EU remains fully committed to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA and we are determined to continue working with the international community for that purpose. But there is an overwhelming sense of urgency, shared by most of the delegations negotiating in Vienna that, in the light of Iran's continued acceleration of its nuclear programme, there is not much time left for negotiations.

Over the past months, we have noted with great regret and worry that Iran has continued to expand its nuclear activities by accumulating more enriched uranium to 20 and 60 per cent uranium-235, respectively, installing more advanced centrifuges, and producing uranium metal. Those activities are not only inconsistent with the nuclear-related provisions of the JCPOA, but also raise serious non-proliferation concerns, particularly

since Iran decided to suspend the implementation of the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement and JCPOA transparency provisions as of 23 February, which has substantially decreased the access of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to relevant information on Iran's nuclear programme.

Furthermore, Iran's continued lack of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency is a source of grave concern. As the only mandated international body authorized to verify the Iranian nuclear programme, it is in the interest of the entire international community, including Iran, for the Agency to have access and continue to receive and gather information and knowledge so that it may verify the developments in Iran, in line with the provisions of the JCPOA. IAEA monitoring of Iranian commitments under the JCPOA and ensuring continuity of knowledge of Iran's nuclear programme is also key for the negotiation process.

We welcome the new Iranian Government's confirmation of Iran's stated position in the Vienna negotiations that it would stand ready to return to the full implementation of the JCPOA, provided that conditions are in place for an effective normalization of its economic and trade relations with the international community. We recognize that Iran has faced very serious negative economic consequences following the United States withdrawal from the JCPOA and the reimposition of previously lifted United States unilateral sanctions, which we have deeply regretted. That, together with the discontinuation of the granting of nuclear waivers, has hampered the full implementation of the deal.

We therefore welcomed the political commitment of President Biden and the United States Administration to engaging in serious negotiations with a view to a possible return to the JCPOA and to Iran's full implementation of its nuclear commitments. We have taken note of the United States position that it would stand ready to return to mutual compliance with the JCPOA and, in that context, would be prepared to lift all of the JCPOA-related sanctions. Based on that and the positions expressed by the existing JCPOA participants, we call for all sides to be flexible and pragmatic and step up their efforts to accelerate the process to put the JCPOA back on the full implementation track. While we acknowledge the strong sense of urgency, we need to make sure to preserve sufficient space for the intense ongoing diplomatic efforts.

Let me also recall that the procurement channel remains operational. As highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General, it remains a vital transparency and confidence-building mechanism. It gives assurances to Member States and private sector actors that transfers of nuclear and dual-use goods and services are fully in line with the resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA.

Furthermore, we urge all Members of the Organization to refrain from actions and statements that could increase regional and international tensions and escalate a military build-up in the region and beyond. The EU has repeatedly urged Iran to desist from activities that could deepen mistrust and that are inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015). The EU remains fully committed to multilateral diplomacy, which has been successful for several decades. Similarly, let us not forget that the origins of the JCPOA are firmly anchored in global non-proliferation and that it is the outcome of effective multilateralism. We have a common interest in making the JCPOA work. Let us do this together, and let us do it swiftly. We do not see any other viable option.

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

I now give the floor to Ambassador Byrne Nason.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): I wish to again express my appreciation to Security Council members for their trust in appointing me as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

Over the course of this year, I have done my utmost to support the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in an impartial and transparent manner. I have worked closely with all Council members to meet our shared responsibility to ensure the full and effective implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA, which it underpins. I continue to maintain an active dialogue with Member States, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, on issues related to the implementation of the resolution.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Secretariat for the invaluable advice and strong support they have given me over the course of this year in carrying out my duties as Facilitator.

The twelfth report of the Facilitator (see S/2021/1019) was approved by Council members on 7 December. I would like to thank each of them for their constructive engagement in that process in a spirit



of compromise and flexibility. The report provides a factual account of the activities that took place in the 2231 format of the Security Council, covering the period from 25 June to 7 December 2021. It includes relevant communications, summarized in my report, as well as key aspects of the workings of the procurement channel. Council members may refer to the report for details, but I wish to mention three points in particular.

First, I would like to report that one meeting of the Security Council in the 2231 format was held during this reporting period, on 7 December, at which representatives of the Security Council discussed the findings and recommendations contained in the twelfth report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/995) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), prior to its public release. Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo has already referred to some of those points in her briefing. The 2231 format also held a discussion on the resumption of talks in Vienna, on ballistic missile and space vehicle launches by the Islamic Republic of Iran and broader developments related to resolution 2231 (2015).

Secondly, during the reporting period a total of 20 notes were circulated in the 2231 format. In addition, I sent 16 official communications to Member States and the Coordinator of the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission. I received a total of 15 communications from Member States and the Coordinator. Among the communications circulated were two regular quarterly reports issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency in September and November 2021, as well as eight updates across the whole reporting period. I note that the impartial and professional role played by the Agency in its verification and monitoring activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as requested under resolution 2231 (2015), is essential, as it underpins international confidence in the JCPOA itself.

Thirdly, no new proposals were submitted to the Security Council through the procurement channel during the reporting period. That channel represents a key transparency and confidence-building mechanism under the JCPOA. It remains operational and stands ready to review proposals. I join the Secretary-General's encouragement of all participants in the JCPOA, Member States and the private sector to fully support and utilize that channel.

The JCPOA is a major achievement in nuclear non-proliferation and an example of how we can work together to resolve protracted and difficult issues through dialogue and diplomacy. It remains the best way to guarantee the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. The resumption of talks in Vienna offers the prospect a possible return of the United States to the JCPOA and its full and effective implementation by all sides. I hope that the talks will build on the progress made in earlier rounds and can move quickly to reach a positive conclusion. In turn, we must continue to play our part in demonstrating that resolution 2231 (2015), which endorses the JCPOA, is working as it should.

In conclusion, I underline the call set out in paragraph 2 of resolution 2231 (2015) to all

“Member States, regional organizations and international organizations to take such actions as may be appropriate to support the implementation of the JCPOA, including ... by refraining from actions that undermine implementation of commitments under the JCPOA”.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Byrne Nason for her briefing.

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

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): I thank all of today's briefers for providing updates on this critical issue.

The United States continues to pursue the path of diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to full compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and to address our full range of concerns with Iran. President Biden has been clear that he is prepared to return to United States compliance, and to stay in compliance, so long as Iran does the same. We are fully prepared to lift sanctions inconsistent with our JCPOA commitments, which would allow Iran to receive the economic benefits of the deal. And we are convinced that, if Iran approaches talks in Vienna with urgency and good faith, we can quickly reach and implement an understanding on mutual return.

We cannot, however, allow Iran to accelerate its nuclear programme and slow-walk its nuclear diplomacy. I am sorry to report that that is exactly what appears to be happening at the JCPOA talks in Vienna. Iran greeted the resumption of talks with new

nuclear provocations and proceeded to stake out vague, unrealistic, maximalist and unconstructive positions on both nuclear and sanctions issues in the talks. We made substantial progress over six rounds of talks this spring, with all sides making difficult decisions. As all five permanent members of the Security Council, plus Germany (P5+1), agree, the outcome of these negotiations is the only possible basis on which to reach a conclusion. But now Iran is seeking to reopen those compromises. The simple truth is that, as Secretary of State Blinken has made clear, Iran is almost out of runway.

There is a little time left, but Iran's continued nuclear advancements and its lack of urgency in the talks are hollowing out the non-proliferation benefits that would be achieved by a mutual return to full JCPOA compliance. Iran's continued nuclear escalations are inconsistent with the stated goal of returning to mutual compliance with the JCPOA. These escalations raise questions about Iran's intentions, particularly given that the United States has made clear its willingness to lift all sanctions inconsistent with the JCPOA in the context of a mutual return to compliance. Let me be clear: Iran's actions will not provide it with any leverage in negotiations and will only intensify our concerns about Iran's activities.

While diplomatic negotiations continue, we remind Member States of the importance of the continued implementation of the remaining sanctions measures in annex B of resolution 2231 (2015). Restrictions remain in place on transfers to and from Iran of certain ballistic-missile and nuclear technology, and individuals and entities on the list established pursuant to resolution 2231 (2015) remain subject to an assets freeze. We support the Secretariat's continued reporting on the implementation of those measures. We appreciate in particular the Secretary-General's reporting on the use of uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs) in the region. Iran's continued proliferation of UAV and ballistic missile technology to its partners and proxies destabilizes Yemen, Iraq and maritime security around the region. For example, Iran has enabled the Houthis to launch increasingly sophisticated strikes deep into Saudi Arabia and into densely-populated Yemeni cities. We encourage the Secretariat to continue to investigate those incidents for possible violations of annex B of resolution 2231 (2015).

The Secretary-General's report (S/2021/995) also finds that International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA) inspectors have been harassed by Iran while monitoring and verifying its implementation of its Safeguards Agreement. That is in direct contravention of their diplomatic privileges and immunities, as well as simple decency. Iran must provide the required cooperation to resolve the IAEA concerns related to possible undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran without further delay. Iran must fully implement the joint statement it negotiated with IAEA Director General Grossi in Tehran on 12 September. Despite clear calls from all the members of the P5+1, that is yet to be done. The IAEA has our full support in carrying out its critical verification and monitoring responsibilities in Iran for both safeguards and JCPOA purposes.

The diplomatic process currently under way remains the best approach to limit Iran's nuclear programme and to set us on a path to address the full range of concerns that we and others have with Iran's activities in the region and beyond. The world is prepared to support a mutual return to compliance. But for the world to engage economically and expand diplomatic cooperation with Iran, Iran must first show seriousness at the table and come back to compliance with the deal in short order, just as the United States has made clear we are also prepared to do.

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing. We welcome the Secretary-General's twelfth report (S/2021/995) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and thank the Secretariat for its continued professionalism and support. I would also like to thank Ambassador Byrne Nason and her team for the work of the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and for her briefing. I also thank His Excellency Mr. Olaf Skoog for his briefing.

The United Kingdom has consistently demonstrated our commitment to implementing resolution 2231 (2015) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Our priority is to see the United States return to the agreement and Iran to return to compliance, and we are negotiating in Vienna towards that goal. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, the latest talks in Vienna resumed on 29 November, five months after Iran broke them off. During those talks, Iran has introduced new maximalist demands, many of which go beyond the JCPOA. The process is not moving fast enough, and time is running out.

At the same time, Iran's nuclear escalation is undermining international peace and security and the global non-proliferation system. Iran has continued to develop a ballistic missile programme, which is inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015). It is important that the Security Council focus on the gravity of the current situation. The Iranian nuclear programme has never been more advanced than it is today. Iran's total stockpile contains enough fissile material that, if enriched further, could produce several nuclear weapons. Iran is producing highly-enriched uranium, which is unprecedented for a State without a nuclear-weapons programme, as well as uranium metal, which provides weapons-applicable knowledge.

Moreover, since February, Iran has curtailed monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in violation of resolution 2231 (2015); and since 2019, has failed to cooperate with the Agency on safeguards investigations. Iran has also failed to implement its bilateral agreement with the IAEA to service cameras and allow access to the Karaj site. We therefore call on Iran to restore fully all access under resolution 2231 (2015) and to implement its legal obligations and bilateral understanding with the Agency without delay.

We have reached a fork in the road. We hope that Iran will choose to conclude a fair and comprehensive deal that would benefit the Iranian people and nation. If Iran continues its current path of nuclear escalation, in weeks, not months, it will be responsible for collapsing the JCPOA and provoking a serious crisis, which would require a robust response from the Council.

**Mr. Pham** (Viet Nam) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union, for their comprehensive briefings.

(*spoke in English*)

I take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Security Council Facilitator of the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), for her able leadership, tireless efforts and her report (see S/2021/1019). I welcome the participation of the representatives of Iran and Germany in today's meeting.

It is encouraging to witness the recent diplomatic engagements between the parties concerned in the negotiations over the return to, and the full and

effective implementation of, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015). The resumption of such negotiations in Vienna in November and in recent days of December has reflected the continued commitments and efforts of the parties concerned to bridge differences and address challenges on this matter after five months of delays. We call on all parties to continue to engage in constructive negotiations, in line of the Secretary-General's call for continued diplomatic engagement on this matter.

We note with concern the information contained in the Secretary-General's twelfth report (S/2021/995) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors' reports on activities of non-compliance with the implementation of the Plan and resolution 2231 (2015). We commend the IAEA's efforts on verification and monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite its significant challenges.

Viet Nam has consistently stressed the importance of upholding international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, international treaties and Security Council resolutions. We reiterate our call for full cooperation for monitoring purposes, as transparency is a crucial element of the confidence-building aspect of the JCPOA. We also call on the parties concerned to spare no effort to resolve differences, exercise self-restraint and refrain from any acts that may exacerbate the situation, erode trust or escalate tensions in the region. It is also crucial for the international community and countries of the region to contribute to the ongoing diplomatic efforts.

The JCPOA is the best way to ensure a comprehensive, long-term and proper solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and contribute to regional and international peace and security. We share the assessment of the Secretary-General that the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015) remain a success of multilateral diplomacy and nuclear non-proliferation and continue to enjoy the full support of the broader international community.

In the light of the upcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we wish to emphasize the importance of the balanced implementation of its three pillars, namely, nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

As this is the last time that Viet Nam is speaking on this issue as a member of the Security Council, I sincerely hope that all parties will continue their efforts



to strengthen dialogue and negotiations to resolve differences and reaffirm their commitments to fully and effectively implementing the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015).

Viet Nam was a member of the IAEA Board of Governors when the JCPOA was concluded, during which we witnessed the Vienna spirit at work and the success of diplomacy. Viet Nam is now a member of the Board again. We will continue to do our utmost to support this process at all appropriate forums. Let the Vienna spirit prevail again in the negotiations towards a successful outcome that contributes to peace and stability in the region and the world at large.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Ambassador Olof Skoog for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason and her team for her report (see S/2021/1019). I welcome the presence of the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Germany.

As we have previously stated, since the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015, Mexico has supported the Plan in its belief that it is a successful example of multilateral diplomacy and a key component in ensuring the stability of the international nuclear non-proliferation architecture. The agreement in and of itself represented a major shift in the way the Security Council would deal with the issue of Iran's nuclear programme by opting for an approach of cooperation and trust over a sanctions regime.

Mexico stresses the importance of a return to the JCPOA without preconditions, which would entail the lifting of unilateral sanctions against Iran and that Iran resume upholding all the commitments it made in 2015. While we understand the position of those who believe that addressing the broader security dynamics in the region is a priority, my country believes that it would be preferable to conduct a separate dialogue in that regard so as to not further hinder the urgent return to the JCPOA.

The reports of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have been regularly documenting worrisome activities, including Iran's high level of uranium enrichment, increasingly advanced research into metal production and the use of modern and centrifuges. In addition, the restriction of access by IAEA monitors to facilities and sites not

declared under the Additional Protocol is also a source of concern. While we are grateful to the IAEA Director General for his efforts to achieve subsequent short-term arrangements to maintain monitoring activities, those arrangements are neither predictable nor sustainable. And although transparency and cooperation are crucial elements for the proper functioning of the Plan of Action, we call on Iran to renew the temporary agreement with the IAEA with a longer time frame in order to maintain monitoring and verification.

With regard to missile-related activities, we must note that recent launches generate mistrust.

Mexico is committed to achieving and maintaining a world free from nuclear weapons through compliance with the commitments and obligations under the various legal instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. My country seeks the strengthening and safeguarding of the non-proliferation regime and nuclear disarmament, established by the NPT and, as such, defends the right of all countries to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. But it is clear that this right goes hand in hand with the obligation to comply with all commitments and obligations under the NPT, in particular full cooperation with the IAEA.

The previous time we considered this issue in the Security Council (see S/PV.8811), we were anticipating results from Vienna. However, half a year later, there is still uncertainty. Despite that, my country trusts that it will be possible to reach an agreement that will enable a return to full compliance with the JCPOA.

**Mr. Ragutthahalli** (India): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo; the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Ambassador Olof Skoog; and Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), the Permanent Representative of Ireland, Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, for their briefings. I also welcome the presence of the representatives of Iran and Germany at this meeting. I will be brief in my remarks.

India supports the full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015). India also supports the peaceful resolution of the relevant issues through dialogue and diplomacy.

We value the efforts of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to implement the Agency's verification and monitoring activities in Iran.

We urge Iran to continue to cooperate with the IAEA in the effective discharge of the Agency's functions and to address the unresolved issues relating to its nuclear activities.

**Ms. Prince** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Skoog and Ambassador Byrne Nason, in her capacity as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), for their briefings.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains committed to the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). And we continue to support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA remains a central pillar of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture, and it is unquestionably a triumph of multilateral diplomacy. Its preservation and revival are therefore critical to safeguard peace and stability in the Middle East and, indeed, the wider world.

We deeply regret the United States May 2018 withdrawal from the agreement and its subsequent decisions to reimpose sanctions and to terminate waivers. Those actions ran counter to the requirements and objectives of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. Furthermore, such actions do not encourage an environment conducive to constructive diplomatic engagement. We therefore continue to urge the United States to rejoin the agreement, and we appeal for the immediate lifting of all unilateral coercive measures. This appeal has become even more urgent as these sanctions have considerably limited Iran's ability to effectively respond to the coronavirus disease pandemic.

We also regret Iran's decision to cease performing several of its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. We take note that Iran has indicated that those steps are reversible, having undertaken them subsequent to the United States withdrawal from the agreement. We urge Iran to return to full compliance to fulfil the totality of its obligations.

The JCPOA remains the only viable path to ensure a peaceful, comprehensive and long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We therefore support the ongoing diplomatic process in Vienna, and we encourage the parties to build on the progress made thus far by fully

engaging in a spirit of mutual respect and compromise. Parties should remain mindful of the purpose of the agreement in an effort to find common ground. Furthermore, members of the international community should refrain from provocative actions that could inflame tensions and deter positive engagement.

We support the mandate of the International Atomic Energy Agency as it works towards ensuring the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. The importance of the Agency's verification and monitoring role cannot be overstated, and as such it is critical that it be granted regular access to effectively carry out its activities. We encourage the parties to engage constructively on this issue.

Resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA were not only conceived to guarantee the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme but are also intended to nurture an environment that promotes and facilitates the development of normal trade and economic relations with the country. In that regard, the continued effective functioning of the procurement channel as well as the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges is essential.

The international community must continue to support the JCPOA and all similar multilateral instruments aimed at promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. For its part, as a member of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States zone of peace and a party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear weapon. We remain steadfast in our commitment to disarmament, a goal which is inextricably linked to non-proliferation

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): Ireland welcomes the reports of the Secretary-General (S/2021/995) and the Joint Commission (see S/2021/992 and S/2021/1019) and has taken note of their findings. I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ambassador Skoog for their informative briefings.

Ireland is strongly committed to preserving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). As the three reports before us today make clear, the JCPOA is an important achievement in multilateral diplomacy and remains the best way to guarantee the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

We welcome the resumption of talks in Vienna, after five months, under the framework of the Joint Commission. It is important that the talks move forward quickly. With the necessary collective political will by all sides, a swift conclusion to the talks and a return to the full implementation of the agreement by all sides is within our reach.

It is imperative that the United States fully meet its commitments under the JCPOA, including the lifting of sanctions, and take all the necessary steps to facilitate the full and proper implementation of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). It is important that the Iranian people see the real and tangible benefits that are an essential part of the Plan.

It is equally imperative that Iran return fully to the implementation of its commitments under the JCPOA. We are deeply concerned by actions including uranium enrichment up to 60 per cent, further fabrication, installation and use of advanced centrifuges and uranium metal production. Those activities carry the real risk of seriously undermining the JCPOA and the broader nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The IAEA's monitoring and verification role is crucial in giving confidence to the international community on the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. For that reason, we continue to be concerned about Iran's decision to suspend the implementation of transparency measures under the JCPOA. The Agency's ability to restore continuity of knowledge at all locations in Iran is critical to its monitoring and verification role. We call on Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA to ensure all the necessary access to that end. Ireland strongly supports and values the integrity and professionalism of the IAEA in carrying out that vital work.

We hope that an agreement can quickly be reached on a return to the full implementation of the JCPOA. Ireland supports the Secretary-General's call on all States, including those of the region, to support the implementation of the Plan.

Finally, it is important that here in New York we demonstrate that resolution 2231 (2015) is working as it should. Ireland will continue to support all efforts to that end.

**Ms. Heimerback** (Norway): I thank Ambassador Skoog and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for their updates. I also warmly thank Ambassador Byrne

Nason as the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

Let me start by reaffirming Norway's full support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015). As the Secretary-General has noted, the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015) continue to enjoy broad international support. An effective and fully implemented JCPOA strengthens global nuclear non-proliferation and is important for regional and international stability and security.

We remain of the view that the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA is the best available opportunity to help build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. As also noted by the Secretary-General, that confidence may be undermined by delays and lack of diplomatic progress in putting the JCPOA back on track.

Norway joins other speakers in commending the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as it strives to continue its verification and monitoring activities in Iran. At our previous meeting in June (see S/PV.8811), several Council members rightfully expressed their concern about the restrictions of access placed on the Agency. We deeply regret the further decline in, and lack of, access at one facility. Transparency measures are a vital component of the JCPOA, and the current situation seriously undermines the Agency's ability to restore continuity of knowledge.

Norway expressed its regret at the decision of the United States to withdraw from the JCPOA in 2018 and unilaterally reimpose sanctions. We also deeply regret that Iran has taken a series of steps to reduce its nuclear-related commitments. The Director General of the IAEA has made clear in his reports submitted to the Council that Iran continues to advance its nuclear programme. Moreover, we express deep concern over Iran's deliberate steps towards nuclear escalation. That presents a serious challenge to the international community and complicates the return to a functioning JCPOA.

We urge Iran to return to full compliance with the JCPOA and resume full cooperation with the IAEA without delay. On the issue of ballistic missile-related provisions, we also share the concerns raised previously and encourage Iran to address them.

The situation surrounding the JCPOA remains tense and unpredictable. Norway remains a steadfast supporter of constructive diplomatic dialogue to decrease tensions and increase trust and cooperation. We repeat our call on all stakeholders to show restraint and avoid actions that may contribute to escalation.

Finally, we welcome the resumption of discussions in Vienna, and we echo the call of other colleagues in encouraging Iran to engage in serious negotiations. Norway shares the ambition of an efficient return to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA that restores and delivers the benefits of the agreement for all. We hope that all sides act on the urgent need to put the Plan back on track.

**Mr. De Rivi re** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union (EU) for their briefings.

Since 2015, France and its three European partners have demonstrated a steady commitment to the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015) by, first, lifting EU sanctions in line with the agreed timetable and facilitating access for our companies to the Iranian market; secondly, clearly opposing the previous United States Administration's withdrawal from the agreement; and, finally, warning about the progress of the Iranian nuclear programme beyond the limits set by the agreement.

Together with all the participants in the JCPOA, during six negotiating sessions last spring we made significant progress towards bringing all parties back to the agreement. At Iran's request, those talks were interrupted on 20 June, the day after its presidential elections. Since then, Iran has repeatedly delayed in returning to the negotiating table for five months.

We had high hopes for the resumption of the JCPOA negotiations in Vienna. However, today, two weeks after the resumption of the talks, in which we have engaged seriously and constructively, it has to be said that the survival of the Iranian nuclear agreement is threatened now more than ever. The Security Council cannot ignore the gravity of the situation.

We are both disappointed and concerned about the position of the new Iranian negotiating team. Iran has made maximal demands, many of which go beyond

the JCPOA, while, at the same time, backtracking on compromises that had been reached after long weeks of difficult discussions. Despite Iran's change of tone in recent days, we are far from any progress in the nuclear talks. The talks are not going in the right direction and are not progressing fast enough.

Time is of the essence. We are nearing the point where Iran's nuclear escalation will have rendered the JCPOA meaningless. For the past two years and until now, including during the Vienna talks, Tehran has continued and accelerated the development of its most problematic nuclear activities without any credible civilian justification, in particular the rapid accumulation of uranium enriched to 20 per cent and 60 per cent, as well as activities related to the production of uranium metal, which provide key know-how for the manufacture of a nuclear device. As a result, Iran's nuclear programme has never been as advanced as it is today.

Those developments are all the more alarming given that, at the same time, there is a serious lack of cooperation by Iran with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

We all know the details of those failures from the IAEA reports, and we reiterate our full support for the Agency's work. The IAEA is now indicating that it may not be able to continue to have full knowledge about Iran's nuclear programme, which is key to ensuring a return to compliance with the JCPOA and its verification. That is particularly true with regard to the advanced centrifuge production activities at the Karaj site. We call on Iran to resume full cooperation with the Agency.

In that context, France is concerned about Iran's continued ballistic activities and transfers, which have a destabilizing effect in the region. Iran cannot be unaware that, under its obligations under resolution 2231 (2015), it is not to carry out any activities related to ballistic missiles designed to deliver nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic-missile technology.

We are at a crossroads. Iran has two paths before it — either it continues its nuclear escalation in the coming weeks, thus leading to the collapse of the JCPOA and triggering a serious crisis, or it chooses to urgently return to the path of a comprehensive and fair agreement for the benefit of its people.



This second path is in everyone's interest. The diplomatic path remains resolutely open to Iran to reach an agreement but, given the developments in its nuclear programme, this is our last chance to restore the JCPOA. That must happen in weeks, not months. France therefore reaffirms its determination to pursue active discussions in Vienna over the next few days with all its E3+3 partners — Germany, Italy, China, Russian and the United States — for a rapid return to the JCPOA. It calls on Iran to negotiate in good faith and to show the same determination to conclude an agreement as soon as possible.

**Mr. Laouani** (Tunisia): I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Ambassador Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland and Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), for their detailed briefings. I also welcome the participation of the representatives of Germany and Iran to this meeting.

Tunisia shares the view that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is an important addition to the global non-proliferation architecture and that it remains the best way to continue to guarantee the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. We sincerely hope that the ongoing discussions to revive the agreement will soon conclude successfully, and we renew the call for the full and effective implementation of this agreement and of resolution 2231 (2015) by all parties.

We once again take note of the differences of interpretation regarding the implementation of the provisions of Annex B of resolution 2231 (2015), in particular with regard to ballistic missile-related activities. While reaffirming the importance of giving due consideration to the concerns expressed, including regarding regional security issues, we urge all parties to refrain from all activities and rhetoric that could deepen mistrust or aggravate tensions and to engage in good faith in dialogue and negotiations to resolve their differences.

In that regard, Tunisia welcomes the bilateral meetings held between various countries of the region during the previous months. We also appreciate all the constructive initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and trust between the parties concerned, including through the creation of new platforms and mechanisms.

Finally, I would like to once again underline the importance of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East given the key role it could play in global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, as well as efforts to bring about regional peace, security and stability.

The Second Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, aimed at elaborating a treaty establishing such a zone, which concluded earlier this month and in which the Arab countries and Iran participated constructively, represents a positive step towards that goal and deserves our full support.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo; Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland and Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), for their briefings. We also welcome the participation of our Iranian colleagues in today's meeting.

We approve the adoption of the twelfth report of the Facilitator (see S/2021/1019) and welcome Ireland's efforts to agree on the text, in which our colleagues demonstrated a truly professional and results-oriented approach. We still have a number of criticisms with regard to the text but, given the importance of maintaining Council unity on this issue, we decided to join the consensus.

The world's attention is now focused on the negotiations in Vienna. Our colleagues there have a very challenging task ahead — to return the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to the initially agreed framework. We must help them, and we can only do so by demonstrating strategic restraint and not fuelling tensions. That applies to all parties to the JCPOA, Security Council members and Iran's neighbours in the region. In the context of resolution 2231 (2015), what is urgently needed now is professional diplomacy. We need to give it a chance to succeed. Its success is in our shared interests.

Against that backdrop, I must frankly say that I am rather puzzled that some of our Western colleagues today rushed to comment not only on the negotiation process, but also on Iran's position at the talks. As

we understand it, that position is evolving and being developed. That is why any blanket conclusions, especially those pronounced here today in New York, are wholly inappropriate.

We must bear in mind that the Vienna talks are objectively not a quick or simple process. There is an apt Russian proverb to describe this: "It is easier to tear down than to build up." As many have said today, it was the United States that tore everything down in 2018, when it withdrew from the JCPOA and did a great deal of damage, including by blocking other parties from implementing the agreement. The world then waited six months for the Biden Administration to finally determine its policy towards the JCPOA. Though not often mentioned, that is one of the main reasons why the return to the JCPOA is so difficult today. So let us be objective and not forget that the source of today's problems is the policy of the United States, not Iran. Now our American colleagues speak of their readiness to return to the implementation of the JCPOA, but those are just words that must be confirmed by action.

It is regrettable that, despite the complexity of the Vienna talks, the United States is pursuing its policy of maximum pressure on Iran. In response, the Iranian side has continued to freeze some of its obligations under the JCPOA. Thus far, it has not been possible to break this vicious cycle.

We believe that progress in terms of the United States returning to the full implementation of the deal will create the conditions for a positive reaction from Iran, including the unfreezing of certain obligations that had been suspended. Let me repeat: the steps taken by Iran are a reaction to the destructive line that the United States of America has taken. By the way, these steps were postponed for a long time; they were not some unilateral withdrawal by Tehran from its obligations. That is precisely the context in which we should consider the reporting by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), without trying to present the situation as evidence of some malicious intent by Tehran, as our Western colleagues are doing.

We believe that it is dangerous and irresponsible to make statements that the JCPOA is outdated or that it needs to be renewed, expanded and so forth. The deal contains a carefully negotiated balance of interests and must be implemented exactly in the form in which it was approved by the Security Council in 2015 (resolution

2231 (2015)), without any deletions or additions. In addition, we cannot agree with certain opinions that the deal is supposedly no longer relevant owing to the fact that the Vienna process is not moving fast enough.

Currently, there is no alternative to the JCPOA. Thanks to the mechanism of thorough verification envisioned in the deal, Iran today is the most thoroughly verified State in the world. No less important is the fact that, from a political point of view, the JCPOA has become a symbol of the possibility to strike a deal despite differences in approaches to a very complex and sensitive set of issues. In and of itself, the deal is first and foremost the most significant confidence-building measure on the international level. There will be no trust without it, and no confidence. Those who believe in a world without the JCPOA must clearly realize that the world without the agreement would be a completely different, much more unpredictable and dangerous place than it is with the agreement.

The Secretary-General's support of the negotiations in Vienna is of fundamental importance. We have noted that this idea is reflected in the current report. We also believe that the United Nations leadership's position sends an important message that issues that have no relationship to the JCPOA should be dealt with outside of efforts to restore the deal. We would like to echo words of gratitude to the IAEA. We join the appeal of the Secretary-General to States Members of the United Nations to increase commercial and economic cooperation with Iran, including by using the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges mechanism.

Unfortunately, a number of our traditional criticisms about the biennial reports of the Secretary General on implementing resolution 2231 (2015) continue not to be taken into account, just as in the past. The current report does not single out with sufficient clarity the reasons for the current situation with respect to the JCPOA. The unwillingness of United Nations leadership to call a spade a spade looks like silent acquiescence in the current situation. And yet, contraventions by the United States of resolution 2231 (2015), including the JCPOA, cannot be considered the norm and should be rectified.

We do not share the approach of the authors of the report, who equate the lifting of illegal unilateral sanctions by the United States and introducing exemptions from those sanctions. By that, they legitimize the practice of unilateral restrictions in

contravention to resolution 2231 (2015) and the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter.

We continue to be seriously concerned about the illegitimate practice of the United Nations Secretariat to conduct so-called investigations within the framework of resolution 2231 (2015), bearing in mind the total lack of a mandate to investigate and the expertise necessary to do so. The United Nations Secretariat's mandate in this area is of a purely administrative and technical character. It is enshrined in the Note by the President of the Security Council dated 16 January of 2016 (S/2016/44). The entity established to facilitate resolution 2231 (2015) is not a sanctions committee. It has no right to collect or analyse information and even less to conduct investigations. Nor does it have any authority to send requests to Member States for information, and particularly the kind of information mentioned in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Secretary-General's report. We will expect that any sections of the report related to these illegitimate investigations will not see any further elaboration in the Secretary-General's next report.

In conclusion, I would like to once again return to Vienna. What is most important is that there is a normal diplomatic process under way there. All of us in this Chamber are professional diplomats. We all know very well that agreeing on even a single sentence, not to mention complex, multilayered agreements, might take several days or more; this is something that is completely normal. Let us not try to spur the process forward or put pressure on its participants from outside. I have no doubt that if the parties demonstrate a pragmatic and constructive approach aimed at seeking a balance of interests outcomes that satisfy everyone will be found.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the three briefers for their briefings, and I welcome the presence of the representatives of Iran and Germany to today's meeting.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), an agreement that was 10 years in the making and approved by the Security Council in resolution 2231 (2015), is a major outcome of multilateral diplomacy. It forms a critical pillar in the international non-proliferation regime and in peace and stability in the Middle East. Three years ago, as a result of the United States being hell bent on withdrawing from the agreement, the Iranian nuclear issue took a nosedive

for the worse, and the crisis has persisted to this day. However, that being the case, since April this year, the parties have started their negotiations on returning to the agreement in Vienna and have made important progress, ushering in new opportunities for the United States and Iran to return to compliance with the JCPOA.

The international community attaches great importance to the resumption of negotiations on the Iranian nuclear issue, and it generally expects that favourable results can be achieved, which in turn will bring some positivity and new hope to a world that is currently caught up in so much uncertainty and instability. The parties must therefore persevere in their commitment, seize opportunities, show mutual understanding and accommodation, and meet each other half way, with a view to moving the negotiations forward along the right path and with the ultimate goal of returning to compliance with JCPOA.

In this regard, China wishes to share the following points. First, there has to be an early decision at the political level. Dialogue and negotiations are the only way forward to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. The parties should remain committed to a political solution, be engaged in the process with full sincerity, respect each other's legitimate rights and reasonable concerns, and restore the balance between the rights and obligations set forth in the JCPOA, so as to return to the agreement in both letter and the spirit. The parties should properly address the basic issues in relation to the negotiations and aim for some early gains, which will help maintain the negotiation process. Furthermore, as to outstanding issues, it is important to look for and expand consensus while playing down political differences, demonstrate diplomatic wisdom, show flexibility and explore innovative solutions. The parties must not shy away from taking critical steps with a view to achieving early results in the negotiations.

Secondly, illegal unilateral sanctions must be lifted. Having unilaterally withdrawn from the agreement and continuously applied maximum pressure on Iran, the United States is the party that started the current Iran nuclear crisis. It has been very vocal in advocating the return of multilateralism and diplomacy. The resumption of negotiations is a litmus test of its attitude. It goes without saying that the United States should first and foremost lift all illegal sanctions on Iran and third parties, and, in return, Iran should resume full compliance with the agreement.

The United States, while expressing his eagerness to return to negotiations, announced just a day or so ago, an escalation in its sanctions against Iran. This move is in contravention of international law and the basic norms of international relations. It shows a total disregard for the call from the international community and is not in any way conducive to advancing the negotiation process, for which China expresses its deep concern. We hope that the United States will take concrete actions to earn the trust of the international community by demonstrating more sincerity and flexibility and working harder towards achieving a timely consensus.

Thirdly, with regard to creating an environment favourable for negotiations, repeatedly hyping Iran's missile launches, exerting pressure through the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), preaching at every turn a plan B in the event of a failure in negotiations and going so far as to threaten implementing the Council's snapback mechanism serve only to hinder the current negotiation process, undermine parties' efforts to preserve the JCPOA and further complicate the situation involving the Iranian nuclear issue. Parties must effectively dispense with the obstacles just mentioned and ensure that negotiations do not radically veer off into the wrong direction. In turn, we expect Iran to understand the concerns about the rapid development of its nuclear capability, maintain constructive cooperation with the Agency and resolve outstanding issues as soon as possible.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and has an important role to play in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The collaboration among the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia on nuclear submarines involving the transfer of weapons-grade nuclear material constitutes a serious risk of nuclear proliferation. It will also negatively affect finding a political and diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. Such a move, characterized by double standards that undermine the objectives and the purposes of the NPT, must be rectified.

Fourthly, with regard to maintaining regional peace and stability, as long as the Middle East remains unstable, achieving peace in the world will remain elusive. Iran's nuclear issue has a bearing on the situation in the Middle East. Maintaining the JCPOA is in essence synonymous with maintaining

regional peace and stability. The countries of the region should subscribe to dialogue and negotiations to resolve differences, while external countries should provide constructive assistance in easing regional tensions, rather than creating antagonism and fuelling confrontations within the region, much less link issues of regional security with negotiations on a return to compliance with the agreement.

The five-point initiative for realizing peace and stability in the Middle East proposed by Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China, calls for mutual respect, equity and justice, nuclear non-proliferation, collective security and accelerated development cooperation. The proposal reflects China's sincere hope and a sense of responsibility for promoting peace and calm in the Middle East. We stand ready to continue to engage with the parties on that initiative and on the regional situation.

The coronavirus disease pandemic continues to wreak havoc throughout the world, as a result of the compounded hardships of the pandemic and sanctions. Iran's economy and its people's livelihood have been seriously affected. In his report (S/2021/995), the Secretary-General calls on countries to support arrangements such as the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges and the procurement channel to help the country fight the pandemic. China shares that view and has to the best of its ability provided supplies, including vaccines, to Iran to combat the pandemic. We will continue to take measures tailored to that end.

As a permanent member of the Security Council and a party to the JCPOA, China has been committed to preserving the effectiveness of the agreement, maintaining the authority of the Council's resolutions and safeguarding the integrity of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Since August, President Xi Jinping of China has spoken by telephone with the Heads of State of both Iran and the United States, respectively, while Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China, has remained in contact with those countries and has continued to coordinate on this issue with the parties concerned.

China will continue to practice true multilateralism, actively participate in the negotiations to return to the JCPOA and play a constructive role in putting the JCPOA back in the right direction, while promoting a political and diplomatic solution to the issue and



maintaining the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East.

**Ms. Nthoki** (Kenya): I also thank the briefers — Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ambassadors Olof Skoog and Byrne Nason — for their overview of twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2021/995), the report of the Joint Commission to the Security Council on the status of the Procurement Working Group's decisions and on any implementation issues (see S/2021/992) and the twelfth six-month report of the Facilitator on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (see S/2021/1019). I also acknowledge the presence of the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Germany at this meeting.

Kenya reaffirms that global nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons constitute the core guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We view the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015) as critical multilateral achievements and mechanisms in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The decision by the United States Government to reaffirm the measures and provisions contained in resolution 2231 (2015) early this year and the engagement of both the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran in ongoing negotiations are all important positive steps towards the full and effective implementation of the Plan and the resolution. We are closely following the renewed diplomatic talks in Vienna, which are currently in their seventh-round. We urge all participants to continue engaging with a spirit of purpose and needed compromise to bring the agreement back to life without further delay.

We are all hoping for an outcome that will further enhance non-proliferation efforts in the Middle East and an outcome that will: first, provide a clear and practical road map within the current imperatives; secondly, outline the steps needed for the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran to return to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015); thirdly, ensure that all parties adhere to their commitments under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, including the lifting of additional sanctions and all retaliatory measures, which are in violation of the principles and procedures laid out in the JCPOA; and, lastly, safeguard the equipment and important verification and monitoring work of the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and ensure that it continues unhampered on the ground.

We commend bilateral and multilateral initiatives by neighbouring countries in the region and urge that they continue to engage constructively to foster a conducive environment for diplomatic engagement and the implementation of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). We encourage Iran to implement fully the Protocol Additional to the Agreement between Iran and the IAEA for the Application of Safeguards and voluntary transparency and implementation measures with the IAEA as before. That includes Iran taking ownership of, and committing to, the JCPOA provisions through non-violation and refraining from further acting on irreversible measures it has undertaken.

Let me reiterate that adherence to the provisions of the JCPOA and agreed mechanisms by all parties is a critical first step that will further enhance trust and build confidence among all parties and neighbouring States for the long-term stability of the Middle East region.

Resolution 2231 (2015) notes that the political and diplomatic efforts that went into the establishment of the JCPOA were geared to, inter alia, ensuring the economic and technological development of Iran in the area of peaceful nuclear activities. We therefore urge that the Joint Commission remain committed to upholding the integrity, transparency and confidence-building approach of the procurement channel to enable the continuation of trade with the Islamic Republic of Iran and relevant transfers within the JCPOA framework.

In conclusion, I urge that the Council's engagement with the non-proliferation agenda go hand in hand in encouraging efforts in strengthening the peaceful application of nuclear technology in industrial development projects for the benefit of the Iranian people and the holistic, political and economic stability of the subregion.

**Mr. Lipand** (Estonia): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Ambassadors Skoog and Byrne Nason for their briefings.

Estonia remains strongly committed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Its full restoration and implementation remain the best possible option to uphold the nuclear non-proliferation regime, prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon and eventually bring greater security to the region and

the world. We therefore welcome the resumption of dialogue and negotiations in Vienna towards restoring and preserving the agreement. We very much hope that the coming weeks will bring positive progress. Any further delays or unconstructive engagement risk undermining the viability of the JCPOA and its ability to ensure that the Iranian nuclear programme remains exclusively peaceful.

We echo the call of the Secretary-General to build on the work already accomplished in previous rounds of diplomatic engagements and avoid any further nuclear provocations. Estonia is deeply concerned that, since 2019, Iran has continued to reduce the implementation of its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. The level of uranium enrichment that Iran has undertaken, together with its research and development activities related to uranium metal production, has no plausible civilian justification.

Some of those activities have permanently and irreversibly improved Iran's nuclear capabilities, exposing the international community to significant nuclear proliferation risks and undermining regional as well as international peace and security. We call on Iran to return to compliance with its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA, without delay.

Estonia commends the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, its dedication and its efforts to continue its monitoring and verification work in Iran. We regret that already for nine months Iran has suspended transparency and verification measures under the JCPOA and under the Additional Protocol, thereby considerably limiting the Agency's ability to fulfil its mandate under resolution 2231 (2015). Iran's failure to allow the Agency's full monitoring activities contributes to concerns that Iran could be using its equipment for malign purposes. It further disrupts the IAEA's efforts to ensure the continuity of knowledge of Iran's nuclear programme.

Estonia remains gravely concerned by Iran's developing and testing of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles and related technologies. Those activities are inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015) and are destabilizing for regional security. Estonia further calls on Iran not to transfer any missiles or missile components, missile technology or unmanned aerial vehicle systems to non-State actors.

The prospect of restoring the JCPOA is still within reach. We call on the parties to show strong political

will and flexibility and to engage in good-faith efforts to determine the steps necessary for both the United States and Iran to return to compliance with the accord.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Niger.

Allow me first and foremost to welcome the convening of this briefing to consider the twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2021/995). I wish to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland, in her capacity as Facilitator; and Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission to the Security Council, for their outstanding briefings. I also welcome the participation of the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Germany in this meeting.

My delegation takes note of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and calls on Member States and all parties to the agreement to comply with the obligations that they have undertaken. In that regard, the Niger reaffirms its attachment to the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), by which the Council approved in 2015 the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear programme. My delegation welcomes the diplomatic efforts within and around the Joint Commission that took place between April and June as well as the resumption of diplomatic efforts from 29 November in Vienna that are aimed at ensuring the return of the United States to the JCPOA, with a view to revitalizing the agreement and ensuring its full implementation by all parties in full transparency.

The procurement track continues to be an essential mechanism for transparency and for confidence-building, ensuring that the transfer of dual-use nuclear materials and other related materials to the Islamic Republic of Iran is in conformity with resolution 2231 (2015) and the provisions and goals of the JCPOA. That is why my delegation calls on the States that are currently not parties to the JCPOA to refrain from taking measures that would impede the capacity of the remaining parties to fulfil their obligations. We also call on all the parties to the JCPOA, Member States

and the relevant sectors to support and to fully use this channel. It is important to stress the importance of the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA by all parties, as was reiterated at the ministerial meeting that took place virtually on 21 December 2020 and that was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The expiration on 24 June of the temporary bilateral technical understanding, concluded on 24 May between International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran, and its non-renewal, are a source of anxiety and concern and a setback for the mechanism of monitoring of the Iranian nuclear programme activities. My delegation would ask the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran to consider the request for extension by the IAEA, including regarding the collection and uninterrupted storing of data by its control and surveillance equipment, and to allow the Agency to continue its work.

In conclusion, my delegation remains concerned about the current tensions in the Persian Gulf region and reiterates the Secretary-General's appeal for an easing, on humanitarian grounds, of all unilateral economic measures that could prevent Iran from mobilizing the necessary resources to confront sanitary difficulties caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic. Such a gesture of flexibility could have the additional benefit of contributing to nudging along certain positions during the negotiations under way. Establishing a climate of trust among parties is essential for the continuation and the successful conclusion of negotiations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Iran.

**Mr. Takht Ravanchi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): It is heartening that today the Council once again is expressing its consistent position that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) must be restored and implemented in full. That, however, can be realized only if all necessary conditions are met in real terms. Make no mistake — we are not imposing any preconditions or new conditions. We are talking about the same conditions that are embedded in the JPOA and in resolution 2231 (2015), the same conditions that form the very foundations of the JCPOA and the same conditions that resulted in reciprocal commitments of the parties to the JCPOA. Without full satisfaction of those conditions, the accord is useless to the Iranian people. We therefore call for the full, timely, unconditional and

verifiable implementation of the JCPOA — no more, no less. Attempts to link the implementation of the JCPOA to extraneous issues or to raise ideas such as the renegotiation of the JCPOA to expand its scope, extend its timelines or make proposals along the lines of “more for more” or “less for less” are totally unacceptable and doomed to fail.

Let us refresh our memory with a flashback to the underlying causes of the current situation. The JCPOA is founded on two pillars: Iran's nuclear-related commitments and the reciprocal commitments for the lifting of sanctions by the United Nations, the European Union and the United States of America against Iran, as well as the promotion of normal economic and trade relations with our country. All those commitments are meticulously worded and explained in detail in the JCPOA and in resolution 2231 (2015). In accordance with the JCPOA, other parties are committed “to ensure Iran's access in areas of trade, technology, finance and energy”. Specifically, the United States, in addition to its obligation to lift sanctions against Iran, is explicitly committed

“to make best efforts in good faith to sustain this JCPOA and to prevent interference with the realization of the full benefit by Iran of the sanctions lifting”.

The fact is that we have been completely deprived of our rights and benefits under the JCPOA for almost four years. Now, certain States try to deceptively portray our insistence on the full and verifiable restoration of our rights as an unconstructive and inflexible position. At the same time they are dead silent about the unlawful and inhumane sanctions of the United States, which by any measure represent an all-out economic war against Iran, aimed at collectively punishing an entire nation, targeting the most vulnerable people the most, harming the poor more than the rich, the ill more than the healthy, and infants and children more than adults. Those acts are indeed equivalent to economic terrorism. In that regard the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights calls the United States sanctions unjust and harmful, destroying the economy and currency of Iran, driving millions of people into poverty and making imported goods unaffordable, including urgently needed humanitarian goods.

The United States has committed multiple cases of significant non-performance under the JCPOA and still

is in continuous, systematic material breach of its legal obligations under resolution 2231 (2015), the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It is also in defiance of the unanimous order of the International Court of Justice of 3 October 2018, requiring the United States to remove impediments to humanitarian trade with Iran. As a result of such gross violations of international law, the scope and extent of the damage to the Iranian people and economy are severe, resulting in the loss of many lives, as well as vast and serious disruption to our economy. The United States has also exerted unprecedented pressures on other States to either not implement their obligations under resolution 2231 (2015) or face punishment. That is unprecedented in the Security Council's history. While we have taken certain remedial measures in accordance with the JCPOA to re-establish some balance in the reciprocal commitments and benefits under the accord, certain States refer with much fanfare to Iran's remedial measures, as if to suggest that it was Iran that withdrew from the JCPOA and introduced countless inhuman sanctions with the publicly declared objective of starving an entire nation.

They also make a hue and cry about all our current peaceful nuclear activities, as if Iran had violated its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Yet, those parties are silent about the repeated terrorist attacks and disruptive measures of the Israeli regime against our peaceful nuclear programme. We reiterate once more that our measures are remedial in nature and are taken in full conformity with our obligations under the NPT and our safeguards agreement. Moreover, they are in line with our rights under paragraphs 26 and 36 of the JCPOA, according to which, in case of

“a re-introduction or re-imposition of the sanctions [...], or such an imposition of new nuclear-related sanctions, [Iran will have the right] to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part”.

More importantly, our steps are completely reversible. We are continuing our remedial measures concurrently with the Vienna talks because the non-performance of obligations by other parties continues. Sanctions are still in full force, a maximum pressure policy is still being pursued, and the sufferings of our people still persist. Nevertheless, as soon as other parties implement all their obligations in a full,

effective and verifiable manner, Iran will immediately reverse its measures in full.

Conversely, the sufferings of our people due to the non-performance by other parties of their obligations, particularly those resulting from the re-imposition of the illegal sanctions of the United States, are almost absolutely irreversible. How can one restore the precious lives lost because of the inhuman sanctions of the United States? How can one bring back to life those lost due to the weaponization of humanitarian goods? How can one revive the lives of innocent children who perish because the United States has opted to prevent their access to the most essential medicines?

Bearing in mind those realities, we insist on the effective removal of all sanctions at once and in a verifiable manner. The way that the United States has treated its international obligations has necessitated such an approach because in international law, the implementation of agreements is first and foremost founded on the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*. Its simple meaning is that the agreement must be kept. That is the oldest universally agreed principle of international law and is fundamental to all legal systems. That principle has been flagrantly violated with respect to the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). As a result, an entire nation has been subjected to the most comprehensive and repressive coercive political, economic and financial measures ever imposed on a country.

When such a customary and fundamental principle of international law is mocked, trampled upon and violated, no nation trusts the culprit. Nor do we. Therefore, the provision of verifiable and objective guarantees that the delicate balance of commitments will not be torpedoed any longer, that the obligations will not be violated again, that sanctions will not be re-imposed under other pretexts or designations — as took place during the previous Administration of the United States — and that the JCPOA mechanisms will not be abused is absolutely necessary. Those are the minimum requirements for relative certainty about the sustainability of the deal.

We cannot and will not allow our economy and the daily economic life of our people be taken hostage through non-compliance by other parties to their commitments once more. We entered into negotiations and agreed the JCPOA's conclusion with good will. We implemented our commitments with good will. And, in



the aftermath of the withdrawal of the United States, we provided enough time, with good will, for that country to remain a JCPOA participant to shoulder its responsibilities. Only after one year did we take certain remedial measures even though, based on the JCPOA, Iran was entitled to exercise such right immediately after the unlawful withdrawal of the United States therefrom.

Iran's peaceful nuclear programme has been under the most robust and intrusive nuclear verification monitoring and transparency measures ever conducted in a country during the history of non-proliferation. Since the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), no country has ever been inspected so thoroughly. The implementation of our commitments has been verified by the IAEA, as reflected in its 15 consecutive reports. After the withdrawal of the United States, Iran exercised maximum restraint and paid a heavy price to preserve the JCPOA. Therefore, asking for objective and verifiable guarantees from the party responsible for the whole mess before us is absolutely warranted and necessary. Iran has done much more than its fair share to preserve the JCPOA and those who have violated their commitments under the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015) since implementation day quite naturally bear more responsibility to revive it. They cannot play victim and blame Iran. If the other sides have the genuine political will to revive the JCPOA, they must be courageous enough to accept full, effective and verifiable implementation of all their obligations agreed upon under the JCPOA in 2015.

Concerning paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), we once again reject attempts to make arbitrary and distorted interpretations of that paragraph to deceptively establish a link between it and the launches by Iran of ballistic missiles and space-launch vehicles. According to the detailed technical and legal reasoning that we have made in our numerous letters to the Council's President, the launches of ballistic missiles and space-launch vehicles by Iran are completely outside of the purview of resolution 2231 (2015). Developing a conventional missile programme is an inherent right under international law and is neither prohibited nor limited by resolution 2231 (2015). We will continue our activities related to ballistic missiles and space-launched vehicles, both of which are necessary to ensuring our security and socioeconomic interests.

Allow me to conclude by stressing that the current Vienna talks can succeed, not by engaging in blame games, not by setting artificial deadlines, not by

introducing threats and intimidation, not by raising unfounded accusations or disinformation campaigns, and not by permitting sabotage, disruptive or terrorist activities in Iran, but only by engaging in negotiations with genuine political will and in good faith, and by sticking to one principle: the full, effective and verifiable implementation by all sides of all commitments under the JCPOA — nothing more and nothing less. That is the most pragmatic and easily achievable solution at the earliest time. There is no magic solution.

Iran is determined to make every effort to restore the JCPOA as is. To that end, our proposals put forward in Vienna are in full conformity with the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). We have demonstrated our genuine political will, seriousness and constructive engagement with our interlocutors to arrive at a good agreement as soon as possible. Now, it is time for the other side to prove that they are genuinely willing to accept and implement, effectively and in good faith, all the JCPOA commitments.

Our observations on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/995) are contained in my letter dated 10 December to the Secretary-General, covering our views on issues that I have not addressed in my remarks today.

Lastly, I would like to say a few words about what was said this afternoon concerning our region. Iran's foreign policy is based on full respect for international law, mutual respect, good-neighbourliness, cooperation and dialogue, as well as the maintenance of regional peace and security through the active participation of all regional States. We are determined to pursue this policy in good faith. Our recent approach towards our neighbourhood arises from our strong conviction that the regional countries should join hands to resolve their differences amicably, not allowing those who have come to this region from thousands of miles away only to sow the seeds of discord among the countries of the region. An important source of insecurity and instability in our region is the massive United States military build-up, which has turned the region into the highest concentration of foreign military installations in the world. Our region's other source of insecurity is the massive United States arms export thereto. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, from 2016 to 2020 almost half of the arms exports of the United States, the largest arms exporter globally, went to the Middle East. The United States is not the only culprit here. Certain European countries

also export deadly weapons to regional countries. That policy of Western countries has turned our region into a powder keg.

Furthermore, the terrorist acts of the United States have created an atmosphere of instability and insecurity in our region. A clear example is the heinous assassination of Major General Qasem Soleimani and his companions in Iraq in early 2020 in a terrorist attack committed at the direct order of the United States President. It is ironic that the United States and some European countries are now accusing Iran of destabilizing behaviour.

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

**Ms. Leendertse** (Germany): Let me first echo previous speakers by thanking all three briefers not only for today's interventions, but also for their continuing support to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We also welcome the support expressed by the Secretary-General for the Vienna talks and for our efforts to restore the JCPOA.

Despite all the difficulties encountered, we still believe that restoring the JCPOA is both urgently required and possible. Unfortunately, we have not been able to move closer to this goal since the last Security Council meeting on this issue, in June (see S/PV.8811). On the contrary, during the past six months, Iran has further escalated its nuclear programme by taking extremely far-reaching steps that are incompatible with its commitments under the JCPOA, some of which also do not have plausible civilian use. Those worrying steps include the development and use of advanced centrifuges way beyond JCPOA limits, uranium enrichment of up to 60 per cent, ever-growing stockpiles of enriched uranium, and ongoing research and development activities on uranium metal production, including enriched uranium metal.

Another point of great concern is lack of transparency. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays a vital role in monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments. The Agency's mandate is enshrined in resolution 2231 (2015) and serves the goal of ensuring the continuity of knowledge about the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. To our deep concern, Iran has

curtailed monitoring activities by the Agency. We strongly support the IAEA's continued efforts to keep up the continuity of knowledge, and we urge Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA and to restore JCPOA monitoring and transparency measures in full.

I echo the sentiments expressed by my E3 colleagues. We are at a crossroads. If Iran engages seriously in the diplomatic process, a good deal for Iran and for all of us can be reached rapidly. If Iran does not engage constructively, crisis will be inevitable and will be costly for us all. We do not want this outcome, which is no more in our interest or in the interest of the international community than it is in the Iranian interest. It is also entirely avoidable, but the window of opportunity is closing rapidly.

Turning to annex B of the resolution, let me reiterate our well-known position. We continue to consider Iran's development of ballistic missiles designed to deliver a nuclear weapon, including launches using such ballistic missile technology, as inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015). We are very concerned about Iran's development of relevant ballistic missile types and continued tests. Clearly, such activities are not conducive to fostering stability and security in the region. Moreover, we reaffirm the need to ensure compliance by all States, in particular Iran, with the prohibition of transfers of Missile Technology Control Regime-listed items to and from Iran, as stated in paragraph 4 of annex B. The delivery of missile technology to non-State actors is destabilizing the region and must end immediately.

Let me finish by noting the following. The Security Council has again reached a level of unity rarely seen on resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. Almost all of us here have stressed again the huge importance of the JCPOA as a key contribution to the non-proliferation and security architecture in the region and beyond. We will do everything in our power to see the JCPOA talks in Vienna succeed, and we count on all parties to return with a mandate suitable to putting that important agreement fully back in place.

*The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.*