Security Council

Provisional

Seventy-eighth year

9299th meeting

Thursday, 30 March 2023, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Nyusi/Ms. Dlhovo		(Mozambique)
Members:	Albania	Mr. Spasse	
	Brazil	Mr. Bicalho Cozendey	
	China	Mr. Liu Yuxi	
	Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa	
	France	Mr. De Rivière	
	Gabon	Mr. Biang	
	Ghana	Mr. Agyeman	
	Japan	Mr. Ishikane	
	Malta	Ms. Gatt	
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia	
	Switzerland	Mr. Hauri	
	United Arab Emirates	Mr. Al Nahyan	
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki	
	United States of America	Ms. Zeya	

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

The impact of development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative

Letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/148/Rev.1)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

The impact of development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative

Letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/148/Rev.1)

The President: I would like to warmly welcome the Ministers and other high-level representatives. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Austria, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine 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. Cristina Duarte, Special Adviser on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General; His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, African Union High Representative for the Silencing the Guns Initiative; and Mr. Mirko Manzoni, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Mr. António Vitorino, Director General of the International Organization for Migration, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/148/Rev.1, which contains the text of a letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Ms. Duarte.

Ms. Duarte: I would like to thank the Mozambiquan presidency for holding this open debate on the impact of development policies on the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative and for inviting me to brief the Security Council on this topic.

The African Union Master Roadmap of practical steps to silence the guns in Africa, also known as the Lusaka Roadmap, identified five areas of action where African member States, with the support of the international community, needed to advance in order to silence the guns in Africa. Out of those five areas, four — economic, social, environmental and legal aspects— refer to issues that are comprised in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the African Union Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. The structure of the Lusaka Master Roadmap underscores the relevance that development policies and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063 have for achieving peace and security in the continent. Unfortunately, that African perspective has not been sufficiently incorporated in global discussions on peace and security in the continent.

For too long, global discussions have considered that the linkages between peace, security and development are constrained due to the fact that wars create emergency situations, divert funds that should be used for development and destroy infrastructure. Those facts are accurate, but they present an incomplete picture of the interrelation between peace and development.

As African policymakers acknowledged when designing the Lusaka Roadmap, development policies play a substantial role in supporting conflict prevention and resolution. Furthermore, the absence of development policies, or the existence of policies and programmes that do not deliver inclusive development, can act as a root cause of conflicts. In other words, as the Secretary-General has affirmed, "the flames of conflict are fuelled by inequality, deprivation and underfunded systems" (*S/PV.9011, p.4*). On the other

hand, inclusive, transparent, equitable and effective development policies can be the tool with the most impact for conflict prevention.

When I briefed the Council last year on capacity building for sustaining peace (see S/PV.9106), I referred to the need to differentiate between external and internal factors of conflict. External factors refer to issues that, to a certain extent, are outside the control of a single State, such as external competition for natural resources, meaning geopolitical interests, and international terrorism. Internal factors are related to the interaction between the State and its citizens, most notably when it comes to exclusion from public services. In order to put an end to conflict, both external and internal factors need to be addressed. In that regard, I note how development policies are better poised to address internal factors, as inclusion can be delivered only through sustainable development.

However, the traditional response to peace and security challenges in Africa has not been to address the internal and external root causes of conflicts, but just their symptoms. In that regard, the only effective solution to conflicts in Africa is sustainable development, because only development will create the capacities that will allow African countries to tackle both the internal and external causes of conflict. That is very clear not only in the Lusaka Masterplan but also in the African Union 2063 Agenda, which reflects our vision for a peaceful, united and prosperous continent.

Acknowledging that development policies impact peace and security implies identifying what are the development-related causes that lie behind a conflict in order to enable the affected country to adopt the medium- and long-term measures that will create a viable and sustainable pathway to peace. Last year when I briefed the Council, I presented one of those causes, namely, the actual or perceived exclusion in the provision of public services. Today, in line with the concept note for this debate (see S/2023/148/Rev.1), I would like to refer to the political history of the continent.

While most of the internal and external factors may have apparent current direct causes, their roots go back in history. Colonialism has often been blamed for the economic exploitation of the African continent, but its impact on the current governance shortcomings has seldom been discussed. The 2022 report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/2022/959) highlights that, when African countries achieved independence, they inherited governance structures that were not designed to run successful independent States, and consequently not prepared to deliver the independence vision.

From an economic perspective, as everybody knows, colonial Administrations did not focus on promoting economic development, but rather on resource extraction and tax collection. From the point of view of the rule of law, their objective was not to uphold the rights of the individuals, but to exercise authority. Even from the point of view of the land, the objective was not to ensure the presence of the State across the territory, but to control strategic sites, either for their location or their economic value. In addition, African States also inherited ruler-drawn borders that had been established not to organize a population, but to distribute the natural wealth of a continent.

As a result of those historical factors, from a governance perspective, African countries still face today three "geographies" that condition the relationship between a country's Government, their territory and their people.

The first geography is the administrative territory of a country, which is determined by its borders. As the concept note for this debate points out, in Africa those borders were the artificial result of negotiations among colonial Powers that did not take into account the reality of the continent.

That takes us to the second geography, which reflects the pre-existing socio-cultural groups. The overlaps between the first and the second geography have led to a situation in which African countries have within their administrative borders two or more historic socio-cultural groups and situations in which one historic community is spread throughout two or more countries. For example, in my region of West Africa, there is one group — the Fulani — that is present in every country between the Gambia and Cameroon. That overlap has two main consequences on governance.

First, colonial Administrations established centralized structures, which were afterwards inherited by the independent States. Those structures were not prepared to manage a diverse population or to promote inclusion. As a result, many African countries have faced intercommunal conflicts that cannot be resolved from a governance perspective unless those structures are properly reformed. Decentralization and devolution

are key policy instruments that need to be part of the conflict resolution toolkit. They enable the recognition of local realities within a State and empower historic communities by providing them with assets. Furthermore, they can help increase the efficiency of public services by bringing their management closer to the beneficiaries. Traditional leadership structures can also be effective tools for supporting the inclusion of historic communities and can therefore add value to African governance structures.

The second consequence of the overlap between the first and the second geographies is the existence of a socioeconomic reality that transcends the boundaries of individual countries. From a peace and security perspective, transboundary movements are often perceived as a risk, and a reaction to that can be attempts to control borders by closing them, despite the fact that most of the time such measures are not effective. A historical reality that goes beyond borders cannot be contained. Furthermore, attempts to limit the transboundary reality of Africa's historical groups undermine their potential as a source of growth and resilience and increase mistrust of State institutions. Africa's integration process is the only response to that challenge that can produce more growth, development and peace. Instead of responding to potential transboundary threats by closing borders, we need to accelerate integration through the Continental Free Trade Area, the regional economic communities and the various instruments in the African Union architecture.

The third geography represents the actual presence of the State. As the concept note points out, public investment and institutions in Africa have been concentrated in a few urban centres, leaving vast expanses of territory without a State presence. That too is the result of internal and external factors. One external factor is the prevalence in international financial and development policies since the 1990s of a market-based approach to public services that has sought to shrink the size of public institutions, further weakening State structures that were already inherently limited. At the same time, from an internal perspective, African countries have not focused enough on building solid country systems. As a result, today State institutions are absent in many remote, rural and marginalized areas of the continent. That absence of the State, from the perspective of the provision of services, is one of the main factors undermining the legitimacy of State institutions, breaking the bonds of trust with the population that are crucial to nation-building and creating fertile ground for terrorism and the emergence of non-State actors.

If we want to reduce the threat presented by the possibility of non-State actors taking over the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, military solutions will have to be complemented by active development policies that contribute to ensuring the effective provision of public services across the territory. As long as development policies continue to be perceived as something to be taken into account only after peace efforts have been undertaken, we cannot achieve durable peace. Conversely, if development aspects are factored in during the peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes, I am confident that we will be able to come here to the Security Council and congratulate African countries on their success in putting an end to conflict, just as we are here today to congratulate Mozambique.

Mozambique's peace process is an example of the smart and effective implementation of development policies in support of a peace and security objective. The dual approach of the Maputo Accord for Peace and National Reconciliation, combining demilitarization and reintegration with decentralization and devolution, has responded to the need to understand the root causes of the conflict and to identify the development solutions needed to ensure the success of the process.

The recent decision by the Government of Mozambique to include eligible demobilized disarmament, demobilization and reintegration beneficiaries in the country's pension system is another example of a smart policy, both from a peace and a development perspective. From the point of view of peace and security, it is yet another step in fighting exclusion and promoting reconciliation through development and social policies. From a macroeconomic perspective, it is an effective way to promote income distribution, which is indispensable to achieving socioeconomic resilience. And resilience is necessary not only to deliver peace but to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and prevent a scenario in which African countries are pushed off track. Economic growth without income distribution will lead only to greater inequalities, exclusion and conflict. I would therefore like to commend you, Mr. President, for that courageous decision, which I am confident will strengthen your country's peace and reconciliation process.

Mozambique's peace and reconciliation process demonstrates that development policies, when applied in conjunction with peacemaking efforts, contribute to ending hostilities and lay solid foundations for durable peace and sustainability. That effective combination of peace and development tools will enable African countries to silence the guns in the continent and achieve durable peace.

The President: I thank Ms. Duarte for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Chambas.

Mr. Chambas: It is an honour to address the Security Council today. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the kind invitation to address the Council, and to take this opportunity to commend you and your Government for convening this important open debate on the impact of development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative of the African Union (AU). Speaking of which, I would also like to join Special Adviser Cristina Duarte in commending you, Sir, as well as your Government and the people of Mozambique, for providing an example of a successful peace process, which I believe can be a model for lesson-sharing on our continent.

When the AU Heads of State and Government adopted the Silencing the Guns initiative, they were motivated by a desire to bequeath to future generations of Africa a continent free of war and conflict. The objective was to work for an Africa at peace with itself and with the rest of the world. The Security Council, consistent with the AU-United Nations strategic partnership, rallied behind that initiative by adopting resolution 2457 (2019).

The topic of today's debate is timely. It comes at a moment when Africa is faced with multiple challenges that are putting the attainment of the noble objectives of the Silencing the Guns initiative at risk, even by the new deadline of 2030. The causes of those challenges are historical, constitutional, institutional, economic, social and cultural. They also relate to the impact of climate change. Africa's vulnerability to global economic shocks and the weak implementation of the protocols and decisions taken at the national, subregional, continental and international levels with regard to peace and security and development on the African continent are also contributory factors.

Regrettably, we are also witnessing a widening gap between richer and poorer nations at the international level, as well as a widening gap at the national level between the elite and the marginalized and poor communities and populations. It is estimated that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, for instance, has wiped out most of the gains made in Africa by increasing the number of persons living in extreme poverty. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's *Economic Report on Africa 2021* observed that the COVID-19 pandemic pushed 55 million Africans into poverty in 2020 and reversed more than two decades of progress in poverty reduction on the continent. Equally alarming is the fact that 15 African countries are reportedly at risk of debt distress. In fact, the total African debt that was forgiven under the multilateral debt relief initiative two decades ago was in the region of $300 billion. Today Africa is once again in debt, to the tune of more than $600 billion. Going forward, we could — and should — foster recovery and transformation in Africa in order to reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities, thereby getting us closer to silencing the guns. I would like to highlight a number of issues in that regard.

First, Africa must embark on people-centred recovery and transformation. It must give prominence to investment in human capital development and utilization, including through investment in education and science; a focus on employability; investment in technology and innovation; and investment in health; harnessing the demographic dividend by investing, inter alia, in the growth of decent employment opportunities; leveraging the African diaspora; mainstreaming informal sectors into formal sectors; investing in gender equality and youth empowerment; and investing in the development of morality, integrity, discipline, self-esteem and self-confidence.

Second, for that transformation to be attained and sustained, there is a need to secure abundant financial resources. In that respect, the mobilization of domestic resources should be prioritized, with a particular emphasis on fighting against illicit financial flows, which deprive the continent of approximately $90 billion annually.

Third, digital technologies offer us a chance to unlock new pathways for rapid and inclusive economic growth, as well as innovation, job creation and access to services. Africa has several successful and dynamic headline ecosystems. The mobile money revolution is a well-known example, as are the cultural industries, in particular those of music and film-making.

Fourth, the development of agricultural parks is aimed at making Africa food secure, and ultimately a net food exporter. It is untenable that a continent with 60 per cent of the world's remaining arable lands, as well as many rivers and freshwater bodies, should be dependent for its grains on external sources. The agricultural parks will also promote, through specialization, regional and continental value chains in agriculture.

Fifth, sustainable industrialization is another key focus area. In that regard, collaboration with partners will involve capacity-building for rural cooperatives, agricultural processing, capacity-building for the production of intermediate goods from Africa's vast array of natural resources, capacity-building to mainstream research and development in order to boost innovation, and the development of regional and continental value chains.

Sixth, the African Continental Free Trade Area market has a bright future. We have a young population with a growing middle class, whose demand for industrial goods is 1.5 times higher than the global average. We must create a "Made in Africa" standard, which once operational will promote competitiveness among qualifying companies and contribute to the removal of technical barriers to trade. The process of deglobalization is under way; since the 1970s, Africa has experienced a progressive decline in its share of global trade, from 6 per cent to its current share of 2.7 per cent. Having adopted the African Continental Free Trade Area, which is a source of foreign exchange and technology transfers, inter alia, the African Union is still committed to international trade. The African Continental Free Trade Area plans to move Africa through a paradigm shift that takes it away from being a producer and exporter of raw materials to being an exporter of manufactured and agriculturally processed goods and services, such as tourism and labour. To achieve that paradigm shift, there is an urgent need for investment in national and cross-border infrastructure to facilitate the free movement of persons, goods and services.

Seventh, although Africa contributes the least to global warming, it is committed to playing its part in the green transition, albeit at a variable speed. New estimates by the African Development Bank show that Africa will need between $1.18 billion and $1.45 billion annually to implement its commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and its nationally determined contributions. In that regard, climate financing, carbon credit trading and other mechanisms should be made a reality through simplified, flexible and quick disbursement methods in order to release the required funds to meet Africa's climate financing gap.

As I conclude, allow me to reiterate what the United Nations and the AU, as well as Special Adviser Duarte, have repeatedly underscored, namely, the nexus between peace and security, development, governance and respect for human rights. That is the mantra of both the Sustainable Development Goals and the AU's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. In that regard, the discussion today is intrinsically linked with that of the high-level debate held by the Council on 28 March on counter-terrorism (see S/PV.9296). The scourge of international terrorism, conflict and instability in Africa, which is driven by internal and external factors, negatively impacts the prospects for sustained development and addressing the pressing needs of the people. The recent unconstitutional changes of Government and the re-emergence of coup d'états must also be addressed. The AU and its regional economic communities continue to adopt measures to strengthen conflict prevention and mediation, ensure good governance, strengthen democratic institutions and enhance the role of women and empower young people at the subregional, national and community levels.

Silencing the guns will require ownership by subregional bodies, national Governments and, above all, by the African peoples and active civil society. The support of Africa's partners and friends is also required. The United Nations, through this body, has already expressed its solidarity on silencing the guns. The support of multilateral and bilateral partners will also go a long way to helping to silence the guns by 2030 and helping us realize a peaceful, secure, democratic, participative, inclusive and prosperous Africa — the Africa we want — by 2063.

The President: I thank Mr. Chambas for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Manzoni.

Mr. Manzoni: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on efforts to advance the Silencing the Guns agenda. I am honoured to be able to speak to the Council today in my capacity as Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique, a position I have held for nearly four years, during which I have accompanied the entire implementation of the Maputo Accord for Peace

and National Reconciliation between the Government of Mozambique and the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO).

My involvement with the process began in 2016, as Switzerland's Ambassador to Mozambique, when I formed part of a small mediation team, with whose members I travelled many times into the bush to talk with both parties, building trust and relationships that continues to this day. The Maputo Accord's mediation, signing and implementation have generated hope and inspiration. I see four fundamental reasons for the Accord's success — establishing national ownership from the outset, building trust, remaining flexible and ensuring a human-centred process throughout. I would like to focus on those elements in order to share how progress can be made and reflect on what we can learn when considering the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding efforts. I want to underline that there have also been many challenges to overcome jointly with the principals involved, but that is the reason why it has been possible.

I want to begin with national ownership. In any context, local and national actors have the best understanding of the nuances of a conflict, and should therefore lead and own their own peace processes. National ownership can act as a catalyst for progress, encouraging greater buy-in from stakeholders and producing more relevant results. The role of international actors is to provide support. From the beginning the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO retained both ownership and initiative in the establishment of the national peace architecture, and both parties gained trust from their equal commitment and respect for each other. Having gone through previous failed attempts to arrive at peace, this time Mozambique put national efforts at its core, and that is working. Of course, for national actors to take on that ownership, political will must be present. In the Mozambican context, both sides have consistently shown up and taken courageous leaps of faith to prioritize peace for their people. While the core mediation team played an important facilitative role, the Government has championed national solutions to national problems by listening and creating a culture of dialogue between the Government and RENAMO.

And for a process to be truly national, it must embrace all of the population. As we heard on 7 March from numerous Member States in this Chamber, during Mozambique's signature event on how to advance the women and peace and security agenda (see S/PV.9276),

excluding women from peace processes dooms those processes to failure. National ownership means ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women. In Mozambique, the peace process has mainstreamed women's participation in the negotiation and implementation structures. It has been guided by the relevant national and international frameworks on women and peace and security, including resolution 1325 (2000) and Mozambique's own national action plan.

We are fully convinced that another reason for Mozambique's successful peace process has been the fostering of trust between the parties. One early indication of that was the fact that just a month after talks resumed between the two leaders, President Nyusi and the then leader of RENAMO, Afonso Dhlakama, a ceasefire was announced. Trust between the parties was further fostered by the implementation of additional partial agreements while the negotiations were ongoing. Notably, the constitutional agreement on decentralization and the memorandum of understanding on military affairs were both signed before the peace agreement. That progressive approach to implementation using confidence-building measures helped to increase trust and gave each party a sense of purpose and achievement. I commend the mutual trust achieved between the parties and how that has been reflected in the exemplary commitment shown by the national implementing structures to working together to realize all the aspects of the agreement.

The third reason behind the success of Mozambique's peace process is its flexibility. The process has taken a forward-thinking and adaptive approach with targeted investments to embed peace. Any hurdles faced along the way were addressed with direct and open dialogue between the parties and with agile decision-making and action. For example, many activities ground to a halt in the global pandemic. However, within one month, President Nyusi and the leader of RENAMO met and held extensive consultations, ultimately facilitating the safe resumption of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) activities in June 2020. The coronavirus disease pandemic could have derailed Mozambique's journey to peace if the necessary flexibility had not been present.

We strongly believe that adopting a flexible and agile approach to timelines and activities was also essential to ensuring that the process continued to reflect the evolving needs of the parties. And flexibility on the part of donors and the international community

has also been indispensable. Peace processes are political processes. In any political process there are many moving parts, and space must be allowed for setbacks, altered timelines and changing directions.

It is important to frequently remind ourselves that peace processes are for people. Maintaining a human-centred approach throughout is not only the right thing to do, but it also guarantees the best chances of success. People were placed at the heart of the DDR process in Mozambique by sensitizing DDR beneficiaries at all stages, ensuring gender-sensitive disarmament and demobilization and prioritizing conflict-sensitive reintegration opportunities. That has had a direct impact on the advancement of the process, because those involved have felt listened to and that their needs have been prioritized. By involving everyone, we give peace a better chance of success. And putting people first pays off in peace dividends. As key elements of the peace initiative, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process has seen more than 4,800 DDR beneficiaries settle in communities of their choice to begin their reintegration journey, with community members welcoming those women and men home.

Progress in inclusive local development has been crucial to embedding peace in communities. For that, DDR programmes must also take a longer-term view, rather than be seen as a technical and time-limited process. The Mozambican process tackles long-standing issues such as pensions for the demobilized and introduces innovative strategies to spur the involvement of a broad range of actors, including the private sector, so as to embed the long-term sustainability of peace.

I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the courage and wisdom of the Government in pursuing a pragmatic solution to pensions. The recent promulgation of a decree extending pensions to the demobilized is historic, solving not only outstanding issues from the past but also investing in the sustainability of the current peace process and setting an example of reconciliation for the rest of the world. Including demobilized combatants in the national pensions system is crucial for the sustainability of the peace process. It is also an important step for national reconciliation, providing the DDR beneficiaries with a sense of dignity and recognition for their service following their demobilization. Additionally, the reconciliation process has taken a long-term comprehensive approach and seeks to integrate peace education into the fabric of Mozambican society. Every individual has a role to play in consolidating and sustaining peace.

An approach combining national ownership, trust, flexibility and a human-centred perspective has created a commitment to continuity, patience and follow-through, resulting in sustained implementation from the parties, implementers, DDR beneficiaries, Mozambican society and the international community at large. I believe this has been possible in Mozambique's unique case because the same people who were involved in the negotiations are the ones involved in implementation. This provides continuity in the process and builds on years of hard work, strengthening trust between the parties by encouraging and facilitating discreet dialogue. Silencing the guns and embracing dialogue is becoming the Mozambican way of doing things, and this is essential for lasting peace.

Almost four years into its implementation, the Maputo Peace and Reconciliation Accord is setting down ever deeper roots. The peace process demonstrates the commitment of the country's leaders to dialogue as the only sustainable path to peace. In the Cabo Delgado province, Mozambique is also applying a model of building peace and security through dynamic regional and local solutions, seeking to make use of inter-African interventions to resolve challenges on the continent. By tapping into the enormous potential offered by regional organizations and partners, Mozambique has built a framework for concerted action, where coordination among actors involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding has been essential. Not only do these actors know the conflict dynamics well, but they are often also directly affected as threats become increasingly transnational.

In conclusion, let me stress that the success of a peace process should not be measured by the difficulties it encounters; rather, it should be judged on the basis of how those involved choose to overcome such difficulties. While there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to building peace, I think collectively we have identified some basic building blocks that will be relevant and applicable to other contexts.

I strongly commend the President of Mozambique, Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, and the former and current leaders of Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, Afonso Dhlakama and Ossufo Momade, for believing in peace and for listening to the voices of millions of Mozambicans who have wanted peace for so long. I remain deeply grateful for the continuous support I receive from both parties, from the Secretary-General and the international community. Such support has

been critical. I look forward to continued partnership to support Mozambicans in their endeavour to build a better future and a lasting peace.

The President: I thank Mr. Manzoni for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as President of the Republic of Mozambique.

(*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*)

I salute all those present for honouring us with their presence for one more debate on promoting peace and security in Africa within the framework of the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative.

We, the Africans, want peace on our continent. We are aware that to have a continent in peace, it is necessary that African leaders believe that a continent with silenced guns is possible. The leaders of our nations have an added responsibility because they have the obligation to mobilize all sensitivities and secure the requisite means and resources at their disposal to fast-track the silencing of the guns once and for all.

What is required is for all of us to work together so that this millennial dream is transformed into a reality through concrete actions. A peaceful African continent with steady growth is possible. For this goal to materialize, we need to resolve the causes of the feelings of injustice, social inequality and exclusion that have fuelled conflicts during the continent's development process. We need to stop heeding the agendas of those who seek to take advantage of our vulnerability, divide us and easily implement programmes for plundering our resources and wealth.

According to an African diplomat, Kofi Annan, there is no peace without development, no development without peace, and no peace and development without human rights. It is this triad — peace, development and human rights — that guides the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2030 agenda. It is a challenging target that we have set for ourselves as Africans in our quest to reverse at an early date the scenario of prevalent flashpoints in armed conflicts that delay the consolidation of politically stable nations and bring economic prosperity to our continent.

I would therefore like to share with the Council Mozambique's experience on this important theme, which we believe can serve as one of the references to be considered in the resolution of armed conflicts in other latitudes, inside and outside the continent. During my statement, I will therefore repeat the words "silencing", "dialogue" and "peace".

Mozambicans respect the importance of silencing the guns because they have experienced moments when the noise of guns sowed sorrow among many families at one time. Our own independence in 1975 was possible only after a 10-year period of armed struggle. The silencing of guns resulted from the negotiations that culminated in the signing of the Lusaka agreements between the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and the Portuguese colonial State in 1974 after the fascist colonial rule had not accepted dialogue from the outset.

A year after the declaration of independence, in 1976, Mozambique sustained a devastating war of aggression, waged by the racist regimes of Rhodesia and apartheid, which lasted 16 years. At that time, as neighbours, the peoples of South Africa and Mozambique were experiencing times of accusations and armed attacks. While isolated, they prevented the harmonious coexistence and development of the highly interdependent economies.

The fragile coexistence that the two countries experienced was interrupted through dialogue, and hope filled the hearts of the two sisterly peoples following the long-awaited agreement known as the Nkomati Agreement, signed by President Samora Moisés Machel and the Prime Minister of South Africa, Peter Botha. Once again, dialogue was the solution.

Domestically, the armed conflict remained incessant. Even at that time, the silencing of the guns in the conflict among Mozambicans, which lasted 16 years and claimed more than 1 million lives, was possible only through a commitment to dialogue, which culminated in the Rome General Peace Agreement for Mozambique between the Government and the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) in 1992. It was only in that way that peace once again enlightened the Mozambican people.

Because the two parties signatories to the Rome Peace Agreement remained not fully happy with the implementation process of the respective agreement, the country once again experienced incidents of armed conflict, which was quietly increasing in the central region to the extent that it affected the movement of persons and goods, hampering investment and the normal flow of economic activities.

Since I assumed the presidency of the Republic of Mozambique on 15 January 2015, we have made the issue of peacekeeping and national reconciliation the main priority for governance. The practice was described by Ambassador Mirko Manzoni. In that regard, I will focus on only some areas by reporting specifically what we have done. We made a commitment to persisting as long as one brother continued to take up arms to kill another brother, whatever the pretext may be.

That is how I began a direct dialogue with the leader of RENAMO, the late Afonso Dhlakama — may he rest in peace — which resulted in the consensus that led us to the Peace and National Reconciliation Agreement in August 2019, also known as the Maputo Accord.

Our engagement in the dialogue process with RENAMO to put an end to political and military tension allowed us to see that there were key aspects of past agreements that should be addressed going forward with regard to decentralization, on the one hand, and military aspects, on the other. Even though there was the Rome Peace Agreement, tensions prevailed.

During the meetings that I held with the leader of RENAMO, the first issue that I raised was for him to tell me one problem that we should address, and I was also to come up with one, so that we did not waste time discussing details. He chose decentralization, and I chose military affairs. Why did I do that? Because there should be no political party with a seat in Parliament with arms and guns. That is how we started talking.

Through a political agreement, we submitted a bill to the National Assembly for the amendment of the national Constitution in 2018. We adopted a new decentralization model, whereby the governors of the country's 10 provinces are now democratically elected. That happened for the first time in 2019. Why was that? Because RENAMO was saying that it had won the elections in some provinces, while the other party, the ruling party, was victorious in other provinces. But, overall, it was FRELIMO that took all. The agreement by which one was the winner of the province was therefore that one governed just that province. Such decentralization therefore resolved the problem raised by RENAMO.

The second matter of the Maputo Accord was the military component, which entailed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. That has a direct relationship with silencing the guns. That was my problem. Let us disarm RENAMO. Let us demobilize,

and let us reintegrate. In that regard, I requested one small thing. I wanted the RENAMO military to have some leadership command and leadership positions in the Mozambique Defence Force. I accepted that, but we could not have a 50:50 share because not all those in the armed forces are from parties. Those people were appointed to leadership positions in the Defence Force. That agreement enabled that 15 of the 16 RENAMO bases were closed, and one remains. We will close that one. That is why we have embarked on the pension process.

Mozambique is proud to have led an agenda for silencing the guns in which the silent arm that we use is dialogue. I said that yesterday (see S/PV.9296). It may not be a perfect model. We may face challenges, but, where there is trust in dialogue, we can succeed.

Nevertheless, we understand that the silencing of guns requires a long-term vision for the development of the country, which entails promoting social justice in a sustainable and inclusive way, thereby ensuring the well-being of all the people. For that reason, in the context of our Mozambican-led peace process, we need to take into account the fact that that can take a long time. That was said here, and we support that. We have now adopted a decree on the payment of pensions, which will happen immediately.

However, it is important to note that the ongoing peace process and the implementation of the 2019 Peace and National Reconciliation Agreement in Mozambique are unique because the process is based on an innovative approach. It encourages tolerance and emphasizes the importance of national ownership. In the process, there were cases in which we brought in mediators, who remained for a long time without dialogue flowing. We therefore had to say that we should stop that and talk directly. As was said, I used my telephone to talk to Mr. Dhlakama because he was living in his hideout in the bush. At the same time, I personally went to the bush during the armed conflict. I just disembarked. I walked, and I reached out. Fortunately, it was a historic meeting with the commandant because, first, why should we fight? If we could meet, that meant we could talk and resolve our problems.

Another important element is the fact that the interlocutors in the dialogue — me and the leader of RENAMO — had opted for direct supervision. When something happens, we therefore should ask directly about what happened and what did not. That process is being continued with the new leader of RENAMO, Mr. Ossufo Momade.

As was said earlier, most formal and informal understandings were implemented before the signing of the Maputo Accord. Yesterday, when we met with the Peacebuilding Commission, I told members of a time when we wanted to spend Christmas without war. I merely picked up my phone and asked, "Why don't you stop killing people so that they can spend the Christmas and New Year celebrations together?" And that was made possible. There was no formal agreement; we only spoke by phone and neither of us knew where we were. But trust had been built in our meetings. Such trust is also built by talking not only about war — we talked about our children and his previous time in Mozambique. I believe that, when people stop being selfish and look towards finding a solution for the benefit of the majority of people, anything is possible.

Another critical but successful approach was to try to be discreet about the main issues being discussed by the parties involved in the dialogue until consensus was reached, otherwise that would create problems. However, people needed to know — women needed to know, as they are the leaders of many families and the source of information for so many people. But deciding on making such information public had to be done with a certain degree of unanimity. We could not just say what we wanted to say. We therefore had to agree on what to say, based on the various sensitivities we had to consider. Failing to communicate with women and young people and failing to involve them can be fatal, as they are the beneficiaries of peace. Peace requires the inclusion and participation of young people, as they make up the majority.

In addition to the experience that we wanted to share with the Council, we also wanted to talk about the fact that Mozambique is currently experiencing difficult times, owing to the negative impact of climate change. But that is a discussion for another time, as it is also a cause of unrest. As we are discussing the Silencing the Guns initiative, I would like to focus on the destruction and deaths resulting from terrorist acts. With regard to the last topic related to terrorism that I want to talk about, silencing the guns cannot be achieved as long as violent extremism prevails on our continent and throughout the world. On the ground in Cabo Delgado, combat operations continue, with the direct engagement of our Mozambique Defence Armed Forces and security forces, supported by the Rwandan Defence Forces, the Southern African Development Community's Standby Force mission in Mozambique,

as well as indirectly through the support of many countries and organizations represented here today, such as the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union and a number of individual countries, some of which prefer not to be thanked or mentioned, as they feel that they are only fulfilling their duty. We continue to persevere and seek complementary ways to accelerate the process of silencing the guns, the use of which is driven by terrorism and violent extremism.

Such complementary solutions are based on enriching minds and ensuring social stability through the creation of opportunities for the development of human capital. In that regard, the United Nations Development Programme has provided an example on the ground. And it is especially important for young people by promoting training programmes for self-employment, generating incomes and economic incentives, which will go a long way in terms of silencing the guns. It also entails the establishment of innovative programmes to ensure that communities in general are involved in, and benefit from, ongoing projects in their regions, including the advantages afforded by the peace process. We intend to promote and consolidate a culture of peace whereby no one is left behind and differences are resolved through dialogue, including diplomatic dialogue. We need to embark on the diplomacy of peace, which is extremely important, not the force of weapons. Every country has had an experience in which guns failed to resolve issues. What resolved issues was mutual understanding.

I would like to conclude by underscoring that the Republic of Mozambique understands that the nexus linking international development, security, and harmony between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 justifies the need for a permanent convergence within the multilateral approach. If we can achieve the objectives of the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative, we will contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16, which aims to,

"Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels".

I thank everyone for their attention, although we have repeated much that has already been said. We believe that other speakers will add even more to our already lengthy discussion.

(*spoke in English*)

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

Mr. Bicalho Cozendey (Brazil): We are very pleased to speak before the Security Council at one of the last meetings presided over by the Mozambican presidency this month. I would like to pay due tribute to the outstanding work of Ambassador Pedro Comissário Afonso and his team. I would also like to thank the briefers — Ms. Duarte, Mr. Ibn Chambas and Mr. Manzoni — for the information and assessments they provided.

When the Council previously convened (see S/PV.9106) to discuss the Silencing the Guns initiative a little more than two years ago, the atmosphere was cautiously optimistic. Although challenges remained, important peace agreements had been reached in South Sudan and Ethiopia. The situation in the Horn of Africa was improving, and important electoral processes had just been concluded. Our outlook today is a little more sombre. The coronavirus disease pandemic and the conflict in Europe have disrupted trade flows and raised the price of grains and other essential commodities, thereby increasing food insecurity and lowering living standards. The situation in the Sahel continues to demand attention, with ruptures of constitutional order and the advance of militant groups towards the coastal countries in West Africa. In the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the re-emergence of the illegal armed group the Mouvement du 23 mars has contributed to the deterioration of the already dramatic security and humanitarian situation in the region. It must be pointed out, however, that there are positive signs of renewed determination on the part of African Governments and societies to bring lasting peace and security to the continent.

First of all, I have in mind the continued commitment of the African Union to the Silencing the Guns initiative, which was just confirmed by the establishment of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism and the appointment of Mr. Ibn Chambas as High Representative for the Silencing the Guns Initiative. The effort that the countries in the Great Lakes region and Central Africa have devoted to the diplomatic endeavours aimed at tackling the conflict

in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is another encouraging sign.

African countries have not only shown the resolve needed to promote political and diplomatic solutions to conflicts on the continent but have also joined forces to provide appropriate responses on the ground when needed. The Multinational Joint Task Force that is tackling terrorism in the Lake Chad basin and the Joint Task Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel are important examples of African solutions to African problems. The regional force deployed by the East African Community in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo can be another tool for bringing stability to that region. Adequate assistance from the international community is indispensable to the success of those efforts. That support should be provided on the basis of strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law and in full respect for the principle of non-interference in the affairs of sovereign States.

The silencing the guns pledge is but one element of that ambitious vision for the future of Africa, expressed in the Solemn Declaration adopted in 2013 during the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Pan-Africanism. Brazil is proud to have participated in that process at the highest level and to have witnessed such an inspiring demonstration of African solidarity. That vision, which was further outlined in the African Union's Agenda 2063, was one of a prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development in a peaceful and secure Africa. Indeed, a prosperous, integrated and united Africa, based on good governance, democracy, social inclusion and respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law, is a necessary precondition for a conflict-free continent. That is the essence of what we are debating today. Security and development are indeed closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

Official development assistance, whether multilateral or bilateral, humanitarian or development-driven, is important, but it is essentially a temporary solution. What developing countries, especially those in Africa, need is a global economic, financial and trade architecture that allows them to fulfil their potential. In that context, I would like to point to the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) as a uniquely placed enabler for mobilizing international attention and supporting nationally defined peacebuilding priorities, in terms both of financing and expertise. At the same time, technical cooperation, notably South-South

cooperation, plays a key role in capacity-building. The PBC's accumulated experience in promoting national ownership, inclusivity and institution-building also provides useful guidelines for societies seeking prosperity and security as their way forward.

Brazil has been actively contributing to African security and development, whether through South-South technical cooperation projects, participation in peacekeeping operations or engagement in the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, among other initiatives. As a developing nation, attached to Africa by close historical and cultural ties, Brazil stands ready to assist the continent in fulfilling its vision of a prosperous future when guns can no longer be heard.

Ms. Zeya (United States of America): At the outset, I would like to thank President Nyusi for presiding over today's important discussion and to congratulate him on Mozambique's successful and ongoing Security Council presidency. I would also like to thank all our speakers for their informative briefings.

As our briefers shared today, we need a departure from status quo solutions if we are to silence the guns on the African continent. Left unchecked, deadly conflicts will divide African societies; corruption will impede economic progress; mismanagement will squander natural resources; food insecurity will heighten the risk of famine and malnutrition; inequity will erode social and economic gains and repression will stifle the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Those challenges are especially pressing for communities in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and they require a comprehensive approach. That is why the United States' strategy regarding sub-Saharan Africa calls for us to leverage all our diplomatic, development and defence capabilities, strengthen our trade and commercial ties, focus on digital ecosystems and rebalance towards urban hubs in order to realize a new vision for how the African people can shape the future of Africa and the world.

As Vice-President Harris made clear while visiting Ghana this week, the United States is committed to investing in African ingenuity and creativity to spur robust economic growth and opportunities in Africa and beyond. To that end, this week the Vice-President announced more than $1 billion in economic empowerment initiatives for women in Africa. However, economic development alone is not the master key to unlocking peace and stability. As we have heard today, societies prosper most when they combine robust democracy with development. President Biden has repeatedly stated that we are at an inflection point when it comes to the future of democracy, which has faced severe setbacks in many parts of Africa, with seven undemocratic transitions of power occurring in the past two years in West and Central Africa. At the same time, however, developments in recent years in Nigeria, Kenya, Zambia, Malawi and the Gambia have shown that democracy can still triumph via the ballot box.

The events of 2022 put into stark relief what we already know, which is that democratic governance, grounded in the rule of law, accountability and respect for human rights, remains the best tool we have for unleashing human potential, maintaining international peace and security, fostering prosperity and upholding human dignity. The United States is committed to the full achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and I am particularly heartened to see the discussion centred around SDG 16 — peace, justice and strong institutions.

As the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes, sustainable development, which balances economic, social and environmental concerns, must be advanced alongside the other equal and interlinked pillars of the Charter of the United Nations, including peace and security, human rights and the rule of law. Those democratic principles, along with those in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Silencing the Guns Roadmap, provide an affirmative vision for sustainable peace, development and security in Africa. We also recognize the vital role that United Nations arms embargoes play in promoting the Silencing the Guns agenda and limiting the flow of weapons into conflict zones.

As our national security strategy articulates, democratic governance consistently outperforms authoritarianism in protecting human dignity, leads to more prosperous and resilient societies, creates stronger and more reliable economic and security partners and encourages peace and stability. That is why today we are proud to be co-hosting the second Summit for Democracy with the leaders of Costa Rica, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea and Zambia. That diverse group of co-hosts underscores a global signal of demand for accountable, transparent and rights-respecting governance and commitment to collective action.

However, collective action at the global level will not work without empowerment at the local level. I have observed that time and time again in my travels, including during my visits last year to Mozambique and earlier this month to the Gambia, Mauritania and Senegal. From Southern to West Africa, local leaders and civil-society representatives have emphasized to me how imperative it is that they have the ability to set their own agendas, develop solutions and receive resources and capacity-building support in order to anchor peace and security at home. In line with SDG 16, we support inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Members of civil society, including religious and traditional leaders and actors, are essential partners in advancing more open, secure, free and prosperous societies. As active members of their communities, civil society actors have insights on key opportunities to promote peace and stability and represent the strongest bulwark from destabilizing forces, and we must support their strength and resilience. Ultimately, we believe that the best strategy for saving lives, building lasting stability and disrupting the cycle of violence is to prevent conflicts before they happen. Through our new 10-year United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, we are actively working with partners to ensure that diverse perspectives are included in the decision-making around peace and security, and that local voices and locally led solutions grounded in mutual trust and accountability are at the forefront of building inclusive resilience. The strategy aims to shore up long-term civilian security, particularly in Mozambique and coastal West African States that share growing extremist threats on their borders.

I applaud President Nyusi for his leadership of efforts to counter vulnerabilities to terrorism, bolster recovery from its impacts and address the root causes of instability in northern Mozambique. We are proud to support Mozambique's plans to promote reconciliation, inclusive and sustainable development, and resilience in historically marginalized and conflict-affected areas, as well as civil society and private sector initiatives to foster pathways for inclusive economic growth in order to increase employment among young Mozambicans.

I am pleased to share that last week, on 24 March, we transmitted to the United States Congress our 10-year plan to implement the United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability. We are launching the next phase of that groundbreaking initiative in order to reboot our approach to conflict prevention and help a select set of partner countries progress towards a more peaceful and resilient future. Each plan tailors our shared approach to the unique challenges and opportunities of the local and regional context. We will continue to emphasize and elevate local voices and solutions to prevent conflict and promote stability. We understand that the context in each country inevitably changes, and those plans will adapt and evolve as necessary.

As President Biden has noted, instability anywhere in our interconnected world can have global repercussions. The United States is committed to strengthening global resiliency and democratic renewal and to promoting open, peaceful, inclusive and self-reliant nations that become strong economic and security partners that are capable of addressing shared challenges. We look forward to working together to realize those shared goals.

Mr. Al Nahyan (United Arab Emirates): I would like to take this opportunity to commend Mozambique for its successful Security Council presidency. We welcome the opportunity to exchange views on preventing and resolving conflicts in Africa. Mozambique's historical journey to peace and progress is an inspiration to us all. I also want to thank the briefers for their insightful statements today.

In previous years, the Council has discussed the Silencing the Guns agenda several times, and there is clearly a need to take stock of where the agenda is today. The idea that turmoil in one region of the world will not spread to another is an illusion. Not only is it in our collective interest to ensure the success of the initiative, but it is also our moral imperative to enable peace under international law in any way that we can. The pursuit of peace is not restricted to African Governments alone. Meetings such as this one are an opportunity to learn from one another. I would therefore like to make the following three points.

First, we should fully leverage the continent's toolkit of conflict resolution and peacebuilding practices. Over the past two decades, the African Union and subregional organizations have crafted conflict-resolution toolkits that centre African views. The recent diplomatic initiative led by the African Union in Ethiopia is one such commendable story. So too is the deployment of the Panel of the Wise and FemWise-Africa. The role of the international community in that endeavour cannot be understated. And although each conflict is unique,

the Council has the responsibility to encourage African mediation efforts and leverage them whenever possible. The Council can advance that in very concrete ways by engaging more systematically with regional and subregional mediators, as envisaged under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and by giving peace efforts the time and space required for them to bear fruit.

Secondly, silencing the guns is about more than conflict resolution. It demands a focus on the root causes, a determination to combat extreme ideologies and the continued consolidation of development gains. The Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063 are guiding frameworks. They set out goals that seek to inform and complement national priorities. Ultimately, they enable Governments and individuals to lay the foundation for more prosperous and peaceful societies that include women and girls. We know that when women participate actively in the economy, they are more resilient to violence and other threats. Deepening partnerships between regional organizations and local women leaders can promote their roles in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Beyond local and national efforts, the international community can lend its support in a number of ways, including by ensuring that development programmes mitigate those economic and climate vulnerabilities and by promoting grass-roots peacebuilding initiatives.

Thirdly and finally, we must stay ahead of the emerging and increasingly complex threats. The rise of extremism and the misuse of technological progress are distinct threats, and when combined they magnify the challenges to peace and security. Complex threats demand equally complex responses, which necessitate levels of investment that are often far beyond the available means. Anticipatory, coordinated action among States — supported by the international community — is key. Let me give an example: foreign direct investment to African countries reached a record of $83 billion in 2021; yet, that accounts for only 5.2 per cent of global foreign direct investment. We cannot expect peace if we do not invest in it. Sustainable development and peacebuilding go hand in hand. Supporting those efforts is much more cost-effective than paying the price of instability and conflict.

Silencing the Guns continues to be one of the best, most comprehensive representations of African visions on building and sustaining peace. It demonstrates that local and regional perspectives and practices are paramount for effective conflict prevention and resolution. And it is the duty of the international community to support African countries, communities and citizens on their path to peace and prosperity.

Mr. Liu Yuxi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Mozambique for convening today's important open debate, as well as you, President Filipe Nyusi, for presiding over it in person. I also thank Ms. Cristina Duarte, Special Adviser on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Mirko Manzoni, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique, and Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, African Union High Representative for the Silencing the Guns Initiative, for their briefings.

Africa is a continent on the rise. It is a fertile land of hope, brimming with vigour and vitality. African countries and peoples are actively exploring development paths suited to their national conditions, effectively responding to multiple political, economic and social challenges, safeguarding regional peace and promoting sustainable development. The African continent is an important force in the world today. Without peace and development in Africa, there can be no stability and prosperity in the world.

Against that new backdrop, the Security Council must give serious thought to how to strengthen international coordination to better help Africa cope with its challenges, how to forge synergies between development policies to address the root causes of conflict and how to bolster United Nations cooperation with Africa to provide enhanced support to the latter.

First, it is important to support Africa's leading role in its own peace and security affairs. Africans know Africa the best, and African countries are the core force in ensuring their own peace and security. The international community should adhere to the principle of seeking African solutions to African problems and provide assistance on the basis of respect and trust, rather than interfering in other countries' internal affairs or even acting on their behalf in the name of human rights.

For those countries in post-conflict situations, we must support their own choice of development paths and governance models that suit their own national conditions. There is no room for blind criticism and finding fault at every turn, let alone for exploiting the opportunity to engage in so-called democratic transformations.

Secondly, it is important to support African countries in their security capacity-building endeavours. Enhancing Africa's own security capacity is the only way to address both the symptoms and root causes of conflicts in Africa. We need to help African countries build professional, efficient and robust security sectors in order to tackle genuine security threats such as terrorism, extremism and intercommunal conflicts.

In August, China facilitated the adoption of a presidential statement by the Council (S/PRST/2022/6) calling for support for security capacity-building in African countries in a comprehensive and targeted manner with tailor-made measures in line with the actual needs of African countries. That presidential statement provides important political guidance for security cooperation with Africa.

United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa must respect the views of the host countries and support their efforts to strengthen security sector development and reform.

The arms embargoes imposed by the Council on the Sudan, South Sudan and others have hindered those countries in their development of a security capacity and should therefore be adjusted or lifted in a timely manner.

Thirdly, it is important to support Africa in achieving sustainable development. Development and security are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. President Xi Jinping has proposed the Global Development Initiative, emphasizing the need to prioritize development cooperation in global macro policy coordination, address prominent issues and challenges in national governance through development and to forge a global community of development with a shared future.

When working with Africa, the international community must strengthen cooperation in line with initiatives such as the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the Silencing the Guns initiative. It must support Africa in advancing infrastructure development, accelerating industrialization, responding to pandemics, eliminating poverty, boosting employment and promoting the swift implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The underlying cause of Africa's development issue is the unfair international economic order. Developed countries must therefore shoulder their due responsibilities, honour their development aid commitments and pay back the historical debt owed to Africa.

Fourthly, it is important to support Africa's efforts to seek strength through unity. Last year marked the twentieth anniversary of the launching of the African Union. Over the past two decades, the AU has held high the banner of strength through unity, solidarity and cooperation. It has been committed to speaking with one voice in international affairs, exploring a development path suitable for Africa and effectively maintaining peace and security, development and stability on the continent. AU-led peacekeeping operations are a useful practice in seeking African solutions to African problems and should receive flexible, predictable and sustainable financial support.

China firmly supports Africa's in-depth participation in the Group of 20, and the group of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, known as BRICS, as well as other mechanisms. China is a staunch advocate for Africa playing a greater role in global governance and international affairs.

China has stood alongside Africa through thick and thin. China will always consider Africa a high priority in its diplomatic relations and prioritize peace and security in Africa in its work at the Council. China and Africa have worked together to launch a partnership initiative for Africa's development, to promote the concept of peaceful development in the Horn of Africa and to implement nine Chinese-African cooperation projects and build a high-level China-Africa community with a shared future. We are ready to work together with the international community to realize the vision of a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, help Africa to silence the guns, protect that source of hope for the world and build a community with a shared future for humankind.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to congratulate Mozambique for taking the initiative to convene this important debate on the impact of development policies on the implementation of the African Union's Silencing the Guns initiative. The remarkable experience of Mozambique, shared by His Excellency President Filipe Nyusi, and the briefings we heard this morning from Special Adviser Cristina Duarte, African Union High Representative Mohamed Ibn Chambas and Personal Envoy Mirko Manzoni were particularly enlightening with regard to the magnitude of the commitments to be undertaken and the responsibilities to be assumed.

When the African Union launched its Silencing the Guns initiative in 2013, the picture of crises and conflicts on the continent was stark: the Sahel was in turmoil; Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan in the Horn of Africa were enveloped in major crises; and the Great Lakes region was suffering chronic instability. Ten years after the launch of that initiative, which is rooted in the African Peace and Security Architecture, it is clear that the African Union is playing a more crucial role than ever in preventing and resolving crises on the continent and is bold in its ability to provide African perspectives on peace and security.

The African Union has been at the heart of peace agreements in the Sudan, in the search for a solution to the crisis in Ethiopia and in State restoration in Somalia. It continues to support the reconciliation process in Libya and is making a major contribution to concrete solutions in the Sahel. However, despite that progress, conflicts and crises persist in Africa and are affecting the daily lives of African populations. Violent extremism, terrorism, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the intrusion of armed groups pose a real threat to peace and security in Africa.

Most of those crises are partly driven by poverty, inequality and social exclusion and fuelled by the exploitation of natural resources. The rise in conflicts, and their links to socioeconomic crises, therefore makes it essential to reflect in depth on the nexus between security and development, which are two sides of the same coin, or rather two pillars of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Indeed, development plays a crucial role in our efforts to promote peace in Africa. The implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative and the actions to be taken must therefore be aligned with that reality. The substantial cost of the absence of development on the cycle of violence and the resurgence of conflict is evident. Poverty and a lack of prospects for young people are risk factors for conflict and the resurgence of conflict. Consequently, young people fall prey to armed and terrorist groups, whose activities are a huge factor in the proliferation of guns. It is therefore essential to closely align the work of addressing security issues together with efforts to enact development policies in order to reinforce the conditions conducive to the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative.

States that are fragile or in post-conflict situations and therefore very often unable to fulfil their governance responsibilities are the most exposed to conflict. In order to increase the effectiveness of our actions in support of peace and strengthen the resilience of such countries, we must systematically combine the many crisis prevention and resolution initiatives with the implementation of quick-impact development projects and ensure that the international financial institutions are involved and the private sector is mobilized. In the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund should support reconstruction, infrastructure restoration projects and the restoration of basic services. Failing to support countries that are already weakened, especially by terrorism, amounts to ignoring the threat posed to international peace and security. We continue to believe that the risk of escalating conflicts can be reduced by developing reliable development projects and contributing to prevention and peacebuilding efforts through appropriate economic investment.

We cannot address the impact of development policies on the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative without highlighting the constraints that undermine development in Africa and therefore tend to fuel crises. Illicit financial flows are a major obstacle to Africa's development, as they drain hard currency holdings and domestic resources and exacerbate poverty and inequality. The annual losses of just over $88 billion due to illicit financial flows alone have a significant impact on States' development. Fighting that scourge is an imperative that can help to curb conflicts and silence the weapons. The adoption of the Yaoundé Declaration, encouraging States to cooperate on taxation and illicit financial flows, shows the interest that African countries have in those issues.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the importance of establishing development policies that are in line with the specific needs of African States and their peoples especially. That is the only way that development can have an effective impact on the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative. It is a human-centred approach that gives people the tools they need to increase their resilience.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the personal participation of President Nyusi in today's meeting and thank the briefers for their statements. We are grateful to the Mozambican presidency for the choice of today's topic. We have often stressed the importance of considering the influence of the whole range of socioeconomic issues on peace and security. We agree with the views

presented in the concept note (see S/2023/148/Rev.1) that the reasons for many of the current conflicts in Africa lie in the continent's past of colonialism, slavery and the pillaging of natural resources. Unfortunately the decolonization of the 1960s did not necessarily lead to full-fledged economic and political sovereignty for the newly independent States. Direct oppression was replaced by subtler forms of neocolonialism, which even today help to perpetuate economic underdevelopment, poverty and political instability in African countries. Many African States have laboured under various unilateral restrictions and sanctions for decades. Those problems can be catalysts for the emergence of new conflicts or the exacerbation of old ones.

If we are to establish lasting peace, we have to understand the underlying causes of conflicts, each of which has its own origins and specific features. There must be a comprehensive approach to resolving them that must go beyond the political process to include development efforts. The ultimate goal of those efforts is to enable States to ensure the welfare and security of their citizens through their own efforts. However, we take a cautious approach to directly linking the goals of sustaining peace, peacebuilding and peacekeeping to sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Of course there is a connection, but it is not always direct. It is important to stress that peace alone cannot guarantee development, nor development peace. Furthermore, we are concerned about the growing popularity of tying security to elements that belong in the area of development, such as climate, access to water resources and so forth. That diverts attention and resources from the actual task of promoting development as such and diminishes the importance of that agenda in the United Nations system.

Many African countries, whether they have been through conflict or not, need support through technology transfers and expertise, industrial and agricultural development, the rebuilding of infrastructure, job creation and the strengthening of health and social protection systems. Development efforts should promote social cohesion and ensure an equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth. We believe that providing material and technical assistance to African States is a moral obligation of developed countries, many of which owe much of their prosperity to resources taken from the continent. At the same time, developed countries still have not fulfilled the

commitment they made half a century ago to increasing official development assistance to 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product. In 2021 that figure was only 0.33 per cent. In other words, we are talking about a shortfall of at least $200 billion in non-repayable assistance to developing countries annually.

At the same time, we want to emphasize that international support should be provided exclusively with the consent of the host Government, in accordance with its priorities and with respect for its sovereignty. It is unacceptable for donors to make the provision of assistance conditional on the fulfilment of political demands or to link it to the human rights situation or other arbitrary factors. We believe that it is the political resolution of conflicts, the stabilization of the security situation and the transition to sustainable development that provide the basis for improving the human rights situation and building democratic institutions in a given country, not the other way around.

Needless to say, the primary responsibility both for preventing conflicts and overcoming their consequences belongs to African States themselves. The continent has come a long way in recent decades in terms of building a regional peace and security architecture. In today's very difficult conditions and against a global backdrop of political and economic upheaval, African countries have become increasingly assertive in finding regional solutions to their problems and are trying to pursue independent and sovereign foreign and domestic policies. We welcome the growing role of the African Union and subregional organizations in preventing conflicts and mediating disputes. The African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020, which has been extended until 2030, is a vital initiative. Against that backdrop, we consider it reasonable for African States to raise the issue of the provision of material and financial assistance by the United Nations in their efforts to maintain international peace and security.

It is well known that the Soviet Union provided significant support to the nations of Africa in their struggle against colonialism, racism and apartheid, as it helped them obtain and protect their sovereignty and consistently supported them in establishing their statehood, strengthening their capacity for self-defence, creating the basis for their national economies and training experts. Thanks to Soviet assistance, entire sectors of the economy and vitally

important infrastructure facilities were created, which has generated stability and peaceful development for many countries.

Russia continues to offer support in ensuring peace and security in Africa with a view to helping the States of the region develop their own capacities to contain crises. One of the areas in which we are cooperating is the creation of effective armed forces and law enforcement, including to combat the terrorist threat. In the academies of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, military personnel from dozens of African States are being hosted. We attached priority attention to the issue of transferring technology and expertise without any preconditions, as well as to development of industry and critical infrastructure on the continent.

Russia is taking part in projects in the area of industrialization, digitalization and agriculture. We continue to provide assistance in the area of electricity generation, which for the moment only covers a quarter of the continent's needs. Today we are providing new environmentally clean technologies, first and foremost nuclear energy. Russia is also stepping up its efforts in providing State fellowships for free education to African students in medicine, teaching advanced technology, transport and other civilian specialties. We are also developing partnerships in such vital areas as health care and biological and epidemiological security.

Russia is also providing assistance to African countries through various United Nations agencies such as the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Our country is also contributing to easing the debt burden in Africa. To date, in the framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, over $20 billion worth of the principal balance of the debt has been forgiven.

The future development of our cooperation will be discussed during the second Russia-Africa summit, which will take place from 26 to 29 July in Saint Petersburg. Its watchwords are consistent with the theme of today's event: "for peace, security and development". Our joint efforts on the flagship initiative of the African Union to end all armed conflicts on the continent by 2030 is included in the draft plan of action on cooperation between the Russian Federation and the African Union for the period 2023–2025, whose adoption is expected in the course of the summit. We expect that its outcome will make a contribution to overall normalization on the African continent.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I thank you, Madam President, for convening today's open debate. I am also grateful for the briefers' briefings.

Development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns campaign are extremely important, and we commend Mozambique for holding an open debate on this matter. With this in mind, I would like to highlight three points that Japan considers essential for today's topic.

First, addressing the root causes of conflict and terrorism is indispensable for regional stability. The vulnerability of State and local institutions is one of the fundamental causes of conflicts and terrorism. Preventing the creation of an environment where young people are attracted to extremism is necessary. Based on this recognition, Japan promotes institution-building and the strengthening of governance, including legislative, administrative and judicial systems. Consolidation of democracy and good governance under the rule of law is crucial for peace and stability, which enables sustainable development in Africa. In this regard, broad, inclusive and democratic public participation including by women and youth in national and local governance, is essential.

Secondly, approaches at the subregional, national, local and community level are needed, as is the human security approach. We cannot overemphasize the important role played by the African Union (AU) and other African subregional groups. In this regard, we wish to emphasize the need to strengthen the self-reliance and resilience of communities, as that is one of the best ways to address root causes.

Collaboration between communities and central and local governments based on mutual trust is also required. Based on this idea, Japan, together with the United Nations Development Programme, Tunisia and other international partners, held a conference last July in Tunis to share good examples of the community-oriented policing model among security-sector officials from 17 African countries. We also underscore the need to protect forcibly displaced people, including refugees and internally displaced persons, through supporting local communities to find durable solutions.

That leads to my third point: the critical importance of African ownership in conjunction with international partnerships. As our Prime Minister Kishida stated last year on the occasion of the eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, Japan aspires to be a partner growing together with Africa. It will help realize the resilient Africa that Africa itself seeks to become.

In this regard, realizing economic development and addressing inequality are critically important. We are proud to be consistent partners of Africa, working on tailored, sustainable and transparent quality cooperation based on the ownership of each country and region. This cooperation covers extensive areas, such as health, education, agriculture, capacity-building, climate change, physical and institutional infrastructure and so forth. We also support Africa's own conflict-prevention and peacekeeping efforts. We assist through capacity-building for peacekeeping personnel in close cooperation with the United Nations. Japan has also been supporting the AU Peace Fund, with the aim of training human resources in the AU, Regional Economic Communities and some African countries.

Furthermore, consultations between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council are important to address common security challenges. We also value the work by the Peacebuilding Commission with its unique advising, bridging and convening role on peacebuilding.

To conclude, these three points — addressing root causes, approaches at subregional, national, local, and community levels, and African ownership in conjunction with international partnerships — are the basis of Japan's policy toward peace and stability in Africa. Stability is a prerequisite if Africa is to unleash the potential of its people, and it is essential for realizing African development. We are fully committed to partnering with Africa to achieve this goal so that the guns can be silenced at last.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): Thank you, Madam President, for convening today's important discussion, and I thank the Special Adviser on Africa to the Secretary-General, the African Union High Representative for the Silencing the Guns Initiative, and the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique for their insightful briefings.

Malta fully recognizes the intrinsic value that socioeconomic considerations have in promoting long-term social cohesion, peace and stability. It is essential to periodically reiterate this message in the Security Council Chamber, where we are daily confronted with the struggle for solutions towards the root causes of conflict and violence.

Malta reaffirms that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. A holistic political process underpinned by respect for the rule of law, democratic principles and good governance is made possible when all stakeholders are included.

Today I will focus on three key messages that can assist in the realization of the Silencing the Guns agenda: first, on the focus on children's education and literacy as pillars to end discrimination, radicalization, violence and conflict; secondly, on the critical support for the youth, peace and security agenda and its inextricable link to the Silencing the Guns agenda; and thirdly, on the centrality of gender equality for ensuring inclusive participation, equitable development and political governance, as underpinned by the women, peace and security agenda.

First, the preamble to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child says: "[M]ankind owes to the child the best it has to give." We should put that objective at the core of our priorities at the Council and ensure a conducive environment for our children's aspirations to flourish. When schools are targeted during armed conflict, children's right to education is violated. Malta remains deeply committed to protecting and promoting education and literacy for all children. That should be our cornerstone for building more resilient, inclusive and sustainable societies.

Secondly, Africa is a young continent. As actors of change, the contributions of young women and men to decision-making and peace processes must be supported. Hearing impassioned pleas by an 18-year-old from Cameroon at a meeting last month during our presidency to remove barriers to youth participation drives us to do more for our young people (seer S/PV. S/PV.9258). Ensuring that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes are both age-responsive and gender-responsive, with comprehensive physical and psychosocial support, can provide young people with meaningful alternatives to violence. Malta supports the essential work of the Peacebuilding Commission in also advancing the youth, peace and security agenda.

Thirdly, gender equality and women's empowerment are central to sustainable peace, especially in conflict and post-conflict situations. Religious and traditional leaders in Africa continue to play important roles in promoting women's leadership in their communities. By sensitizing them, they are preventing sexual and gender-based violence, combating impunity for those crimes and supporting victims.

Development policies must be designed to promote a grass-roots-based approach to addressing the root causes of conflict. It is clear that climate, conflict and conflict-induced food insecurity have left a number of African countries more vulnerable and less resilient to meeting the current and future shocks. That, in turn, drives their overall humanitarian needs and stifles progress, most notably their overarching objectives with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals. When sustainable investments are facilitated, entire communities can be uplifted from the scourge of financial poverty and rejoined into decision-making processes.

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is one such example. Our national contributions to the PBF over the years stem from our conviction that peacebuilding is an integral part of our multilateral project. We strongly believe that, if we all contribute, we can, and will, achieve significant results. We also highlight the extensive support that the European Union provides through the Global Gateway initiative, with at least €150 billion to be invested in sectors such as transport education, health and energy by 2027.

Early-warning systems, as well as mediation, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, are critical tools for achieving long-lasting results in many settings. We commend the work of the African Union in that regard.

In conclusion, the achievement of the Silencing the Guns initiative requires the commitment and cooperation of all stakeholders in Africa, with the support of the international community. When Governments, regional organizations, international partners, civil society and the private sector work together, we are one step closer to a peaceful and prosperous Africa for all.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking the speakers for their valuable briefings this morning.

This is a key debate for the Security Council and the United Nations system as a whole, leading us to the premise that the current challenges to peace can be overcome only through international cooperation and revitalized multilateralism, focused on investing in people as the main factor in conflict prevention and resolution.

For that reason, which is not an insignificant one, Ecuador welcomes the convening of this meeting, which complements the high-level debate held two days ago on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional bodies in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism (see S/PV.9296).

Ecuador commends the African Union's resolve in its goal of silencing the guns in Africa and the development of its Master Roadmap, which sets out practical steps to rid the continent of conflict and create favourable conditions for its growth, development and integration. The international community should support that objective, under the principle of national ownership and in the context of the African Union's Agenda 2063, as discussed at the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Ethiopia on 18 and 19 February.

A comprehensive and action-oriented approach enables peacebuilding. We are witnessing tremendous efforts by African countries in conflict situations to overcome conflict, transcend the impacts of a tragic history and move towards a shared vision of a peaceful and prosperous future. In that context, we welcome the fact that peace agreements and electoral processes have been concluded, allowing efforts to be directed towards identifying priorities and building the necessary institutions to achieve development and sustainable peace.

In order to achieve those ambitious efforts, issues such as trafficking in small arms and light weapons must be tackled. In that area, the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in the context of its Global Firearms Programme, the Economic Community of West African States and other subregional organizations is key. Equally important is the role of peacekeeping operations and other Council-mandated entities in combating the illicit transfer and destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, in the context of resolution 2220 (2015).

Inequality, exclusion and marginalization exacerbate humanitarian crises, and human rights violations and abuses undermine the social fabric, fuelling cycles of violence. Organized crime plays a

destabilizing role that transcends borders. We therefore believe that the fight against that scourge must include specific efforts in border areas.

Disinformation — a breeding ground for recruitment into terrorism and violent extremism, with transnational links that benefit from illegal trafficking in arms, explosives, drugs and natural resources — must be combated by utilizing strategic communications that reach the sectors and areas most susceptible to recruitment into such scourges.

Today we must also remember the distinct impact of armed violence and trafficking in firearms on women and girls. We encourage greater efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence. We also reaffirm the role of women in political participation and crisis and conflict prevention and their essential role in reaching lasting peace agreements.

Likewise, young people are key to efforts towards adaptability, inclusion and the promotion of national identity, rendering the youth, peace and security agenda an appropriate tool for supporting the building of social cohesion.

State presence and capacity-building must bring about a sense of belonging. Respect, promoting diversity and fostering ethnic and religious tolerance should be nurtured in the classroom. In addition to being a tool for development, education is a conduit for the citizenship and national pride necessary for peace.

Finally, I would like to highlight the fact that, through his testimony at a meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission yesterday morning, President Nyusi provided us with a model example of the peacebuilding process in Mozambique, which should be an incentive for countries in conflict or post-conflict situations to approach that advisory body and benefit from its catalytic potential to foster collaborative work within the United Nations system and leverage the support of regional and international financial institutions.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this timely debate. As we have heard today, President Nyusi's personal leadership in delivering the Maputo Accord for Peace and National Reconciliation offers many valuable lessons for silencing the guns across the African continent. I am grateful to all our briefers for their presentations.

The human and financial costs of conflict are unsustainable. Done well, development is the best form of prevention. Durable peace, security and development

can be secured only through integrated solutions that bring together the breadth of United Nations and African Union (AU) development expertise. That also means ensuring that countries can access adequate development financing for taking action. And as President Nyusi said earlier, development and security should be underpinned by respect for human rights and their defence. I would like to make three additional points.

First, the United Kingdom is committed to long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships with African countries to promote economic development. In that context, the Prime Minister will host the United Kingdom-African Investment Summit in London in April 2024. The Summit will promote two-way trade and investment with African countries to create jobs and growth. Its aim is to support initiatives to encourage intra-African trade and women's economic empowerment. We know that economic growth and stability contribute to longer-term peace and security.

Secondly, the United Kingdom strongly supports increased collaboration within the United Nations on development and peace and security. In addition to the work of the Security Council on peace and security, that means complementary and mutually reinforcing peacebuilding and development responses. The discussion yesterday in the Peacebuilding Commission on Mozambique's recent journey was a good example of that. The root causes of conflict and violence have to be addressed based on holistic analysis and the use of integrated solutions.

Thirdly, the United Kingdom continues to encourage enhanced partnerships among the United Nations, the African Union, the African Development Bank, the World Bank and other regional partners. We work closely with the African Union on shared priorities such as strengthening health systems and mitigating the effects of climate change. The United Kingdom is proud to support the AU Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation, which is an important continental tool for helping to prevent and manage conflict.

Lastly, the United Kingdom will remain a committed partner for advancing development, peace and security across the African continent, including through support for the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): I must begin by thanking Mozambique for organizing this important debate. It is well understood and widely appreciated that without

peace, efforts at sustainable development are impeded. What is less appreciated is the impact of development policies on peace, and that in turn has translated into inadequate support for efforts to ensure that development policies do not detract from peace but rather have a positive impact on it. We therefore welcome the insightful briefings by Special Adviser Cristina Duarte, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, African Union High Representative for the Silencing the Guns Initiative, and Mr. Mirko Manzoni, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique. We believe that the briefers' rich contributions to the debate will help the Council better unite its views and identify further ways by which its intersecting actions with other organs and bodies can support Africa's ambition to pacify the continent by 2030, in line with our commitment to silencing the guns.

The Africa we know is a continent of promise, a promise that unfortunately has been shackled by the reality of competing international interests, well-intended but harmful global policies, disjointed actions and diminished national capacities. It is such influences that along with others have held back Africa's prospects for mobilizing its endowed natural resources, bulging youth population, large market size of 1.3 billion people and combined economy of $3.5 trillion in order to mute the sounds of the guns and enable Africa's children to become fully educated, its prosperity to be developed and shared by its people and its peace and stability to be guaranteed by its Governments. The fact is that the capacity of African States is a necessary factor for peace. And historical and current policies that have undermined the continent cannot be glossed over if we are to be true to ourselves.

Africa has carried over into the present the consequences of unfavourable global adjustments in the monetary and financial arenas, as well as in trade and other dimensions. It cannot be justly said that a region where 33 of its 54 member countries are classified as least developed has benefited equitably from participating in the international system, even if we granted that all the factors for such a state of affairs were national. Monetary policies in major markets today are disproportionately affecting smaller economies through rising interest rates, depreciating currencies, an elevated cost of living and a reduced fiscal capacity to absorb shocks. Such consequences exacerbate fragilities and reduce State capacity. Mindful of Africa's complex and challenging political, security and socioeconomic situation, we welcome the African Union's extension of the implementation of

the Silencing the Guns initiative and its 2030 Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa, as well as noting the continuing relevance of resolution 2457 (2019).

While we acknowledge the moderate gains that have been made since the establishment of the initiative 10 years ago, we note that challenges to its implementation remain. It is against that backdrop that Ghana would like to focus on three issues that we believe could support the efforts to silence the guns in Africa beyond the more traditional areas of the Master Roadmap's work, which we fully support.

First, in silencing the guns, it will be important to expand development policies that support the continent's efforts to address the root causes of conflict, including the economic and social inequalities that have destabilized several countries. That includes supporting States in honouring their social contract with their citizens, as required, through the rebuilding of national institutions, the enhancement of State presence throughout their national territories and the provision of basic social services to all segments of the population, especially the underprivileged and poor, who can least afford privatized basic services. That is also a policy goal that is necessary to insulate vulnerable populations from the infectious radicalization of extremist and terrorist groups. And we believe that the United Nations development system, as well as the international financial institutions, can play an important role in supporting the efforts of African countries.

Secondly, Africa is a young continent whose youth dividends can be effectively realized only if its children and young people are properly educated and mobilized into beneficial innovation and value creation. Such a people-centred transformational agenda is a costly venture that most Governments consider too great a political risk to take within their short electoral cycles. We therefore urge for enhanced and sustained international support for the generational development that the power of education brings. We welcome the commitments made by leaders in September 2022 to transforming education for the world's children, a significant proportion of whom live in Africa. In our view, an educated and decently employed youthful population places the continent on the trajectory of peace, away from divisiveness, strife and conflict.

Thirdly, Africa's prosperity is fundamental to its peace. It is for that reason that the continent, through its African Union Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, established the African Continental Free Trade Area to improve economic integration and unlock development potential for the people of the continent. The continent's development agenda should therefore form the framework around which international support is given and cooperation carried out with the continent. That is necessary to avoid disjointed actions and enable the continent's own strength to be mobilized for its development.

I would like to reaffirm Ghana's commitment to all continental, regional, national and local actions that support efforts to silence the guns, including good governance, investment in preventive measures and the harnessing of the complementarities between development and security in building a resilient and continental community for durable peace.

We particularly underscore the crucial role of traditional and religious leaders in reinforcing peace in Africa and believe that the moral values and native wisdom they uphold has earned them reverence and a place in many African countries for a positive impact on the political, security and development landscape. In Ghana for instance, the National House of Chiefs, the National Peace Council, the Council of State and the Christian Council of Ghana, all of whose membership include traditional and religious leaders, have made positive contributions to our national peace and stability. Through their efforts, the peace pact signed by all the presidential candidates since the 2012 national elections has deepened social cohesion and helped amplify the importance of peaceful and legal processes in addressing electoral grievances.

We also believe that the diversity of African societies must be embraced and leveraged for development through inclusive and balanced social, cultural, ethnic and religious representation in national life. Africa's stability can be assured, and its women and young people not left behind, if we embrace the fact that, although we may be different, we all can belong.

Finally, Ghana believes that development policies can have a positive impact on the implementation of silencing the guns in Africa. However, we must move beyond the business-as-usual approach by strengthening cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, as well as by demonstrating stronger political will, including in the implementation of existing commitments, such as the United Nations/African Union Joint Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): France congratulates Mozambique on convening today's debate. We commend the path taken by the country in the area of peace and national reconciliation. I thank Ms. Duarte, Mr. Chambas and Mr. Manzoni for their briefings.

Africa faces considerable challenges today, such as the pressure of climate change, persistent terrorism and economic, health and geopolitical shocks. There is also a challenge posed to governance and the strengthening of State institutions. Lastly, the root causes of conflicts must be addressed. Such challenges are not only faced by Africa; they are challenges that are common to all. In that regard, the only effective responses are global responses that are coordinated and based on solidarity. First and foremost, solutions must be promoted by the African Union itself and be aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts.

France welcomes the operationalization of the African Peace Fund and supports the increase in African peacekeeping operations, as the African Union has the capacity to provide robust responses to the continent's security challenges. France is ready to resume discussions at the Security Council to ensure sustainable and predictable funding for those operations, including through assessed contributions. Nonetheless, the challenges go well beyond security threats. We must establish partnerships, as equals, with African countries to better respond together to long-term challenges, in particular to environmental and development challenges. France and Gabon did just that at the beginning of March by organizing the One Forest Summit to combat climate disruptions and preserve biodiversity.

In the area of health, to combat the coronavirus disease pandemic, France opted to support African scientific excellence by supporting the production of vaccines on the continent. To finance sustainable infrastructure, one year ago, the European Union launched the Global Gateway strategy. Half of the €300 billion mobilized through the strategy will be allocated to Africa, and more than one third of the projects will be implemented in sub-Saharan Africa.

The summit that France will organize on 22 and 23 June in Paris will strengthen the international financial infrastructure, enabling it to combat inequalities and finance the climate transition. Solutions must be designed with all actors involved in the continent's transformation — young people, civil society, entrepreneurs, researchers, athletes and the cultural sphere. Women and young people must be at the heart of those solutions. African women spearheaded the women and peace and security agenda after the Windhoek Declaration in 2000. We must draw on the exceptional potential of the African continent and its civil society to develop solutions together.

Mr. Spasse (Albania): I thank Mozambique for convening today's important open debate. I also thank the briefers for their insightful remarks. We see value in re-engaging the Security Council on this important issue. We welcome the guiding spirit of the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want Master Roadmap. In that regard, regional efforts are important. The challenges Africa faces are enormous. They have a direct impact on the people of the continent and the rest of the world. Allow me to underline three points.

First, we believe that African leaders must make it a priority to properly address the illicit flow of weapons, their transfer, diversion, theft and the mismanagement, and the misuse of small arms and light weapons, their stockpiles and ammunition. For that to succeed, it is essential for all African partners to join the Arms Trade Treaty and ratify it as soon as possible. We encourage additional efforts at all levels related to the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Secondly, we echo the Secretary-General's report on the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/2022/959), which clearly identifies the lack of governance institutions as a serious obstacle to the ability of African States to deliver sustainable development outcomes, putting at risk peace and security. As we have seen, the lack of governance leads to the empowerment of terrorists and armed groups, thereby generating more violence and instability. It is fundamental for States to increase their presence, including over the cross-border routes of illicit trafficking. We strongly encourage a whole-of-society approach, creating a multi-stakeholder network, establishing the rule of law and building trust in institutions in marginalized and conflict-affected areas.

We support United Nations recommendations to engage meaningfully with traditional and religious leaders, civil society, humanitarian workers, women and young representatives. They can provide avenues for the peaceful resolution of disputes and nation-building efforts. Outreach to families — especially to young people through sustainable education and development programmes — is particularly important. States should invest more in building and promoting a culture of peace and respect for cultural differences in order to counter intolerance and forms of violent extremism. We find the decision of the African Union to proclaim September of each year as Africa Amnesty Month, to encourage civilians to voluntarily surrender illicit weapons in their possession, to be very wise.

Thirdly, corruption and illegal activities continue to worsen the trust in governmental institutions in Africa. We encourage African partners to address that problem with accountability, to accelerate their efforts in strengthening governance and anti-corruption mechanisms and to cut any links that enable non-State actors and their sponsors to access weapons and State assets.

Finally, we believe that close cooperation between the African Union and its member States and the United Nations, as well as with other regional and subregional organizations and partners, would further enhance good governance, sustainable peace and development. Also, streamlining the agendas of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council is necessary in promoting and building a durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

Mr. Hauri (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank His Excellency the President of Mozambique for having convened our meeting today, which gives us the opportunity to discuss the links between peacebuilding and development in Africa. I also thank the briefers for their informative presentations.

Switzerland fully supports the efforts aimed at achieving sustainable peace in Africa, a key element of the African Union's Agenda 2063. The African Union aspires to put an end to armed conflicts. To achieve that, the root causes must be addressed, and poverty in all its forms must be eradicated. As we have just heard, unfortunately, weapons still speak too loudly, both in Africa and in other parts of the world. The illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their

ammunition continues to sow violence, threaten peace, tear apart the social fabric and impede development. In view of the need for action in that regard, Switzerland would like to highlight four points.

First, while the supply of weapons must be reduced, the factors that drive demand must also be addressed. The focus must be on preventing violence by considering the full range of political, economic and social factors in conflicts. The cycle of violence can be broken only if the cycle of impunity is also broken. It is therefore essential for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law to be investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. Integrating armed violence reduction and accountability more systematically into peacebuilding and development efforts is therefore critical to achieving sustainable results.

Secondly, it is important to strengthen the capacities of local governments to deliver equitable and sustainable public services, especially in peripheral regions and conflict areas. That builds confidence within the population and helps to restore the presence of the State. Sustainable Development Goal 16 calls for the creation of peaceful and inclusive societies and effective, accountable and transparent public institutions. In that connection, Switzerland is supporting a project to improve education planning in the Niger, particularly in emergency situations.

Thirdly, humanitarian, peacebuilding and development efforts must take into account the links between climate change and conflict. Many African States are familiar with the impact of droughts and floods. Food insecurity and mass population displacement can exacerbate conflicts and increase the risk of recruitment by armed groups. There is an urgent need for affected States to reduce their vulnerability to climate shocks in order to enhance peace and security.

Fourthly, dialogue is fundamental for defusing tensions before they erupt into conflict and for resolving existing conflicts. Such dialogue should systematically include women, young people and, depending on the context, other actors, such as traditional and religious leaders. In line with its tradition of mediation and good offices, Switzerland promotes dialogue platforms, including at the regional level. For example, we support the Nairobi process to advance peace in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The United Nations regional offices for West Africa and the Sahel and for Central Africa also play a key role,

in particular by promoting the creation of spaces for dialogue in collaboration with the African Union and subregional organizations.

The Silencing the Guns initiative provides African solutions to African challenges. It enables the African Union and its regional mechanisms to strengthen their capacity to manage conflicts and crisis situations, including through cross-border cooperation. The guns will not be silenced as long as they seem more accessible than a job or vocational training. I therefore want to address all actors, here and on the ground, who are working for sustainable peace in Africa. Our peace efforts must go hand in hand with efforts to build confidence, strengthen rule of law institutions, promote social cohesion, uphold human rights and international humanitarian law and create economic opportunities, especially for young people.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign and Caribbean Community Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Browne (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago would like to thank the Republic of Mozambique for organizing today's important Security Council open debate. We are also grateful to the briefers for the information and assessments they have provided on the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative.

I would like to convey through you, Madam President, that is an honour to address this open debate under the leadership of the President of Mozambique. I recall my recent productive interactions with him, held in my capacity as the President of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, during the forty-second African, Caribbean and Pacific States-European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly, held in Mozambique in October and November last year. Those exchanges reaffirmed the enduring relationship between the Caribbean and Africa.

Today we meet again in what has been referred to as the most important room in the world. I wish to place on record in the Chamber that Trinidad and Tobago applauds the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative through, inter alia, the strengthening of arms control and disarmament frameworks. That common effort is a symbol of the commitment and unity of the African region around the goal of building a conflict-free continent, an essential basis for its prosperity and development. Trinidad and Tobago supports

that initiative, which is in line with the Agenda 2063 of the African Union and with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The necessity of curbing the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons and ammunition is a foreign policy priority for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and a key strategic objective of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Council members may be aware that the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago has the lead responsibility for matters related to crime and security in the quasi-Cabinet of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Caribbean Community. That is a responsibility we take seriously, in both its internal and its external dimensions. Regrettably, Africa, as well as the Caribbean and Latin America, are regions that pay the greatest human cost of the uncontrolled proliferation of illicit firearms, despite the fact that we are not major manufacturers of those weapons.

Consequently, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has undertaken a number of measures at the regional and hemispheric levels to strengthen the framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In fact, Trinidad and Tobago, together with some other CARICOM States, has backed a legal challenge brought by Mexico against private-sector gun manufacturers in the United States, in an effort to hold them accountable for their role in facilitating the free flow of illicit arms and ammunition throughout the region. Such weapons are the weapons of choice in the commission of the most serious crimes, including murder, at shocking rates.

Although we have crafted regional solutions to tackle the myriad problems related to crime and security, we are all cognizant of the need for enhanced cooperation at the multilateral level. That is why Trinidad and Tobago subscribes fully to the object and purpose of the Arms Trade Treaty. We recall with satisfaction and appreciation that Africa was an ardent partner in that endeavour together with CARICOM. We also stress the need to fully implement other existing international instruments in that area, including the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Firearms Protocol.

It is our belief that women's perspectives should be equally represented at all levels in peace and security processes, as should the hopes and aspirations of young people, who are ultimately the inheritors of the future. It was as a manifestation of that view that Trinidad and Tobago initiated its resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, which the Assembly has adopted annually since 2010.

I would like to conclude by urging the international community to act decisively to silence the guns in Africa, and to silence them in other regions of the world as well. We must make a difference on the ground. Words alone will not prevent the devastating and irreparable harm caused by weapons in the hands of misguided individuals.

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

Ms. Keul (Germany): First of all, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this important open debate today.

Peace and security in Africa is the theme for today's meeting. Jointly, we are striving for nothing less than the vision of a conflict-free Africa. Together with its African partners, Germany is ready and willing to tackle the causes of conflict, violence and fragility in Africa through an integrated approach. We need to link crisis prevention, stabilization, conflict resolution and peacebuilding with sustainable development efforts under strong African leadership.

To that end, inclusive and transparent development policies, the strengthening of State institutions, the rule of law and democracy and the participation of women are crucial. In order to support this African-led endeavour, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development presented a new strategy for Africa in January this year. The strategy has been developed in close consultation with Africa, and in particular with representatives from the political arena, the private sector, civil society, academia and young people. Based on that strategy, our development cooperation will focus primarily on a just social and environmental transformation, as well as gender equality and job creation for Africa's young people.

There are many challenges. The illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons pose a serious threat to peace and security. The effective control of such weapons is essential to preventing future conflicts, proliferation, terrorism and organized crime. Silencing the guns is our joint responsibility. The threats and the challenges posed

by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons are transnational. Our answer must be transnational as well.

Germany welcomes and supports regional approaches such as the plan of action of the Economic Community of West African States. We have been supporting national and regional capacity-building efforts in Africa and worldwide. Those measures are aimed at combating terrorist financing and illicit financial flows, as well as improving border management and national law-enforcement capabilities. In 2022 alone we devoted more than €10 million to projects such as the Africa Amnesty Month project, on the surrender and collection of illegally owned weapons. As Chair of the Open-ended Working Group on conventional ammunition, we are committed to improving the effective control and management of ammunition.

A strong peace and security architecture in Africa is also key to fighting the misuse of small arms and light weapons, as well as to supporting African efforts to solve the underlying root causes in this area. Germany assists African Union (AU) institutions and regional economic communities in implementing the instruments of the African Peace and Security Architecture, to which we have contributed more than €30 million since its creation. Our joint objective is to prevent crises, manage conflicts and build sustainable peace. As the largest contributor to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, we also support the call for the sustainable and predictable financing of AU-led peace missions. We very much welcome the fact that the AU found a common position on the issue at its recent summit in Addis Ababa.

Let me conclude by joining the AU's call to ensure adequate and sustainable funding for United Nations peacebuilding, including through the introduction of assessed contributions. We are close to a compromise and call on all United Nations Member States to join the proposal developed by the Group of African States and the European Union. In a globalized world, our security and prosperity are inextricably linked. Germany stands ready to join our African partners to work together for peace and security and sustainable development in order to make peace a reality for all African people.

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

Mr. André (Portugal): I am grateful to Mozambique for convening this timely debate and to all of today's briefers for their valuable insights.

Let me start by thanking President Nyusi for his wise leadership in the peace process and by commending the Mozambican Government and the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) for achieving a critical milestone in their peace process after reaching an agreement on the payment of pensions to demobilized RENAMO ex-combatants. The Government decree announced last week will hopefully lead to the full disarmament and demobilization process and the complete implementation of the Maputo Accord of 2019. As that major step is taken towards the consolidation of peace, we also commend the role played by the United Nations, in particular by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique.

This is an important moment to hear about Africa's priorities. Global events with local impact and local events with global impacts both underscore the need to invest in partnerships to address Africa's development challenges. Africa faces a significant number of challenges in different areas, ranging from social and economic hindrances to security and development, and they need to be addressed through national and regional ownership and through international cooperation. It is crucial to mobilize all available instruments and to further coordinate efforts — both in the bilateral and the multilateral realms — to address peace and security challenges on the continent. A multifaceted approach is required to respond to the root causes of conflicts, and concerted forms of cooperation are needed to tackle transnational threats, such as terrorism, religious extremism, piracy and other forms of organized crime and illicit trafficking. Purely military solutions will not be sufficient. Work must be done to achieve sustainable and inclusive development and in the short term to ensure humanitarian aid for those in need. Leaving no one behind cannot be just a motto. During the cruellest months of the recent pandemic, one sentence was repeated several times in this Chamber: We are only as strong as the weakest of us. That is a truth that we should also have in mind when we talk about peace and development.

We have been strong advocates of a deeper and broader relationship with Africa, always respecting African development agendas and priorities. Our long-standing approach has always been to engage with Africa, not to develop policies on Africa. We recently

approved the Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy, an important component of Portugal's external policy. Through that strategy, we will pay special attention to countries in fragile situations. Improving results in those contexts requires coherent policies that link the various areas, namely, external action, diplomacy, defence and development. And it also requires integrated responses, in particular by means of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. In that regard, Portugal supports a strategy with the following three mutually reinforcing axes.

First, support should be provided for Africa's economic integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area, regional economic organizations and the development of regional and local value chains.

Secondly, support should be provided for efforts aimed at stabilization and regional crisis prevention and management, on the basis of the principle of African ownership, integrating security with economic development and humanitarian cooperation.

Thirdly, support should be provided for the development of strategic corridors and infrastructure — roads, railways, ports and energy and digital infrastructure — in order to connect African countries with each other and connect Africa with the rest of the world, namely, through the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. That is why Portugal has been active in bridging cooperation efforts between Africa and Europe. In Mozambique, for example, we deployed a military mission to reinforce the training of the Mozambican special forces to act in Cabo Delgado.

Portugal has also contributed financially to multilateral projects, notably through United Nations agencies, aimed at strengthening national counter-terrorism capacities. We also support projects to assist displaced persons in Cabo Delgado, including through financial contributions and partnerships with non-governmental organizations. That multilayered combined approach is further complemented with strong investment in human capacity-building, namely, by providing professional training in oil and gas to young persons from Cabo Delgado. Portugal has also contributed operationally to improving the technical military capabilities of partner countries of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries. Maritime security is particularly relevant. And that is another issue for which the promotion of development on land is crucial to ensure security at sea.

In conclusion, it is worth recalling that development is not and cannot be portrayed as a precondition for the realization of human rights. Development is itself a right. Development policies can help address security challenges by investing in critical infrastructure, such as roads, water and sanitation facilities and energy systems, which can in turn improve access to basic services, create jobs and promote economic growth, thereby fostering the well-being of African nations and African peoples and consequently contributing to the noble objective of silencing the guns.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.