



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

9574th meeting

Wednesday, 13 March 2024, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Mrs. Shino (Japan)

Members:

Algeria	Mr. Remaoun
China	Mr. Jie Lin
Ecuador	Mrs. Barba Bustos
France	Mrs. Meyer
Guyana	Ms. Hazlewood
Malta	Mr. De Bono Sant Cassia
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Republic of Korea	Mr. Dongwoo Kang
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Sierra Leone	Mr. Scotland
Slovenia	Mrs. Košir
Switzerland	Mr. Carpenter
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Weld-Blundell
United States of America	Mr. Pine

Agenda

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Promoting conflict prevention — empowering all actors including women and youth

Letter dated 1 March 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2024/210)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no longer than three minutes to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after two and a half minutes.

I now call on the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines.

Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga (Philippines): We congratulate Japan on its presidency of the Security Council this month. It is difficult to think of a more qualified nation to preside over this open debate, especially on a subject that calls for humane thinking to arrive at solutions that are sometimes tentative but never final because each life lost is irreplaceable. In life-and-death situations, the only decent choice is to protect the former and avoid the latter.

The Philippines has always stood for a rules-based order, in which reason rules and compassion prevails. Our active participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other global partnerships underscores our dedication to multilateralism and the primacy of international law. We believe that honest and strategic collaboration is essential to assisting conflict-affected countries, the peaceful settlement of international disputes and strengthening resilience in facing security risks. Women are at the core of that mission. The art of peacemaking begins at home and comes from the hands of women. Those who work hardest on anything have the strongest commitment to protecting it and making it work. Those who build and sustain families know best what is good for them, at the expense of no-one in the family. Extend that further, and we are here under one roof in the home of the family of nations and peoples called the United Nations. We therefore look forward to the Summit of the Future in September and the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, including the strengthening and updating of the United Nations toolbox for prevention of conflict and its recurrence, with the women and peace and security and youth perspectives, as highlighted by the Secretary-General in the New Agenda for Peace.

The Philippines has always championed peace and peacemaking. Faced with the outbreak of war, the Philippines may join the fray, but it is less to fight on the parlous side of good and more to protect innocent lives and secure communities. We have carried out

peacekeeping in Africa, Haiti and the Middle East, always with unfailing courage and appropriate behaviour. At the end of the Vietnam War, we welcomed all who had braved the sea in small boats to begin rebuilding their lives on our shores. We note the key roles played in the refugee centres by women, who frequently manage them.

As a nation that champions peacebuilding and sustaining peace, our success in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the southern Philippines is the centrepiece. The process was founded on the understanding of the intersectionality of vulnerability, the recognition of opportunities for shared gains through strategic interventions, the value of institutionalizing convergence for social cohesion and sustainable development and on jointly realizing the intergenerational value of peace. Women contributed greatly to the success of the BARMM. They were negotiators, researchers, educators and community organizers. We forged what is now the BARMM across half a century of fighting between warring factions and clansmen, both against an inclusive democracy. Peace is possible, and patience pays. They are the best way forward, with the least hurt and loss. Compassion as a strategy lays the strongest foundation for lasting peace after bitter conflict. There is no fresh reason to look back in anger. The BARMM process, while demonstrating our respect for distinct security mandates and commitment to holistic development, stands in full support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. We hope to engage with the Peacebuilding Commission to share our experiences in establishing the BARMM as we continue our journey towards a sustainable peace through conflict prevention, equity and, always and without fail, human dignity.

The role of the Security Council in forging peace is at its most critical today, when the risk of political, cultural and resource conflicts is compounded by the complexities of digital technologies and the impacts of climate change. It must advance efforts enabling the participation of all actors in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts through collaboration among the peacekeeping and political missions, the mandates of other United Nations agencies and beyond. Those efforts must translate into early warnings of potential conflicts, concrete preventive actions and transition plans for peace operations ahead of their withdrawals. When a nation is at war with itself and contending domestic forces cannot rise to the right solution, United

Nations peacekeepers have done so, if not to end a conflict with a lasting peace, then to lessen civilian casualties. Their presence halts the escalating violence, and they usually pay the price for it. Not all bullets fired hit their target, but all bullets, without fail, take a toll on the prospect of peace by increasing the passion for reckoning.

Since 1963, the Philippines has been committed to United Nations peacekeeping operations. We wish to increase our footprint with more professional peacekeepers on the ground, most especially highly trained women peacekeepers with nothing to prove and much compassion to share. That is our commitment to inclusive, intergenerational and lasting peace. As a partner, pathfinder and peacemaker, the Philippines is ready to bring its experiences and insights to the Security Council to demonstrate a focused and effective approach to peace and security challenges.

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

Ms. Borovets (Ukraine): Ukraine highly appreciates the initiative of the presidency of Japan to hold this important open debate, and we commend Secretary-General António Guterres for his visionary New Agenda for Peace. The Agenda's focus on conflict prevention, sustainable development and the modernization of peacekeeping operations paves the way for innovative strategies. Its emphasis on trust, solidarity and the need for urgent reform within the United Nations framework aligns with Ukraine's aspirations for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine and all over the world. We are committed to engaging with the New Agenda for Peace and remain hopeful that it will lead to meaningful actions.

As we speak, a brutal war of aggression is unfolding in my country. Its consequences are devastating, and women and youth are the most vulnerable. More than a million Ukrainians under the age of 18 are internally displaced, 2 million young people have been forced to seek protection abroad and 90 per cent of the more than 8 million Ukrainians who have temporarily left Ukraine are women and children. The war has been detrimental to children's mental condition and their learning outcomes. According to UNICEF, the negative effects include a two-year learning loss in reading and a one-year loss in math. The education system in the territories of Ukraine that are temporarily occupied by Russia has been deliberately destroyed by the occupier and replaced with Russian

curricula and the brainwashing and militarization of the young. But despite all the challenges, Ukrainian women and young people have shown remarkable resilience. Youth engagement in the emergency response has doubled, from 20 to 42 per cent. More than 60,000 women are serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, while others are mastering new professions, opening businesses amid the war and taking the lead in all sectors. Ukraine is working to ensure the active participation and inclusion of women and young people in shaping their futures and contributing to recovery efforts.

Ukraine's example is clear. In a world in which conflicts are multiplying, our current tools for conflict prevention are inadequate. While an overwhelming majority of Member States are committed to peace, some are fuelling wars and blatantly disregarding international law. Let me state the obvious. No conflict can be effectively prevented unless we put an end to the existing ones. If conflict-prevention mechanisms actually worked, Russia would not have dared to invade my country. Yet we can and must add more tools to our conflict-prevention toolbox. Those tools must be sharp enough to discourage anyone from aggression and the use of force in relations between States, except in the case of self-defence, as the Charter of the United Nations clearly states.

Let me name just a few such tools. They include isolation rather than appeasement, exclusion rather than face-saving options, economic pressure rather than business as usual and military assistance to those who — through self-defence — are defending the principles of the Charter and democracy and international law. That is exactly what President Zelenskyy's peace formula offers. Its 10 points are based on international law and the principles of the Charter. Ukraine invites all responsible nations to join the implementation of the peace formula. We strongly believe that such an approach should be reflected in the outcomes of the Summit of the Future, focusing on action and tangible results. It is the only way forward for a safer, more peaceful world.

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

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia): We thank the presidency of Japan for convening this open debate on the topic "Promoting conflict prevention — empowering all actors including women and youth", and for providing a comprehensive concept note to guide today's discussions (S/2024/210, annex).

Building inclusive, peaceful and resilient societies is a cornerstone for fostering development, upholding human rights and preventing conflict, with women and young people playing a pivotal role in achieving those objectives. Armenia reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and resolution 2250 (2015) on youth and peace and security, and we have been consistently working to integrate their principles into national policies, programmes and initiatives aimed at advancing gender equality and youth engagement. Armenia supports the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission to prioritize the integration of gender equality strategies into its important work.

Women and young people have a distinct potential to contribute to peacebuilding and sustainable development. Yet it is also they who are the most affected by the consequences of armed conflict. The blockade of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which started in December 2022 and culminated in September 2023 with the use of military force against the civilians there, demonstrated its disproportionate effects on women and young people, especially those who are caregivers. That implicit example of a premeditated ethnic cleansing, masterminded and perpetrated while the international community watched, has resulted in the widespread forced displacement of the entire ethnic Armenian population in the region, further exacerbating disparities and vulnerabilities for those who bear the brunt of violence and deprivation. According to a report published by Amnesty International in 2023, the disruption of essential goods and services in Nagorno-Karabakh affected families with young children the most, and women and youth have come to be revealed as the main targets of the blockade. Azerbaijan's persistent violations, including its armed attacks and incursions against Armenia's territorial integrity, its promulgation of aggressive rhetoric and its systematic destruction of millennia-old Armenian cultural heritage, have demonstrated time and again its utter disdain for international law. That was also exemplified by its failure to comply with the provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice for the period between 2021 and 2023. The United Nations and the Security Council have yet to acknowledge the gravity of those violations or to reflect on the failure to prevent them.

Women and youth bring unique perspectives to shaping responsive humanitarian action and sustainable development strategies that prioritize

lasting improvements in the livelihood, resilience and dignity of populations, especially those that apply the human security approach — and I want to acknowledge Japan's important contribution in that regard. In their roles as community leaders and caregivers, women are indispensable to supporting human security when they can leverage their knowledge, networks and expertise, especially at times of crises and their immediate aftermath. Likewise, the engagement of young people as digital natives is crucial in driving progress and innovation, in addition to promoting responsible online behaviour and countering hate speech and misinformation. Armenia recognizes the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting the prevention or recurrence of conflicts by building strong and resilient communities, with the engagement of diverse stakeholders, including women and young people from the populations affected.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the capacities of the United Nations system for prevention, evaluate its current toolbox and establish more responsive and effective mechanisms for addressing the root causes of conflict, while ensuring accountability for atrocity crimes and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

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

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): I would like to thank the Japanese presidency for organizing this open debate, and I also thank the briefers. It is very timely, as we are negotiating the outcome document for the Summit of the Future, and in terms of the run-up to the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement made this morning on behalf of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the statement to be made on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Prevention saves money, but far more importantly, it saves lives. Yet countries are sometimes reluctant about prevention, fearing that it may lead to interference in their internal affairs. Embracing prevention more broadly therefore requires clear and predictable procedures that provide guarantees. That is why the Peacebuilding Commission, firmly rooted in national ownership and respect for national sovereignty and positioned at the intersection of the three pillars of the United Nations, is uniquely placed to fulfil that role.

The PBC can significantly contribute to structural, as well as operational, prevention. Structural prevention can be achieved through the development of national prevention strategies. The PBC should be a forum for their presentation and to share experiences and lessons learned, but also to mobilize financial assistance to implement them, when needed.

Operational prevention could be implemented through light-footprint civilian missions that could be deployed upon invitation from the host country after a peacekeeping mission to facilitate a smooth transition or to prevent further deterioration of the situation and the risk of violent conflict. If such missions are equipped with the necessary financial resources, in close cooperation with the Government concerned, they can address the root causes of the conflict and strengthen the resilience of the society. If its mandate is extended, the PBC could potentially be the body that would oversee such missions.

Inclusivity is another very important policy in conflict prevention, and the PBC has both the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security strategies, which should be considered living documents, constantly being developed and implemented.

Lastly, the Security Council should be cooperating more closely with the PBC. In addition to requesting its advice more often, it could include the PBC in its briefings on early warning and situational awareness, especially regarding the countries that are on the PBC agenda.

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

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate Japan on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month and to thank you, Madam President, for holding today's meeting.

Our world today is experiencing a new period of disturbances, as the threats, challenges and risks facing it are diverse and intertwined. New conflict areas threaten international peace and development. That is why we must shoulder our responsibilities and find practical solutions to establish sustainable peace.

We stress the need to give greater attention to peacebuilding and to providing sustainable and adequate financing for achieving it as a *sin qua non* for the success of our joint efforts to build resilience

in addressing current challenges. In that regard, we stress the following points, which constitute a general framework for promoting our working mechanisms in order to achieve peacebuilding and ensure its sustainability.

First, building and sustaining peace are the key cornerstones for anchoring sustainable development and peoples' prosperity. Peacebuilding is not only ending conflicts. It also includes preventing conflicts and adopting a proactive approach to promote cooperation mechanisms that address the root causes of conflicts. We stress the crucial role of preventive diplomacy in addressing tensions before they turn into armed conflicts. In that regard, we recall the important report of the former Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, one of the proponents of preventive diplomacy. In his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (S/24111), Mr. Boutros-Ghali presented key recommendations for establishing and promoting preventive diplomacy as a vital strategy essential tool for preventing conflict and enabling States and institutions to play an effective role in ensuring international peace and provide support for societies experiencing political transition phases and those facing complex security challenges.

Secondly, analysing risks is essential in identifying and understanding the root causes of conflicts. It is a major component in conflict prevention aimed at the adoption of a comprehensive approach to understand the basic motives of conflicts and assessing their repercussions. It is important to develop strategies that could find sustainable solutions aimed at achieving good results and ensuring a safe and stable future.

Thirdly, addressing the root causes of conflicts requires major engagement by the relevant States, in line with the principle of national ownership. National institutions should identify, plan and implement their priorities. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is important as a key supporter of member States. The PBC shares the responsibility to guide and support such States in their efforts to implement comprehensive peace strategies. Such efforts can create an environment conducive for sustainable development.

Fourthly, it is important to support States' efforts in building their national institutions and capacities, promoting good governance to prevent conflicts and addressing the root causes of conflicts while taking into account national priorities, ensuring security and stability and achieving sustainable development.

Fifthly, there is a need to promote the participation of all segments of the society in an effective manner in the areas of risk assessment and decision-making related to preventive measures. That provides the foundation for societal consensus, promotes good governance, establishes transparency and justice and promotes the culture of constructive dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

I am pleased that today's meeting is being held concurrently with the current session of the Commission on the Status of Women so that, together, we can reaffirm the pivotal role of women in preventing and resolving conflicts. There is a crucial need to increase their participation in political and decision-making processes. Women are an indispensable cornerstone in achieving peace and security. We also stress the vital role of youth in the development and implementation of prevention strategies. They are one of the groups most affected by social and political changes and emerging economic challenges.

We stress the Security Council's responsibility to support national initiatives to address new security challenges. It is important to promote the abilities of States and their institutions so that they can address such challenges. It is also important to promote investigation missions and periodic visits by the members of the Security Council to conflict areas. That will allow the Council to assess the situation on the ground and take the necessary proactive measures to prevent the escalation of conflicts.

The Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace reminds us of the need to accelerate our efforts to prevent conflicts. It is important to promote multilateralism by investing in this international Organization's abilities, so that it can keep up with current changes. I would like in that regard to stress the need to coordinate between the United Nations and regional organizations for peacebuilding and conflict prevention. That is what we want to put forward to the Council.

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

Mr. Pretterhofer (Austria): Austria aligns itself with the statement to be made on behalf of the European Union.

We thank you, Madam President, for organizing today's open debate on conflict prevention with a specific focus on the role of women and youth.

Austria advocates for a more inclusive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Conflict prevention is not just about halting violence. It is about constructing just and inclusive societies, which are the prerequisite for sustainable peace — a peace that relies on open societies and the full, effective and meaningful participation of women and youth. That is why these principles were enshrined in resolution 1325 (2000) in 2000, the youth and peace and security resolution 2250 (2015) and the respective subsequent resolutions. These were, no doubt, important, but they also need to be implemented.

The reality is that women and youth still suffer disproportionately in conflict. Austria firmly stands against all forms of violence, including the heinous acts of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. At the same time, we must shift our perspective and see women and youth not only as victims but as agents for change and peace. Austria understands its commitment to peace as an investment that extends beyond rhetoric into tangible support. That is why we have provided more than €130 million in humanitarian assistance in the past year and increased our multi-year funding to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund from €5 million to €9.7 million through 2025.

Of the 18 peace agreements reached in 2022, only one was signed or witnessed by a representative of a women's group or organization. That highlights a significant and lingering gap between our aspirations and reality in achieving the objective of the women and peace and security agenda. To remedy that, the international community, with the Security Council at the forefront, must embrace and implement inclusive strategies where women and young people are seen not just as victims, but as key architects of peace; where women and youth peacebuilders are not only heard, but listened to; where women and youth peacebuilders are funded, not underfunded; and where they are protected, not left exposed.

In tackling today's complex conflicts, we must accept that no single solution fits all scenarios. Peacebuilding cannot be treated in isolation. Rather, it should be understood as a practice that requires a holistic approach and is intrinsically linked to and interacts with climate change, biodiversity loss, weak institutions, poverty and other socioeconomic factors, as well as healthy information ecosystems. Effective conflict prevention and peacebuilding must therefore address both the humanitarian, development and peace

nexus as well as the climate and security nexus. That is why Austria supports the Climate Security Mechanism, of which we became a member last year. Similarly, we believe that true effectiveness in conflict prevention and peacebuilding lies in national, local and community-led interventions. While externally driven peace processes may have merit, they often focus solely on political and military tactics, neglecting the underlying issues within communities and therefore often resulting in solutions that offer only temporary respite rather than lasting peace.

The Pact for the Future presents us with a chance to enhance the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, particularly in developing national prevention strategies. A crucial point in making our societies resilient is the empowerment of women and youth in decision-making. Let me add that such empowerment can be guaranteed only by access to information, as well as to free and independent media as fact-checkers. The cornerstones of our approach are therefore threefold — inclusivity, synergy and partnerships. As we strive to advance those goals, let us remember that preventing violent conflict is not just a priority but a fundamental aspect of our Organization's work, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which requires the active contribution of States, international organizations and civil society to ensure success.

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

Ms. Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica commends Japan for convening this open debate and would like to highlight three aspects.

First, it has already been 23 years since the publication of the Secretary-General's first report on the prevention of armed conflict (S/2001/574) and since the adoption of the Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, whose fourth Review Conference Costa Rica will preside over. Those frameworks consider arms control as a key element in conflict prevention. Costa Rica therefore calls on the Council to include stronger efforts and mandates to monitor and enforce arms embargoes at the national and regional levels. We also call on all actors within our Organization, including peacekeeping missions and their troop-contributing

countries, to take on a central role in monitoring weapons and ammunition, collecting data on recovered weapons and ammunition and monitoring illicit flows and sharing such information with sanctions panels in accordance with their mandate. We also call on States to respond to requests for traceability information from sanctions panels.

Secondly, and despite the Council's progress in recognizing the link between women's participation and their protection, a notable gap persists between international frameworks and the realities faced by women, especially in conflict-affected regions. To close that gap, Costa Rica calls for prioritizing the implementation of the provision in resolution 2493 (2019) on the creation of enabling environments for women's participation, improved coordination between United Nations missions and entities and the adoption of a gender-sensitive approach to digital tools for participation, among other things.

Thirdly, the complementarity of the women and peace and security and youth and peace and security agendas lies in their shared goal of promoting inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding efforts across diverse communities and generations. Applying a gender lens to interventions under the youth and peace and security agenda contributes to promoting a culture of peace and preventing a new generation from duplicating the same patriarchal patterns and power structures that limit equality between men and women. Similarly, the women and peace and security agenda should address the age-specific needs and experiences of young women and proactively address their priorities and concerns.

We have the power to prevent conflict by implementing arms-control mechanisms, promoting women's participation and intergenerational dialogue and strengthening coordination within the system.

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

Mr. Sterley (South Africa): We thank the presidency of Japan for facilitating this open debate on empowering all actors, including women and youth, in promoting conflict prevention. We also thank all of the briefers for sharing their insights.

Conflict prevention is at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations and of the Security Council in particular. The maintenance of international peace and security is contingent on the realization of all three

intertwined pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights and development. In that context, I would like to highlight the following four issues of importance in our discussion today.

First, peace and, by extension, conflict prevention will remain elusive if the root causes of conflict are not adequately identified and addressed. The protracted conflict in Palestine and the parts of the African continent where we see relapses and recurrences of conflicts are examples that we should draw lessons from. We cannot build sustainable peace without addressing the reasons why those conflicts began and persist.

Secondly, a one-size-fits-all template for conflict prevention should be avoided. Every conflict situation is unique, and responses must therefore be equally bespoke. Moreover, concerted efforts are needed to proactively respond to the diverse triggers of conflict, especially in fragile States, through national conflict-prevention strategies with contributions from the various stakeholders in order to ensure national ownership. While considering unique responses, we must be cognizant of the double standards that are at times applied in dealing with conflicts at the international level. The values and principles of international law must be consistently applied so as to avoid a selective application of rights for some at the expense of others.

Thirdly, it is also vital for States to promote a human rights-centred approach to protecting the rights of all their people. Such an approach, anchored in resilient national institutions and policies, will ensure that all segments of society, in particular women and young people, enjoy their human rights. There is value in promoting the substantial role of women and youth in efforts to sustain peace because of their distinct abilities to reach out to communities. In our view, that is a foundation for inclusivity and is also key to helping prevent the outbreak or recurrence of conflicts in some situations.

Finally, we would like to underline the importance of sharing best practices for inclusive approaches to conflict prevention. We encourage States and regional arrangements to share lessons and experiences on inclusive approaches to conflict prevention. In conclusion, successful conflict prevention is naturally inclusive, fostering political, economic and social space for all actors, including women and youth. The Security Council remains pivotal to the creation of normative

frameworks that support inclusion, while individual States must continue to develop context-specific responses that support conflict prevention.

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

Ms. Schwalger (New Zealand): We thank Japan for convening this important meeting today on the topic of promoting conflict prevention and empowering the participation of all actors, including women and youth. Doing so is a shared responsibility of the United Nations system and of all Member States.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Canada, Australia and my own country, New Zealand (CANZ).

CANZ fully supports the work already under way, including the strengthening of such bodies as the Peacebuilding Commission and the ongoing negotiations of the Pact for the Future. We have seen early drafts of the Pact place a focus on inclusivity and on empowering women and youth, including in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and we intend to ensure that those references are maintained and strengthened. Empowering all actors, including women and youth, to have a voice in the prevention of conflict and to ensure a sustainable peace should be a key objective for all Member States. In conflict, women and youth often suffer the disproportionate consequences of military action, and we have seen this across two harrowing examples: Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza. Yet they continue to not have seats at the table at which peace and security matters are discussed. We must deliver on our commitments to realize the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

CANZ remains committed to ensuring the full participation of indigenous peoples in the United Nations. Those voices should be systematically included, as appropriate, in all aspects of conflict prevention and conflict resolution, including in restorative justice mechanisms.

We now have opportunities to deliver on making our work more inclusive, including via the meaningful participation of women and youth. To that end, upcoming processes, such as the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture, offer an important chance to strengthen inclusive participation in conflict prevention within the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Finally, CANZ welcomes the milestone of allocating assessed contributions to finance the Peacebuilding Fund, beginning in 2025, and reiterates our support for adequate, predictable and sustainable peacebuilding financing to tackle peace and security challenges. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture plays a vital role and is well placed to improve collective efforts to prevent conflicts and respond to post-conflict challenges.

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

Mr. Feruță (Romania): I would like to thank Japan for placing this important issue on the agenda.

Building reliable and resilient institutions that represent all actors in a society — including and especially women and youth — is paramount. We have put in place a strong institutional framework to empower women and girls to participate in preventing conflict and sustaining peace. The ongoing session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the women and peace and security agenda are part of that. However, greater engagement is needed in the implementation of those instruments, particularly ahead of the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture — we simply need to do more.

Romania is firmly committed to placing women and girls at the centre of peace efforts. We joined the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action. Our national strategy and our national action plan on women and peace and security makes it very clear: there is a correlation between the status of women and the level of conflict in a certain area, and we have witnessed the worldwide impact of our failure to represent and promote women's rights and their participation in all spheres and levels of our communities. We need to address the remaining bottlenecks preventing the inclusion of women, especially at the higher levels of decision-making.

Conflict prevention requires systemic changes in terms of the participation of both women and youth. resolution 2250 (2015) is a milestone document that enabled youth participation in peace processes. What is needed now is to provide younger generations with a strong voice in order to build more resilient and peaceful societies. Romania is committed to contributing actively to creating opportunities for younger generations worldwide and reducing the gaps in education and skills in the use of new technologies. Most recently, our Government provided financial assistance and supplies to the first virtual centre of excellence in Addis Ababa.

Peace is inextricably linked to continued investments in the younger generations, which are our powerhouse for more resilient and stronger societies. We have developed the necessary tools, but we must further refine coordination between different entities across the United Nations system. I welcome the recent developments that have further enhanced United Nations peacebuilding activities.

Romania has actively committed its efforts to strengthening the capacity of the Peacebuilding Fund to respond to the growing needs in peacebuilding settings. Our expectation of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs is that it will hold a separate briefing with Member States on the status of the upcoming New Agenda for Peace and how the special political missions will fit into that newly reshaped framework.

Finally, looking ahead, we will have an opportunity at the Summit of the Future to rethink the use of our institutional framework on peacebuilding and conflict prevention. We also see an opportunity, through the Pact for the Future, to promote system-wide engagement on financing and building partnerships for peacebuilding, adopting a whole-of-society approach. Romania will continue to advocate for mainstreaming the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security perspectives in the United Nations agenda.

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

Mr. Vasconcelos y Cruz (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to express its deep appreciation to Japan for convening this debate.

As part of our involvement in the Security Council as an elected member between 2021 and 2022, our country promoted the adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2021/22, in which the Council reaffirmed that national Governments and authorities have the primary responsibility in driving and directing activities for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, emphasizing that inclusivity is key to that purpose. Likewise, my country reaffirms the approach of the New Agenda for Peace, which prioritizes and invests more in conflict prevention and resolution, with a people-centred approach that is inclusive of all sectors of society. We also reaffirm our support for the Secretary-General's initiative, contained in his report entitled Our Common Agenda (A/75/982), in which he calls for the development of national prevention strategies to strengthen the national infrastructure for peace, placing women and girls at the centre and addressing the needs of young people.

At the national level, Mexico has implemented the Women Peacebuilders programme, the aim of which is to strengthen women's leadership and organization in their communities and to contribute to repairing the social fabric. We recognize that women's social, economic and political action is key to peacebuilding. With regard to the participation of the youth in violence prevention, the Mexican Institute of Youth runs a programme called Creative Seedbeds. The programme consists of groups that train participants in the arts, is community-focused and caters to girls, boys and young people. The programme is grounded in our rich cultural heritage, and, through it, peace is fostered in safe spaces to develop children's critical thinking and encourage them to participate in the arts.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Peacebuilding Commission as a key adviser in the construction and implementation of strategies in favour of the youth, peace and security agenda, as well as in the creation of national action plans on women and peace and security. The Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission can promote synergies between the two agendas and facilitate their mainstreaming in the work of both entities.

We therefore support the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen the Commission, and we call on the Commission to bolster efforts to support national prevention strategies, with an inclusive approach.

Finally, we urge the membership and other stakeholders to take advantage of the ongoing discussions of the Pact for the Future, as well as the 2025 Peacebuilding Commission review process, as valuable opportunities to focus efforts on strengthening the prevention architecture, with a focus on gender and inclusion.

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

Mr. Muhamad (Malaysia): Malaysia thanks Japan for convening this important debate on promoting conflict prevention and empowering all actors, including women and youth. Our delegation also appreciates the valuable insights shared today by the briefers.

Malaysia firmly believes that sustainable peace can be ensured only by addressing the potential root causes of conflicts, which can relate to economic disparities and social injustices. A holistic approach is therefore imperative, and it should aim to build resilience within communities and mitigate the potential for conflict.

One crucial aspect of that holistic approach must be the inclusion and empowerment of all actors, with a specific emphasis on women and youth. Recognizing their roles as agents of change and peacebuilders is important. Women can bring unique perspectives and solutions to the table, and youth represent the future that must be shaped by inclusivity and equal opportunity.

Empowering women and youth is not only a matter of justice, but also a strategic imperative. Studies consistently show that societies with greater gender equality are more resilient and less prone to conflict. Youth, with their energy, creativity and determination, can be powerful catalysts for positive change. Embracing their potential is investing in a more stable and peaceful future.

The formulation of Malaysia's national policies, including with regard to peace and security, takes into account gender perspective. For example, we are proud of the 94 women officials who are serving among the 865 Malaysian Armed Forces and Royal Malaysia Police personnel deployed in five United Nations peacekeeping operations. We have found that the involvement of women officials has been very valuable, for instance, when addressing gender-based crime and conflict-related sexual violence.

Malaysia fully endorses the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security, adopted in November 2017. Furthermore, the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, as ASEAN's track 1.5 platform, focuses on youth participation in peacebuilding in order to promote ASEAN's culture of peace. Those are some examples that attest to our commitment in advancing the implementation of the women and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas.

Malaysia notes that the challenges in promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of all actors, including women and youth, are significant, but the opportunities are equally profound. As we work towards the Summit of the Future, Malaysia calls for more constructive discussions such as this debate, to enhance cooperation and collaboration in the maintenance of peace and security.

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

Mr. Nasir (Indonesia): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this open debate.

Conflict prevention is a vital part of the peace continuum. Investing in conflict prevention means investing in peace and people. Together with peacebuilding, conflict prevention deserves much greater attention, as it requires the consideration of the nexus of security, human rights and development in order to ensure that measures are in place to prevent conflict or its recurrence. The Council must therefore maintain a coherent approach towards sustaining peace.

Against that backdrop, I wish to underline three points.

First, creating an enabling environment is crucial. By investing in national capacities for conflict prevention, we can secure bottom-up, locally owned programmes that enhance community and family resilience, promote national institutions and ensure access to the economy and justice.

That is why Indonesian peacekeepers, including our women peacekeepers, make great efforts to invest in local people, winning the hearts and minds of local communities — not only to ensure the fulfilment of their mandates, but also to pave the way for peacebuilding efforts through community engagement.

Moreover, that approach also requires the promotion of the meaningful role of women and youth as critical enablers for inclusive prevention and peacebuilding throughout the peace continuum.

Secondly, we need to ensure a smooth transition from peace operations to peacebuilding. Peacebuilding does not start when peacekeeping ends. It must start far in advance, in tandem with peace operations. Every conflict situation needs a comprehensive assessment in place before the situation undergoes any transition. That, in turn, will require strong partnership with all stakeholders on the ground, including regional and subregional organizations.

Thirdly, synergy within the United Nations system must be fostered. The Council must work with all relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies to address the root causes of conflict. Coordination with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is vital. The PBC plays an important role in mobilizing regional organizations, international financial institutions and the private sector, as well as leveraging development in order to prevent countries from relapsing into conflict.

The Council has vital mandates, not only to prevent conflict, but also to bring hostilities to an end. In that context, the Council must act collectively and decisively to ensure that no more innocent lives, including women, children and youth — in Gaza and in other conflict situations — are lost in vain.

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

Mrs. González López (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate on the promotion of conflict prevention and the empowerment of all stakeholders, including, most importantly, women and youth. We would also like to thank the briefers for their presentations.

The Security Council plays an unmistakably critical role in conflict prevention through mechanisms such as the authorization of peace operations, which must have clear mandates and predictable and sufficient funding to achieve the objectives.

We also stress the central role that the Peacebuilding Commission must play in strengthening inter-agency cooperation and coordination within the United Nations, as well as with other regional organizations, Governments and other interested actors. That involves the exchange of information, best practices and the mobilization of resources to support conflict prevention initiatives at the regional and international levels.

Synergies among various United Nations organs and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes must be strengthened in order to enable them to adopt effective, comprehensive approaches that connect the elements of the humanitarian, development and peace nexus that are so fundamental to achieving sustainable peace. That involves addressing the root causes of conflict, working on prevention and strengthening social resilience by creating and strengthening national institutions, as well as raising awareness among and empowering all actors, especially those who have historically been marginalized. In that regard, the full participation of women and young people at all levels and stages of peace and post-conflict processes is essential to building sustainable peace. The effective implementation of the women and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas is central to building that resilience and national ownership of sustainable peace. Efforts aimed at building and maintaining peace, including under those two agendas, must also receive adequate, predictable and sustainable

funding, for which we believe the full implementation of General Assembly resolutions 76/305 and 78/257 is key. In that regard, we appreciate the recent agreements to strengthen the Peacebuilding Fund.

In El Salvador, the Fund has made it possible to set up initiatives that strengthen women's participation in peacebuilding, such as the Women Guardians of Peace project, which is aimed at using capacity-building, leadership and empowerment to increase and enhance the participation and influence of women, specifically those who participate in civil society organizations, women's networks and women leaders in prioritized areas. It also seeks to salvage the historical memory of women and promote recognition for their transformative role in promoting peace, especially during and after the armed conflict that our country endured. That is being done through a series of intergenerational dialogue workshops to create a link between the past and the present that enables us to build bridges of understanding and prevent situations that trigger conflict. We thereby also restore and promote the historical memory of women.

My country fully agrees that conflict prevention is essential not only to prevent human suffering but as a means to promote sustainable development, and that it can only be achieved if a gender and intergenerational approach is included in the actions implemented by all States to that end. In that regard, we recognize the relevance of the prevention approach in the New Agenda for Peace.

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

Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes (Latvia): Latvia welcomes this open debate on promoting conflict prevention and appreciates Japan's leadership in facilitating inclusive discussion of this important topic. We also thank the briefers for their valuable insights.

As we are witnessing the highest number of violent conflicts since the Second World War, this is indeed an appropriate moment to rethink our approach to prevention. While conflicts have various causes, they are seldom inevitable. One can draw parallels with devastating fires, which usually result from factors that could have been prevented had the fire-hazard risks been addressed in time. In order to improve preparedness and resilience, Latvia believes that United Nations prevention efforts should be built on three main pillars — effective coordination among actors, inclusive participation and adequate resources.

First, prevention must be a horizontal task pursued by all relevant institutions and should take advantage of their tools and expertise. For instance, the Security Council should invest both in its capability for foresight regarding potential conflicts and in its ability to mobilize the United Nations system to prevent them. In line with the proposals of the New Agenda for Peace initiative, the Peacebuilding Commission could enhance its assistance to States with their national prevention plans. Furthermore, we must reinvigorate the key role that the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies play in accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which are crucial to ensuring long-term peace. All those lines of effort should be pursued in a coordinated manner, involving all stakeholders.

Secondly, while often bearing the brunt of the conflict, women, young people and minorities are frequently sidelined in the peacebuilding and prevention processes. We should strive for a different approach, involving and unlocking the full potential of every member of the community, fostering cohesion and the ability to prevent tensions and conflicts. When our Prime Minister, Evika Siliņa, was participating in the meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women this week, she highlighted Latvia's commitment to strengthening the women and peace and security agenda. Equally, Latvia actively supports the involvement of young people in deliberations on sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions for prevention. Latvia's United Nations Youth representative is looking forward to discussing these topics at the upcoming Economic and Social Council Youth Forum.

Finally, peacebuilding and prevention efforts demand predictable resources. As a donor to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, Latvia welcomes the agreement on assessed contributions to peacebuilding. It is equally important to ensure that resources are invested efficiently through a coordinated approach among United Nations agencies and programmes, as well as international actors, including international financial institutions.

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

Ms. Jiménez de la Hoz (Spain) (spoke in Spanish): I thank the Japanese presidency for convening this open debate, which allows us to reflect on the functioning

of the collective security system of which the Security Council is the touchstone, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Spain aligns itself with the statement to be made on behalf of the European Union, and I would now like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Conflict prevention requires comprehensive approaches with generous time horizons and adequate funding. It is also about strengthening society through the effective participation of women and young people in all their diversity. It is therefore essential to recognize the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, which must also include respect for and the promotion of the exercise of fundamental freedoms and human rights for all. That is the chosen approach for our 2023–2026 Humanitarian Diplomacy Strategy, the primary objective of which is to prevent conflicts and provide mediation to resolve them, collaborating to promote a culture of peace and preserve the humanitarian space.

The Council's primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security includes conflict prevention through a comprehensive approach. We support the Security Council in addressing factors that exacerbate threats and risks, such as climate change and food insecurity. That is also why we recognize the importance of the women and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas. Spain's feminist foreign policy encourages us to place particular emphasis on women's full and meaningful participation. As we noted in the open debate on women and peace and security last October (see S/PV.9452), we believe that conflict prevention should address its underlying causes, such as gender inequality, by appointing more women to positions of political, economic and security power. Allow me to briefly mention the work of networks of women mediators, through which we can advance women's effective participation in conflict prevention and mediation. Spain participates in the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, in the Ibero-American Network of Women Mediators and contributes to the work of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation, especially in the Sahel region.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is another tool for conflict prevention, since eradicating poverty, protecting the planet and improving people's lives can dramatically reduce the risks of conflict. We also welcome the fact that by strengthening its

relationship with the Peacebuilding Commission, the Council can enrich its deliberations and design mandates that take into account the Commission's advice.

The current trend towards the geopolitical fragmentation of the world and growing numbers of inter-State conflicts, with flagrant violations of the Charter, has encouraged some to seek an international order based on spheres of influence, in which the strongest States prevail over the majority and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States are not respected. However, those trends should serve as a catalyst for reaffirming our collective commitment to international peace and security, the rules-based international order that underpins them and the power of multilateralism in preventing and resolving conflicts.

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

Mr. Zahneisen (Germany): Germany aligns itself fully with the statements to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and by the representative of Guatemala, on behalf of the Human Rights and Conflict Prevention Caucus. I want to thank Japan for organizing today's debate and to commend it for its consistent role as a global leader in peacebuilding and prevention, from the time of Sadako Ogata to today's joint press statement (SC/15623) made on behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. I also thank today's briefers, and I would like to refer to the briefing by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador França Danese of Brazil. Germany fully supports his analysis of how the Commission can better support and complement the work of the Security Council in this field. It is our hope that many of Ambassador França Danese's very concrete ideas will be followed up during next year's peacebuilding architecture review. We see a strong desire within the United Nations membership not to miss this historic opportunity to significantly strengthen the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and its beneficial impact on the ground.

It is our firm belief that collectively we have made remarkable progress in the field of prevention and peacebuilding. By now, we are quite familiar with what works well, and we have created the required instruments for implementing it. I will mention just three.

First, there is the Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention of the United Nations Development Programme and the

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. United Nations peace and development advisers funded by that programme have actively contributed to the formulation and implementation of national prevention strategies in 67 countries. Secondly, there is the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, which successfully supports local initiatives that focus on the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. And thirdly, of course, we have the Peacebuilding Fund and its crucial catalytic work in support of national prevention and peacebuilding efforts. All of those instruments are geared to national ownership. They work at the request of Governments and in support of national and regional prevention efforts.

However, what we believe is missing is the necessary scaling-up to respond to the increase in demand for prevention support from Member States. In that regard, we are still falling significantly short of what is required financially. Germany is the main contributor to all three of those instruments, and we hope that other Member States will also consider contributing financially to those highly valued tools. We also must explore alternative modes of funding by involving development banks, the private sector, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Capital Development Fund. Germany also recently launched the Investing for Peace Initiative, aimed at enabling more peace-contributing investments in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

In conclusion, I want to return to what Ambassador França Danese said this morning, which was also raised by many delegations during the open debate on the working methods of the Security Council on Monday (see S/PV.9571). We urgently need better connectivity between the Security Council and the other bodies of the United Nations, foremost among them the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as women and youth actors, if we truly want to be successful in the field of prevention and the transition from crisis management to peace consolidation. In our view, that should also include a stronger and more systematic exchange with United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies with strong expertise in the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. We call on the members of the Security Council to make the best possible use of the current favourable momentum for a coherent approach to prevention and peace consolidation.

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

Mr. Önal (Türkiye): I thank the Japanese presidency for organizing this debate on a highly relevant thematic focus.

The global community's ability to address international peace and security issues today is being put to the test of history. We are faced with multiple and simultaneous conflicts, which are increasingly multilayered and multidimensional in a complex international landscape that is itself rapidly transforming as a result of the emergence of new challenges. In order to deal with them effectively, we need to adopt methods whose functionality has been tested over many decades.

First among them is conflict prevention, as it is always more effective than striving to resolve conflicts once they have occurred and grappling with their multifaceted repercussions. That is why Türkiye is a strong supporter of dialogue, diplomacy and mediation as effective tools for the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes. As exemplified in its participation in the Group of Friends of Mediation and Alliance of Civilizations initiatives, Türkiye continues to be actively engaged in international efforts to that end.

Secondly, addressing the root causes of conflicts is critical to preventing them from happening in the first place and resolving them once they occur. Armed conflicts, terrorism, gross human rights violations, illegal occupations, oppression and a lack of good governance are major threats to peace and security at the national and international levels. Those factors are further exacerbated by poverty, social and economic inequalities and perceived double standards that erode confidence in global governance. In the Middle East, for example, the Palestinian question is a core issue. In the absence of a viable solution to that question, sustainable peace and security in the wider region will remain elusive.

This week, hundreds of young and seasoned women leaders from all walks of life and all over the world are once again gathering in this building. As the most transformative and dynamic segments of societies, women and young people have an important role to play in terms of building and ensuring the sustainability of peace, and they therefore need to be actively included at all levels of peace processes. As

we try to address conflicts effectively, we need to draw lessons from recent history and avoid mistakes of the past. One such lesson should be to avoid the application of one-size-fits-all methods, whose failure has been demonstrated over and over again. Rather, what we need is to develop bottom-up approaches that take into account the specifics of each country, bear in mind the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and prioritize institution- and capacity-building.

At the global level, we cannot talk about the existence of an effective institutional framework without reforming the Security Council. In order to fulfil its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, the Council must be able to deliver by taking decisive and timely action when breaches occur. We need to be able to do better than meeting only at the minimum common denominators, which almost always compromises meaningful action. Given the Security Council's structural deficiencies and the underlying problem of the use of the veto, that will be possible only through comprehensive reform, so that the Council can become the representative, democratic, transparent and effective organ that our world urgently needs today.

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

Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand): At the outset, allow me to commend Japan for organizing this important open debate, and to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and the other briefers for their valuable insights and recommendations. I would like to make five points.

First, peace, sustainable development and human rights reinforce one another. Therefore, one of the best ways to prevent conflict and thereby help ensure peace is to promote sustainable development, enhance human security and advance and protect human rights. If we can all attain the Sustainable Development Goals, there will be less chance of conflict. If we can develop an environment in which human security and human rights are promoted and protected, there will be a greater chance for peace and stability to be sustained.

Secondly, conflict prevention requires multi-stakeholder and multi-level engagement, from Governments to communities to individuals. We need to place emphasis on empowerment and the meaningful participation of peoples, communities and other actors in building social harmony, economic development and

reconciliation. If all have a say and a stake in generating consensus solutions, such solutions are likely to be more sustainable.

Thirdly, we have to reinforce a culture of peace based on respect for diversity, an emphasis on peaceful means and moderation and respect for international law and regional norms. That is an area where the United Nations and regional organizations can make important contributions. In that connection, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, through its norm-building and community-building efforts and practical policies based on shared interests, has been a relative success story in preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention.

Fourthly, women have an important role to play in preventing conflicts. Resolution 1325 (2000) acknowledges that armed conflicts adversely affect women in particular and recognizes the role and contributions of women in peacemaking and peacebuilding and their fundamental right to be included in peace processes. Sustainable peace cannot be built when the rights of women are ignored. Transformational change is therefore needed to protect women's rights and ensure gender equality in order to build and sustain peace. That includes ensuring women's empowerment by increasing their participation in politics, the economy and all other facets of society.

Fifthly, we can enhance conflict-prevention efforts by taking into account the interests, rights and welfare of young people and children. As resolution 2250 (2015) recognizes, today's generation of youth is the largest the world has ever known and accounts for many of the civilians adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons. Young people and children have suffered, often disproportionately, in conflict situations, economic downturns and pandemics. In our view, if today's young people do not have hope for a peaceful future, our future is at risk. If the safety and welfare of children cannot be protected today, we have a very shaky foundation on which to build our tomorrow. Youth and children should therefore be safeguarded. They should be given hope and nurtured to be creative and constructive enablers of peaceful change and contributors to progress. That will help lessen the risks of conflict in the future.

In conclusion, it is therefore essential to ensure that conflict prevention and its various dimensions are an integral part of the Summit of the Future and the New Agenda for Peace. To that end, Thailand will cooperate

with the United Nations and our fellow Member States to enhance conflict prevention, because it is at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations and because it is in our collective interests to prevent conflict. In part to help attain that goal, Thailand will continue to promote sustainable development, enhance human security and promote and protect human rights because they are interlinked with one another and with sustaining peace. And considering the effects of multidimensional factors on conflict prevention, we hope that pragmatic ways can also be found to enhance dialogue and complementarities, wherever possible, between the work of the Security Council and other United Nations bodies and entities, including the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council.

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

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): We thank the Japanese presidency for convening this meeting, which highlights the importance of preventive diplomacy in establishing a proactive approach to addressing the root causes of conflicts, intervening early on to prevent their escalation and taking measures to promote the active participation of all segments of society, including women and youth.

In Yemen, women and young people are vital forces for change and have played an effective role in accelerating that change. However, those achievements have been stymied by the war waged by the Houthi terrorist militias, which flies in the face of our national consensus and the aspirations of the Yemeni people. Yemen gained unique experience through the active participation of women, youth and civil society during our comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, held in 2013, in which 30 per cent of the participants were women and 20 per cent young people. We also appointed four women to our 17-member Constitution drafting committee. The Yemeni Government has also worked for years to facilitate the work of the National Commission to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights and address all the difficulties in removing the obstacles to its work. Its level of female representation is remarkable, with a view to enabling the Commission to carry out its work as an independent national mechanism. The Presidential Leadership Council has also issued directives to the Government to cooperate fully with the Commission, facilitate its work and implement the recommendations issued in its reports with a view to contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights.

A total of 271 women were recently appointed to the judiciary, including 37 as public prosecutors. The slogan “Invest in women: Accelerate progress and development”, which was the theme of this year’s International Women’s Day celebration in Yemen, is a reminder that all women, in both rural and urban areas, play important roles in building society, achieving peace and stability in Yemen and empowering women economically and socially. Yemen’s Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, which oversees the country’s national plan for the women and peace and security agenda, is actively coordinating and following up on the implementation of the plan, based on the principles of partnership, inclusive leadership and accountability, in order to protect women from violence and discrimination while ensuring their effective participation in political and economic life and in decision-making processes.

Despite the pivotal role that women and youth are playing in Yemen, the Houthi terrorist militias continue to systematically target those groups, committing numerous violations and acts of violence against them in blatant disregard for international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The violations include kidnapping members of those groups and detaining them in secret prisons and detention centres based on their political affiliation or participation in civil society organizations. Yemeni women have faced physical and psychological torture in militia prisons, where the victims have included Intisar Al-Hammadi and Fatima Al-Arouli, whose imprisonment and cruel and unjustified treatment has included death sentences and other such violations, cited in the report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen issued in November 2023 (see S/2023/833).

We want to commend the exceptional resilience of Palestinian women in the face of the ongoing violations and genocide crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power. We recognize the significant role that they play on the front lines of the humanitarian response, and their meaningful participation with a view to achieving their legitimate rights and establishing a sovereign and independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

In conclusion, the Yemeni Government emphasizes the importance for the international community and the United Nations to continue to ensure support to Member States, especially conflict-affected States, by providing them with the expertise and funding they need to strengthen their national strategies on the women

and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas by implementing initiatives that encourage the participation of women and young people in mediation, negotiation and peacebuilding, while focusing on providing training in those skills and building capacity for the institutions implementing those strategies.

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

Ms. Rodríguez Mancia (Guatemala): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Human Rights and Conflict Prevention Caucus in New York, co-chaired by Germany and Switzerland, and its other members — Albania, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Gabon, Guatemala, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Uruguay.

We thank Japan for organizing this open debate and express our gratitude to the briefers for their contributions.

As a cross-regional group of Member States, the Caucus would like to take this opportunity to address the Council for the first time this year. As we are navigating turbulent times, it is crucial to recall the universality, indivisibility, interrelatedness and interdependence of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations adopted more than 75 years ago, governs our coexistence and sets out a foundation for protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of every human being on the planet. There is a clear lesson from the past, as the Secretary-General pointed out in his address to the Human Rights Council in Geneva last month, which is that protecting human rights protects us all. The Caucus would like to focus on three points today.

First, human rights are at the very core of conflict prevention. History teaches us that the systematic violation and abuse of human rights is a strong indicator and an early warning sign of conflict. Upholding the human rights of every individual helps to prevent conflict and contribute to sustainable peace. The Caucus stresses the urgency of bolstering the preventive mechanisms of the United Nations and fostering an inclusive and safe civic space for all actors to engage.

Secondly, women's contributions and their leadership are not optional luxuries, but essential requirements for sustainable peace. That is why we

need to continue tearing down gender-based barriers and dismantling patriarchal power structures. Member States must ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in all peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts, including mediation processes. Their voices and roles as peacebuilders, decision-makers, human rights defenders and agents of change are fundamental to the durability of peace. We therefore call for the full implementation of all Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security.

Thirdly, young people do not just represent hope for the future. They are also active enablers of change today. Engaging them in conflict prevention and peacebuilding ensures that their diversity and ideas contribute to resilient societies. We must harness that untapped potential by advancing the youth and peace and security agenda and by empowering young people to lead. For example, with its dedicated gender strategy and its strategic action plan on youth, the Peacebuilding Commission is paving the way for concrete steps to genuinely include all relevant actors in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In future, both strategies could be expanded to early action and conflict prevention to guide the Peacebuilding Commission in its own work, as well as in its advice to the Security Council and other United Nations organs.

Building on *The Highest Aspiration: A Call to Action for Human Rights*, the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace recognizes the central role of women and young people in peacebuilding and the need to address unequal power structures. It presents a crucial framework that puts human rights at the heart of conflict prevention and underscores that full respect for all human rights — civil, cultural, economic, political and social — is integral to peace. The New Agenda for Peace's comprehensive approach, which integrates peace, human rights and sustainable development, sets the stage for discussions at the upcoming Summit of the Future. Member States must commit to working for peace and security rooted in human rights, shaping a strong outcome for the Summit.

Finally, the Caucus is committed to strengthening collaboration between the Security Council, the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, which is essential for early action, through regular briefings. To that end, we will work closely with Member States, civil society and the United Nations system. It is

vital to align the peace efforts being made across New York and Geneva to ensure informed decision-making with human rights at its forefront.

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

Mr. Greco (Italy): Let me commend Japan for organizing this timely open debate.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

The devastating crisis scenarios that we are seeing today confirm the urgency of changing the paradigm from crisis management to conflict prevention. The path towards conflict prevention is rooted in solidarity and accountability, with multilateralism and the United Nations at its core. We need solidarity among countries, based on the guiding principle of leaving no one behind and recognizing that a lack of development is a main driver of conflict, violence and insecurity. Solidarity can therefore accelerate action towards the Sustainable Development Goals and towards inclusion, human rights, the rule of law and education. We need accountability for countries, because as they move towards sustainable development, there must be a social pact between Governments and their communities. There are liberties to safeguard, human rights to uphold, gender and youth empowerment to achieve and the rule of law to abide by, internationally as well as domestically.

Any time a country violates international law, it becomes itself a driver of conflict and insecurity, hampering development. The universal commitments enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, cannot be questioned. Solidarity and accountability and prevention and national ownership must go hand in hand. Italy therefore fully supports the vision of the New Agenda for Peace — a bottom-up, widespread system of conflict prevention based on the development of national strategies that are anchored in human rights and the rule of law. National prevention strategies should leverage the role of regional organizations and receive effective and concrete support from the United Nations, respecting solidarity, complementarity and national ownership.

When it comes to conflict prevention, the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the relevant regional organizations must be on the same

page. Regional organizations must be involved in the decision-making process that leads to the adoption of relevant resolutions. The Peacebuilding Commission must play a central role in building a network of peacebuilders, based on regional organizations, who can provide the Security Council with advice reflecting their positions. That will help the Security Council adopt mandates that can actually be implemented.

Last but certainly not least, effective conflict prevention is about inclusiveness. Gender equality is both a universal value and a cross-cutting priority. Through the women and peace and security agenda, it is also a collective commitment to keeping women's rights and their leadership at the core of security and political decision-making. Women's leadership and their full, equal and meaningful participation at all levels of decision-making is not only right but essential to regenerating — both domestically and internationally — the circle of trust that has been so deeply eroded by conflicts and inequalities.

The deep causes of violence and conflicts are often rooted in inequalities and structural patterns of discrimination against women and young people. We must ensure that all segments of society — starting with women and youth, in line with the women and peace and security and youth and peace and security agendas — are able to have their voices heard and contribute to shaping the future of the societies they live in. The world needs women and youth at the forefront of prevention efforts for their resilience, their unique skills, their effectiveness and their vision.

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

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (spoke in Arabic): At the outset, we would like to sincerely thank Japan for convening today's meeting on such an important issue. We also thank the briefers for their valuable contributions.

The issue of preventing and resolving conflicts by peaceful means is one of the main priorities of Qatar's foreign policy, in accordance with the wise vision of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar. Our proven record of successes in the field of mediation, including in a variety of situations — such as the peaceful settlement of conflicts, including border disputes, and the reuniting of children with their families — is proof of our dedication to resolving international crises and investing in peace. We therefore commend the Secretary-General for

giving priority to conflict prevention in his New Agenda for Peace, which we strongly support as part of the Pact for the Future. And Qatar's commitment to finding solutions to international crises goes beyond negotiations and mediation. Indeed, we firmly believe that at its core, conflict prevention must address the root causes of conflict. In that regard, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development constitutes a comprehensive framework for addressing the drivers of conflict and violence.

The State of Qatar also continues to implement multiple humanitarian and development projects to address the root causes of conflict. To that end, we have invested more than \$6.4 billion in more than 100 countries. Our initiatives target the world's most vulnerable populations and focus on education, health care, economic development and programmes for the empowerment of women and young people.

In that context, we specifically believe that providing quality education is not only vital to empowering women and youth, but it is also a key tool for promoting peace and preventing conflict. Neglecting education carries with it the risk of perpetuating cycles of violence and instability. That is why the State of Qatar continues to prioritize education initiatives. For example, we have enrolled more than 11 million children in school in more than 57 countries through Education Above All's flagship Educate a Child programme. In 2023, the State of Qatar and Education Above All committed to supporting the education sectors of several African countries, with the goal of providing quality education to more than 2.3 million children not enrolled in school. Also in 2023, the State of Qatar made a financial contribution of \$20 million to support the efforts of the Education Cannot Wait Fund to undertake initiatives to provide education in emergencies and protracted crises.

Recognizing the grave repercussions of attacks on education in the context of conflict prevention and sustaining peace, the State of Qatar played a leading role in spearheading international efforts to adopt General Assembly resolution 74/275, of 2020, which declared 9 September the International Day to Protect Education from Attack.

In addition to education, young people should also be equipped with the tools to participate effectively in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In January 2022, the State of Qatar hosted the High-Level Global Conference on Comprehensive Peace Paths for

Youth, in which more than 160 young peacebuilders participated, including a large number of young women, from more than 74 participating countries. Two documents emerged from the Conference, namely, a guide for public sector employees to facilitate the operationalization of the plan on youth and peace and security, and a pilot five-year strategic action plan to promote comprehensive peace paths for youth, based on recommendations from relevant key stakeholders. The implementation of those documents will promote the meaningful participation of young people in conflict prevention efforts.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar remains firmly committed to working side by side with the United Nations, including by leveraging our role within the Peacebuilding Commission to strengthen conflict prevention efforts and identify actionable steps towards sustainable peace.

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

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Madam President, on convening the second open debate of your Security Council presidency this month. I also take this opportunity to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Ambassador Sergio França Danese, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC); and the other briefers for their outstanding participation and their important and exhaustive presentations.

Women and young people are at the heart of every society and constitute a vital pillar of stability, development and resilience within communities. It is therefore essential to guarantee their full, equal and effective participation in building and sustaining peace, so that they can play their rightful role as natural and trusted architects of peace. When women and young people are included, it has been proven that peace agreements are more inclusive, that peacebuilding initiatives better the needs of the community and that peace is more sustainable. Women and young people play a key role in promoting peace and achieving stability in every State. They bring alternative perspectives, skills and resources to the peace table, along with opportunities that are lost in their absence.

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its full and unwavering support for the actions undertaken by the Secretary-General, the Security Council, Member

States, civil society and the various United Nations agencies to ensure that women and young people are meaningfully represented in national, regional and international institutions; to promote their key role in conflict prevention and resolution and to equip them with the necessary means to influence decision-making on cross-cutting issues relating to sustainable development and socioeconomic prosperity.

From my personal experience and my close follow-up as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration, I can attest and confirm that women and young people, in several difficult situations in the Central African Republic, have shown themselves to be more instrumental and decisive in promoting peace, creativity and conciliation and in creating a space for coexistence between different communities. In the same vein, Morocco believes it is necessary to promote the PBC's role as a facilitator of discussion on cross-cutting issues, emphasizing the interdependent and mutually reinforcing nature of peace and development. We are convinced that the PBC is capable of creating tremendous opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperation, and of supporting countries that are no longer on the Security Council's agenda. All coordination between the PBC and the Security Council should be strengthened in order to prevent new crises and react effectively to avoid relapses. In addition, the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture and the Summit of the Future also provide a good opportunity not only to support more established participation by women and young people in decision-making processes, but also to boost the Commission's capacities so that it can effectively perform its duties.

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its full support for the Secretary-General's proposed New Agenda for Peace, with its focus on investing in prevention and peacebuilding. We are convinced that the New Agenda will encourage Member States to develop a set of innovative and collective responses to our common challenges; to promote the funding of peacebuilding, which remains a critical challenge, and also to reaffirm their commitments to pursuing concrete, action-oriented results.

In conclusion, building and sustaining peace are not merely efforts to safeguard the present, but they are also the proactive measures that are needed to prevent conflicts before they start, escalate and evolve into protracted fighting, with women and children at the centre of those preventive efforts. Therefore,

Morocco will spare no effort in continuing to work towards building peaceful and resilient societies that grant women and young people their rightful place in a better future.

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

Ms. Lingg (Liechtenstein): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this timely debate on conflict prevention, and especially for offering a gender- and youth-sensitive lens, which is indeed greatly needed for successful prevention.

There is clear evidence of the benefits of women's participation in both conflict prevention and conflict resolution. Their active engagement in mediation is essential to achieving lasting peace that endures well beyond the silencing of the guns. Furthermore, women are also crucial agents for democracy, political legitimacy, economic recovery and social cohesion. Yet all too often, women remain excluded from formal decision-making and peace processes, which negatively affects the sustainability of peace agreements and ceasefires. Especially in the current times, it is necessary that we translate the words of resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-up into concrete action.

The ongoing process leading up to the Summit of the Future and, in particular, exchanges on the New Agenda for Peace, provide an opportune moment to reconsider how the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) can strengthen its complementary role to the Security Council with respect to sustainable conflict resolution. In particular, we recognize the PBC's inclusive approach to sustainable peace by integrating gender and youth aspects into its work and providing a hub for closer coordination on information-sharing and early warning within the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. And we support the PBC's authoritative role in addressing topics of concern to peacebuilding — for example, transitions of United Nations peacekeeping missions, in which it can meaningfully complement efforts made by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The effective prevention of conflicts requires addressing all possible root causes, ranging from food insecurity to the climate crisis. The human security concept provides such a holistic view and puts people, including women and youth, at its centre. Liechtenstein thanks Japan for its leadership in promoting the human security paradigm within the United Nations. We have

applied several of its dimensions on the ground — for example, through our international, humanitarian and development cooperation, with a focus on poverty reduction, the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and accountability, education and economic development and climate mitigation. Empowering people bottom-up is an important step towards more peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

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

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): Poland commends Japan for organizing this timely and important debate.

We remain committed to supporting countries and societies in need during post-conflict reconstruction. Our current membership in the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) reflects that commitment. We believe that the coordination of activities between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission must be ensured and effective. The Council needs the expertise and assistance of the PBC in conflict resolution. In that context, we thank the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission for his insightful and inspiring briefing today.

With the New Agenda for Peace and the Summit of the Future on the horizon, we have a unique chance to solidify the United Nations framework for peacebuilding. We fully endorse those endeavours and look forward to actively contributing to the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. We believe that structural prevention — resting upon all three United Nations pillars — is crucial. Reducing the risk of conflicts requires resilient and accountable State institutions, good governance, social cohesion, as well as inclusive and sustainable development that respects human rights. In that regard, it should be stressed that the meaningful participation of women and youth in public life is indispensable for strengthening social cohesion and, consequently, structural prevention. To achieve that, our efforts must not only be more decisive but also more focused and more coordinated. Treating the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas obligations as an inherent part of other United Nations strategies, in particular those related to peace, security and development, should remain our priority. That is why, through Polish development assistance, we largely focus on reducing economic and social inequalities, particularly between women and men, and on the education of the younger generation.

The most constructive way to empower young people, counteract the risk of radicalization and reduce their vulnerability in conflict situations is to invest in high-quality education, vocational training and employment opportunities. To that end, Poland provides assistance to students from developing countries, including those from conflict-affected areas. At the same time, the ever-present threat of manipulation and disinformation looms large, particularly for young people. We must act decisively to counter that challenge. Investing in education for peace is a strategic solution. By fostering critical thinking skills and media literacy, we equip them to navigate the information landscape and discern truth from falsehood.

In conclusion, empowering women and young people as agents of change is vital. By meaningfully involving them and nurturing their potential, we can enable their leadership in preventing conflicts and ensuring lasting peace.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Lambrinidis.

Mr. Lambrinidis: I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, as well as Andorra, align themselves with this statement.

As the Commission on the Status of Women convenes in New York this week, we should reflect on this quotation from the New Agenda for Peace: “as long as gendered power inequalities [...] hold back half our societies [...] peace will remain elusive”. That quotation followed the call of the Secretary-General to dismantle patriarchal power structures. We know that a more gender-equal society opens the door to more inclusivity, and thus for more social justice and peace. Building resilience requires removing all barriers to gender equality and women’s empowerment so that women can be full, equal and meaningful participants in peace, security and peacebuilding. Exactly the same applies to youth. That is key to creating ownership for the solutions of the future.

The European Union is committed to supporting the inclusion of women and youth in conflict prevention, mediation and peace processes around the globe. To give an example, we have built cross-regional networks of young peacebuilders to create channels to influence

decision-making. The Sahel Youth Voices network, the Young Mediterranean Voices network and European Union-Tunisia partnership for youth are among the European Union's flagship initiatives. Also, the Afghan Leaders Forum supports Afghan women both inside and outside Afghanistan in making their voices heard. Finally, in Burundi, EU support helps to strengthen the participation of women in peace mediation processes and local infrastructure for peace.

And please, let us not forget that ensuring the full realization of human rights for all, including women and girls, is key to sustaining peace. We must fully implement resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and resolution 2250 (2015), on youth, peace and security.

The world is facing multiple crises, and no region has been spared. The United Nations must be better prepared to support countries in their national conflict prevention endeavours. That is a key deliverable that we hope to see from the Summit of the Future and, subsequently, from next year's review of the peacebuilding architecture. The Secretary-General has several important tools at his disposal for conflict prevention and mediation. The Security Council should consider the systematic inclusion of peacebuilding components in its mandates and transition plans and consider how women and youth can be empowered to fully participate in peacebuilding activities. But more broadly, we need a United Nations support system for conflict prevention that is more coherent, better resourced and better prepared to meet the diverse needs of Member States.

We see three crucial components in that regard.

First, we need more systematic support to Member States to develop national prevention strategies, as called for in the New Agenda for Peace. These strategies should be multidimensional, people-centred and focus not only on conflict but also on gender-based violence. The strategies could be presented in the Peacebuilding Commission and be linked to financial and other incentives for their implementation. We already heard from Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe. We also participated in a meeting on indigenous peoples and national reconciliation with Canada, Colombia and Norway. This month the PBC will discuss Mauritania, Kenya and Timor-Leste. I strongly commend those countries for stepping forward and taking the lead.

Secondly, we need better coherence among the United Nations system's many actors that support peacebuilding. They must work in sync to allow Resident Coordinators to provide the best support to countries' formulation and implementation of conflict-prevention strategies and, of course, to include women and youth in those efforts.

Finally, we need a new paradigm for financing conflict prevention and a step change in investment for prevention, building on the General Assembly resolution "Financing for peacebuilding" from 2022 (resolution 76/305). The fragmentation of the United Nations system and the strong reliance on voluntary funding sets the system up for competition rather than for collaboration.

I conclude by saying that the European Union looks forward to engaging actively in further discussions to achieve real progress on conflict prevention during the Summit of the Future and the 2025 peacebuilding architecture review. The work is ahead of us, but the situation is very hopeful, including — and I thank them for their initiative — the amazing participation of so many Member States here today.

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

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): Brazil commends Japan for organizing this timely open debate. I thank the civil society briefers for their insightful contributions to this meeting. I also thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her insights and all Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) members for their contribution to the PBC Chair's briefing this morning.

As we witness the continuing widespread violence of old and new conflicts, it is more important than ever to step up our prevention efforts, both at the local and global levels. The Security Council should play an active role in preventing conflicts and the recurrence of violence, and so should the Peacebuilding Commission. Together, both organs, each in their own areas of responsibility and interacting effectively, have much more to offer the world in terms of protecting and promoting peace.

We concur with the Secretary-General's priority given to prevention in his New Agenda for Peace. Prevention saves lives, safeguards development gains and is essential for sustaining peace.

In the signature event organized during the Brazilian presidency of the Council on the theme “Peace through dialogue: the contribution of regional, subregional and bilateral arrangements to the prevention and peaceful resolution of disputes” (see S/PV.9448), many delegations showcased how the element of prevention is fundamental to building peaceful societies.

As stated by the Secretary-General, effective prevention requires comprehensive approaches. In that regard, there is great value in the elaboration of national and regional prevention strategies. Developing those strategies demands a deep understanding of the main risk factors that apply to a certain nation or region.

Inclusivity should be at the heart of any prevention strategy. The credibility of political processes and the strength of institutions rely on their capacity to represent multiple views and sectors of society. When it comes to prevention, the plurality of perspectives provides a broader perception of risks and helps to indicate where investments are most needed.

The full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in peace and security issues and in political decision processes is of vital importance to prevent conflicts. Women suffer disproportionately the effects of conflicts and can offer a unique perspective on prevention, as is already well established by the women and peace and security agenda. We should learn from it and build upon it.

The inclusion of youth in debates and decisions concerning conflict prevention is also central. Prevention strategies must take into account specific vulnerabilities regarding young people, especially those related to education, social inclusion and the need for economic opportunities. Unassisted young people may fall prey to the dynamics of confrontation and violence in their daily lives if they are not considered through a comprehensive approach.

The cross-cutting nature of prevention requires whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approaches. Thus, conflict prevention is intertwined with the promotion of human rights and political and economic rights. Upholding those rights adds to countries’ social, political and institutional stability and to the opportunities enjoyed by entire societies.

We must also develop a more integrated international approach to prevention, with the involvement of different United Nations bodies, agencies and programmes, as

well as other international institutions. That is a role the Peacebuilding Commission is well placed to perform and more so if the Security Council can also devote greater and well-coordinated attention to the matter. As Chair of the PBC this year, Brazil will be entirely devoted to that commitment.

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

Mrs. Kamboj (India): The complexity of threats to the international peace and security agenda today is reflective of the interconnectedness of our world. Conflicts have become more fragmented and the conflict theatre much more complex and volatile. The gender perspective is yet to be fully integrated in our collective efforts towards conflict prevention, recovery and reconstruction.

India has therefore emphasized the need for a holistic approach to creating conducive conditions where vulnerabilities are addressed and conflict is prevented, especially in view of the disproportionate effect that conflict and violence have on women and youth. In doing so, we take inspiration from the ancient teachings of our philosophy rooted in the principles of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, which sees the world as one large, interconnected family.

Five points are key in that regard.

First, the peaceful settlement of disputes is key for the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of the rule of law. Dialogue and diplomacy should be the preferred path to resolve differences in an atmosphere free from fear and coercion.

Secondly, the Council needs to respect consensus-based regional efforts to address shared challenges to international peace and security. The United Nations and regional organizations must assist national authorities, upon their request, in developing capabilities, through the participation of women and youth, to address socioeconomic vulnerabilities and build resilience. Moreover, troop-contributing countries need to have a say in the decision-making frameworks, including at the time of finalization of mandates.

Thirdly, given the role that the Security Council plays in efforts to resolve conflicts and in sustaining peace, a close and hard look at its workings, including the issue of its representativeness, is required. The Security Council, as the institutional architecture primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace

and security, cannot remain frozen in time. It needs to evolve to avoid obsolescence and irrelevance. One of the most important requirements is therefore to strengthen the capacity of the Council to address the issues in front of it by making it representative of contemporary realities and by undertaking reform to make it more effective. For its part, India has indeed walked the talk, ensuring that the African Union became a full-fledged member of the Group of 20 (G20) during its presidency last year. The Security Council simply needs to follow suit.

Fourthly, the objective of peacebuilding should be to break silos and to promote post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, support the development of integrated strategies towards sustainable development and to ensure predictable resources for early recovery. Respect for national ownership, sovereignty and territorial integrity, while prioritizing development, is a *sine qua non* for sustaining peace.

Fifthly, we need to acknowledge that the meaningful participation of women and youth in decision-making strengthens prevention efforts and deepens the effectiveness of peacebuilding in post-conflict situations. Women police officers and peacekeepers play an indispensable role in furthering the women and peace and security agenda in post-conflict situations, and that needs to be further incentivized and facilitated.

I am happy to share that, in recent years particularly, India has strengthened its efforts to put more women in key positions in all its peacekeeping endeavours. Currently, the Council is aware that there are 108 Indian women peacekeepers deployed in United Nations peacekeeping missions worldwide. That includes military observers and staff officers, contingent officers and soldiers, as well as three all-female engagement teams deployed in peacekeeping missions in the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Golan Heights. I should also add that, driven by Prime Minister Modi's vision of women-led development, the G20 adopted a full-fledged action plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women during India's presidency last year. We will continue to remain steadfast in contributing to those efforts globally while working with all our partners.

As I conclude, I will state that India has consistently contributed positively and substantially to peacebuilding efforts, underpinned by its efforts to give voice to the countries in the global South. We are

dedicated to furthering those endeavours, and hereby reassert our unwavering commitment to fostering peace and stability.

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

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the delegation of Japan for having convened this important open debate.

With regard to the questions posed for the purposes of this meeting, the key definitions and obligations are prescribed by international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Within that basic understanding, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States is imperative for preventing conflicts, restoring and maintaining peace, protecting human security and promoting sustainable economic and social development.

The international community failed to prevent and suppress the aggression against my country, Azerbaijan, and the resulting occupation, ethnic cleansing, devastation and cultural erasure of its territories carried out by neighbouring Armenia. Resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), all unanimously adopted, still remain unimplemented 27 years later.

Impunity for such ignorance and for the systematic atrocities committed by the aggressor, along with the evident deviation of the settlement process, within the regional arrangement, from the universally accepted principles of effective mediation, created conditions conducive to the protraction of the conflict and the aggravation of its military, humanitarian and economic implications.

It is noteworthy that certain countries that for decades turned a blind eye to, or indulged in flagrant violations of international law and the human rights of hundreds of thousands of people uprooted from their homes as a result of the aggression, have increased their selfish interest in the region after Azerbaijan liberated its territories from occupation, restored its sovereignty and territorial integrity and eliminated the threat of violent separatism.

Sustainable peace in the region requires that Armenia strictly abide by its international obligations, abandon its territorial claims, cease and desist from disinformation and misinformation, redress the

harm caused to Azerbaijan by its aggression and occupation and engage faithfully in normalizing inter-State relations.

Azerbaijan attaches particular importance to the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas and the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people. We are proud of the contribution of Azerbaijani women to United Nations peacekeeping and to the national post-conflict demining and development efforts.

Those agendas acquire additional significance for my country in the context of ongoing large-scale rehabilitation and reconstruction of the liberated territories so as to ensure the safe and dignified return of the forcibly displaced population, including women, girls and young people, to their places of origin.

Support for, and solidarity with, States affected by conflict and engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding, rehabilitation and demining must remain a priority and critical commitment of the United Nations and the entire international community.

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

Mr. Danailov Frchkoski (North Macedonia): Dialogue and mediation are crucial in the prevention of conflicts and atrocity crimes. In overall terms, the United Nations and its Charter have an institutional mandate to promote dialogue and mediation. My statement will refer to the capacity of the Organization to do that.

The United Nations has various departments and units for enabling dialogue and mediation — the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Peace Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations monitoring mechanisms for human rights treaties, a special procedures division and, most importantly, the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, which have standby teams of mediation experts, as well as the High-Level Advisory Board for Mediation, established in 2017.

However, what is necessary for improving those mechanisms and bodies and making them more relevant is focusing on specific kinds of conflicts, very much

present in the world, and somehow addressing the work of the United Nations — so-called identity conflicts. These presume cultural differences in antagonized conflicts, in which civilian targets, mainly women and girls, are exposed to extreme violence. The challenge we all face in that regard is that identity conflicts are exceptionally hard for mediation and negotiation. According to the *Alert 2023! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, issued by a peace research centre in the University of Barcelona, 70 per cent of conflicts today have identity demands in their substance and origin.

Our opinion is that the specific United Nations departments and units for mediations and negotiation are not well prepared and should focus more on mediation and negotiation in identity conflicts. Again, I want to stress that these conflicts have a specific dynamic. They unfold the psychology of victimhood and have the potential of being very bloody. What is needed is specific knowledge of mediation and negotiations techniques, gender-balanced teams for negotiations, sets of specific targets to be considered by the negotiation teams, including grass-roots leaders and actors, religious leaders and even gangs leaders or other community leaders.

My point is that the United Nations needs to reconstruct units for mediation and negotiation so that they are more efficient, more knowledgeable and have a more robust structure. It is also necessary to centralize or to facilitate better access to all existing data about the history of the Organization's involvement in conflict mediation and negotiation into one institutional point of reference. That better-organized archive would serve as the institutional memory of the United Nations and could be the basis for further research and efficient work for the respective units. More importantly, it could provide access to lessons learned so that we can build upon current solutions.

I want to conclude this topic regarding identity conflicts with a proposal for establishing a United Nations school for mediation and negotiation as an important milestone for diplomacy and international relations.

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

Mr. Hachem (Lebanon): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Madam President, and the delegation of Japan on assuming the presidency of the Council for

this month and to thank you for organizing this debate at a time when our world is grappling with conflicts that tarnish the ideals of respect for human rights and human dignity.

Before delving into the theme of our debate today, entitled “Promoting conflict prevention: empowering all actors including women and youth”, allow me to stress that before empowering everyone, especially women and youth, we should first and collectively thrive to protect them.

Unfortunately, we have failed on both fronts. On the conflict prevention front, we have failed. A mere glance at what has been happening in Gaza and Lebanon over the past five months confirms that statement. On empowering women and youth, we have also failed. We have been struggling to find ways to empower women and youth, when those two groups have been striving in Gaza to survive — not to live, but to survive.

The topic of our debate today is one that Lebanon attaches great importance to, as throughout our history, we have struggled through conflicts, wars and invasions. As we speak, Lebanon continues to be the target, once again, of Israeli aggression that has killed more than 50 civilians — including 22 women, 3 journalists and 8 children — since October. That aggression has also displaced more than 90,000 persons, 50 per cent of them women. And while we have been deploying all efforts, together with our partners, to prevent the conflict from further escalating, we find Israel extending and expanding its aggression.

For too long, we have opted to manage conflicts rather than resolve them and, thus, prevent future conflicts from erupting. Prevention is rooted in international law and in our international obligations. The only way to prevent another cycle of violence in our region is by respecting our obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and by fully implementing relevant Security Council resolutions.

I conclude my statement with a Lebanese example of how women are truly empowered and empowering. One of our survivors, journalist Christina Assi, who was targeted by Israel, together with her colleagues, for being journalists, on 13 October, left the hospital only a week ago after undergoing more than 21 surgeries. When asked about her message on International Women’s Day, she said,

(spoke in Arabic)

“I will not remain in my wheelchair. The story will not end here. It is true that this is difficult and that my journey in treatment will be long. However, I will walk once again, and I will work once again. Something within me is urging me to continue to resist and fight. I do not know what it is, but there is a voice within me reminding me that I will not let them win and that I will not succumb.”

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Ms. Mustafa (Syrian Arab Republic) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I thank you, Madam President, for convening this important debate at a time when we face grave challenges worldwide that require harnessing all energies and promoting the participation of youth and women in various sectors in order to advance societies and achieve stability and prosperity.

The Syrian Arab Republic would like to stress in the first place that the maintenance of international peace and security along with conflict prevention require full commitment to international law, prioritizing the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, foremost of which are the principles of sovereignty, non-interference in States’ internal affairs, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use or threat of use of force.

The Syrian Arab Republic believes in the importance of including women and youth in decision-making processes, policymaking, national programmes and voluntary and civil society activities. That is why Syrian State institutions continue to develop administrative and legislative frameworks, establish national cadres and provide opportunities to ensure the full representation of all segments of society on equal footing and without any discrimination.

The terrorist war against my country has affected all Syrians, including women and young people. They were confronted with unprecedented challenges. However, despite all that, Syrian women have played an honourable and pioneering role in overcoming such challenges and dealing with their repercussions. Syrian women have participated in fighting terrorism and its ideology, which is based on ignorance, extremism and hatred. Syrian women have strongly supported families that have lost their breadwinners. Syrian women have meaningfully participated in socially oriented

activities and civil society organizations. The Syrian Government has played a major role in promoting the status and participation of women, who have continued to assume various State and society positions. Women's participation in local administrative councils has increased five-fold since 2010, and women now represent 44 per cent of the workforce in the public sector, and 57 per cent of the judiciary.

The Syrian Arab Republic looks for the support of Member States in its efforts to improve the situation of all Syrians, including women and youth, through the following actions: first, supporting counter-terrorism efforts and ending terrorism's extremist ideology and practices, based on restricting freedoms, discriminating against women, subjecting them to violence and perpetrating violations against them, including by the imposition of the so-called public morality law by the terrorist Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham; secondly, repatriation by States of all their terrorists and their families; thirdly, supporting the efforts of the Syrian Government to provide good living and capacity-building conditions, promoting early-recovery projects in terms of quantity and quality and supporting small- and micro-scale projects for women and youth, including projects for women living in urban areas and prioritizing women breadwinners who have been displaced by the war; fourthly, ending the illegitimate foreign military presence and the immediate and unconditional lifting of the unilateral, coercive measures against the Syrian people, which force many Syrians, especially the youth, to seek asylum abroad; and, fifthly, supporting the efforts of the Syrian Government to provide the environment conducive for the return of displaced persons to their regions.

For more than five decades, Syrian women have faced the Israeli occupation and its crimes against Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan. Syrian women have long suffered for many years from the worst crimes committed by terrorist groups. Syrian women therefore are fully aware of the pain and suffering of their sisters in the occupied Palestinian territories, who are facing the Israeli war machine, which has killed more than 9,000 women over the past 157 days of genocide, which means 60 women killed every day. The Israeli war machine has also killed thousands of young people and children.

At the same time, the United States Administration, which claims to defend human rights and promote women's empowerment, has prevented the Security

Council from shouldering its responsibility and ending the unjust aggression. Any discussion on the role of women in peacebuilding requires the need to ending the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and ending women's suffering under its yoke.

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

Mr. Rwamucyo (Rwanda): I thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity to contribute to this debate on promoting conflict prevention, with a specific emphasis on empowering all actors, including women and youth. Rwanda extends its gratitude to the briefers for their insightful presentations and commends Japan for its leadership in organizing this significant discussion.

Conflict prevention is a goal that we must all prioritize. Promoting conflict prevention requires investing in a meaningful understanding of the root causes in order to address them comprehensively. That is not only the most effective method to avert conflict, but it also ensures long-term and sustainable peace and stability. Essential to the process is the dismantling of systemic barriers that promote discrimination, hinder political representation and stifle the participation of marginalized groups, including women and youth, in peacebuilding efforts. In Africa, and worldwide, embracing unity amid diversity presents a promising avenue for youth to actively foster peace and security. Unfortunately, marginalized communities often face barriers hindering their involvement, including insufficient social safeguards, scarce job prospects and restricted educational access. Yet, by promoting youth engagement through structured forums and developmental initiatives, we pave a direct route towards conflict prevention.

That task gains particular significance with initiatives such as the YouthConnekt initiative, led by His Excellency President Paul Kagame of Rwanda. Through platforms like Youth Connekt, youth mobilization and empowerment are not just ideals, but actionable strategies. Such initiatives offer spaces for young people to connect, exchange ideas and gain skills crucial for active participation in peacebuilding efforts. By nurturing the potential of the youth, we not only address their challenges, but also unlock their capacity to become agents of positive change, further reinforcing the vision of unity in diversity for sustainable peace and security. Rwanda's commitment to the principle of

“leave no one behind” is a testament to our belief in an inclusive dialogue and the participation of all societal sectors in peacebuilding. That commitment extends to supporting conflict-prevention initiatives through funding, technical assistance and advocacy, especially for women-led projects.

Our approach to conflict prevention is informed by lessons learned from past experiences. It is critical that strategies for peace be not only effective but also sustainable, while avoiding reliance on military solutions and instead prioritizing dialogue, mediation and reconciliation. Rwanda’s post-genocide reconciliation process serves as a profound example of effective conflict resolution. By fostering understanding and rebuilding relationships between victims and perpetrators, we have been able to lay a strong foundation for lasting peace and stability. That experience underscores the importance of reconciliation and transitional justice in preventing the recurrence of conflict.

In the light of Rwanda’s own experiences, we believe that the following concrete recommendations can guide the Security Council’s actions in supporting peacebuilding.

First, political will is strongly needed, since national ownership of contested issues — including through supporting dialogues and community engagement and delivering on citizens’ expectations — is crucial for addressing the root causes of conflict. Each country and community has unique challenges and opportunities. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Sustainable peacebuilding will come from nationally-led and -owned processes. Support from partners will only help to enhance outcomes.

Secondly, international bodies, partners and national Governments should invest in initiatives that promote inclusive political processes, while ensuring the meaningful participation of women, youth and marginalized communities.

Thirdly, the Security Council and partner institutions should encourage the establishment and funding of platforms for youth engagement and civil society participation in peace processes. That includes supporting educational and employment opportunities for young people to deter their involvement in conflicts.

Fourthly, we need to promote reconciliation and dialogue, drawing on Rwanda’s reconciliation model to foster dialogue and understanding in conflict-affected

areas, and to support initiatives aimed at reconciliation and the healing of societies in order to prevent the recurrence of conflicts.

Fifthly, international organizations and donor countries should prioritize support for locally driven peacebuilding and conflict-prevention initiatives, in particular those championing the involvement of women and youth.

Rwanda recognizes and commends the Security Council’s commitment to supporting long-term sustainable peacebuilding. Only through the establishment of strong and inclusive institutions, underscored by effective governance and accountability mechanisms, can we truly promote conflict prevention and empower all actors in the peace process. Rwanda’s journey offers valuable lessons in that regard, and as we look towards the Summit of the Future and the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, we stand ready to share our experiences with the international community.

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

Mr. García Toma (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Permanent Representative of Japan for inviting us to participate in this important open debate and wish him every success in steering the Security Council’s activities during his country’s presidency this month.

Given the fact that we will soon be discussing the steps for reviewing the institutional framework for the United Nations with a view to achieving greater efficiency in peacebuilding, we want to take this opportunity to reiterate the need to incentivize and increase the participation of women and young people in the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts. And we agree with the President that this is an institutional policy that must be implemented on the basis of a holistic approach that guarantees the nexus between humanitarian action, development, peace and the shared exercise of leadership by women and young people.

In investing and acquiring capital geared towards promoting and sustainably affirming the participation of women and youth in processes to resolve conflicts stemming from any form of violence, intolerance, social injustice and exclusion, we must bear in mind the crucial need to refine capacities and skills aimed at

fostering positions and alignments, since the latter can effectively detect, understand and meet the challenges reflected by the ecumenical culture of peace — namely, its undeniable vocation to respect the life and dignity of all people without discrimination. To that end, Peru's position is aligned with that of the delegations that spoke before me, in that we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission plays a fundamental advisory role in determining the mandates of the Council and especially in building a resilient institutional framework.

We are not opening a Pandora's box or repeating an old diatribe when we say that eradicating extreme poverty is one of the vital challenges to overcome in order to sustain peace. However much of a truism it may be, it should always be reiterated that poverty is one of the root causes of conflict and post-conflict situations. Poverty withers the spirit, paves the way for difficult futures, poses challenges to daily life and fuels misunderstandings.

Conflicts always result in innocent casualties. We need to take a hard look at the long list of children, adolescents and women who have become victims of the military enterprise, their lives foolishly and senselessly sacrificed. The time has come to put an end to our complicity with such bold-faced projection and to the hypocrisy of hiding the reality facing women and young people in conflict zones.

The verdict of history must clearly reflect that women and young people are not merely recipients of the dividends of peace, but that, regardless of institutional positions, they also actively participate in decision-making processes related to conflict resolution and prevention and are well-equipped to do so. Women bring to the table their steely resolve, self-effacing martyr-like qualities and ability to foster hope and light. Young people bring a spirit that refuses to accept defeat, passionately tackle challenges by leveraging the means available and approaching each day with determination to build for the future.

Let me conclude by reiterating Peru's political will to continue promoting a culture of dialogue, tolerance respect for diversity and mutual understanding in which active civil participation is encouraged, with a view to contributing to the maintenance of peace, prosperity and equality, without excluding or marginalizing others, and with rights and duties equitably afforded to all. As Mahatma Gandhi said, there is no way to peace — peace is the way.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Babo Soares (Timor-Leste): At the outset, we would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this open debate, and we thank the briefers for their insightful remarks.

We share the view that conflict prevention must be the cornerstone of our collective security and recognize the importance of healthy and balanced economic and social development, underpinned by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and grounded in international human rights laws and standards.

As a post-conflict society, we are dealing with various challenges, which has led us to believe that the best way to prevent conflicts is to deal with their root causes. It is both in the collective interest of the Security Council and the wider international community. We are of the view that the efforts in global peacebuilding and sustaining peace must focus on helping countries to achieve internal reconciliation, build resilient and inclusive societies, boost security sector reform, support inclusive political processes, to promote social cohesion, good governance, the rule of law, electoral assistance, gender equality, women's empowerment and climate security, to prevent conflict and to lay the foundation for sustainable development.

Timor-Leste's first-hand experience has taught us that the costs of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction — both financially and operationally, as well as in terms of human suffering — are far greater than the cost of investment in conflict prevention. That background has led us to invest in peacebuilding and conflict prevention since the restoration of our independence in 2002. By investment, we refer to the design of numerous programmes, policies and legal frameworks aimed at promoting conflict prevention in order to achieve post-conflict stability. Those include developing a blended community dispute resolution mechanism; promoting security sector reform; ensuring equal opportunities for women and youth and promoting women rights; providing pensions for veterans; and establishing a law on the practice of martial arts, to name but a few.

Realizing the fundamental importance of partnerships for regional peace, Timor-Leste's post-conflict policies were also designed to foster special relations with our immediate neighbours and countries in the region. We have been enjoying such relations

with our neighbours and will hopefully soon become a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In addition, we have been actively engaging with the ASEAN Regional Forum to contribute towards achieving peace and security in the region.

Meanwhile, considering the importance of combining both national and global peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts to facilitate peer learning and help fill in the knowledge and capacity gaps in achieving peacebuilding and State-building goals, we have been actively engaging within the Group of Seven Plus, composed of States affected by conflict and fragility, to collectively advocate for better approaches to supporting conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.

Having already said so, we wish to underscore that the responsibility for conflict prevention rests on States. National leadership is key, while partnerships with regional and global actors are important to enable better linkages between national, regional and international conflict prevention efforts.

I wish to conclude by reaffirming our commitment to continuing to find ways to contribute towards regional and world peace. We join the call for global commitment to promote the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and human fraternity, which we believe can help to promote conflict prevention and build a better world for us and our future generations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Mukongo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to speak at this open debate of the Security Council on promoting conflict prevention and empowering all actors, including women and youth.

The world today is in the throes of deep and multifaceted crises. The fundamentals of prevention have been shaken to their core. Contemporary international law — once dominated by Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations, which urges members of the Organization to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations — is now a shadow of its former self.

The dream of those who drafted the Charter has vanished. The foundation of the collective security system established by the Charter has broken down. It is no longer based on the idea of a conventional community in which everyone must respect certain essential principles and in which the transgression of those principles by one member provokes a collective reaction by the others. Instead, it is the rhetoric of war that is making a comeback. We are helplessly witnessing a shameless reawakening of the old demons of armed aggression and wars of conquest for raw materials and new living spaces, which spare no continent.

The crisis in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is an eloquent example of that reality in today's world. The statistics are sickening: the death toll stands at several million lives lost. It is a veritable genocide, superbly and deliberately ignored by the international community for reasons that are easy to imagine. In terms of duration, the crisis spans three decades, with a record 7 million people internally displaced to date.

The conflict in my country is not only one of the longest, but also one of the deadliest in the history of the modern world. The number of countries involved and the very high material and economic cost have led to a situation that has been further exacerbated by the systematic plundering of its strategic mineral resources. That open-air pillaging and aggression constitute a silent human and economic genocide taking place with almost total indifference on the part of the international community.

As far as dealing with the external roots of this crisis is concerned, the priority is to put an end to the aggression against my country by Rwanda and all of its accomplices. The regional economy of predation, which thrives on the blood of the Congolese people, must be dismantled. The Security Council, which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, should see to that.

Given the specific nature of the situation in the east of my country, my delegation supports, by way of more innovative measures, a comprehensive and holistic approach to conflict prevention and the establishment of lasting peace. Those should include better adapted operational and structural measures for the prevention of armed conflict; the promotion of sustainable economic growth; the fight against poverty; social and sustainable development; and regional reconciliation.

At the domestic level, the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, did not wait for the end of the war to put in place a strategy for preventing armed conflict. He did so in order to deal with the endogenous roots of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in depth, in partnership with all active forces, namely, women, young people, partners and the United Nations country team in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not forgetting the Peacebuilding Commission.

For example, on 22 October 2023, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo endorsed a law on the prevention and resolution of community conflicts. That law, which was drawn up in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, forms part of the arsenal of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's national conflict prevention and resolution policy. Other large-scale initiatives are also part of the prevention armoury, such as the development programme for 145 territories in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is aimed at reaching rural areas; the reform of the security sector; the reform of the army; and the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Programme, et cetera.

To conclude my remarks, I would like to reassure the Council that my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, will continue, despite the ordeal of aggression, to pursue its efforts to strengthen its national infrastructure for the restoration and consolidation of peace. The national conflict prevention policy already in place will undoubtedly be regularly updated in line with developments on the ground. Women and young people, who are integral links in the peace chain, will not be left behind.

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

Mrs. Mimran Rosenberg (Israel): We thank Japan for convening this important and timely open debate.

As the international organ that bears the primary responsibility to address threats to international peace and security, the Council's ability to prevent conflict also lies in its ability to hold perpetrators accountable and fight impunity.

On 7 October 2023, more than 1,200 women and men in Israel — the majority of whom were young people between the ages of 18 and 39 — experienced

the most horrific attack on their human rights, which included acts of murder, femicide, torture and the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war. Youth who came from all over the world to attend the Nova music festival, which stands for peace and happiness, found themselves shot dead while running for their lives or killed by grenades while trying to find shelter from rockets. Young families were burnt alive in their homes. Young women and men, children and babies were brutally kidnapped and taken into Gaza.

As we sit here today, those innocent women, men, adolescents and youth are still being held in inhumane conditions by terrorists in Gaza. Nevertheless, the response of the international community, including here in the Council, has been one of complacency at best, and almost victim-blaming at worst. "Are you Israeli?" became the so-called context for addressing the heinous crimes committed against innocent civilians.

In the most recent report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security (S/2022/220), not one single word was written about the atrocities young persons in Israel endured or about the young persons who are still held as hostages in Gaza. Would that have been the case had the victims not been from Israel? Would the Council still have presented "context" for the burning of families, had they been from Kenya; the massive shooting of women, had they been from Brazil; or the mutilation of bodies, had they been from Australia?

One of the guiding questions for today's debate was how the international community, including the Security Council, can support national efforts to address conflict and its challenges. To begin with, the Council must not let impunity prevail. We call upon the Council to strengthen the sanctions regime to include sexual violence as a designation criterion, to designate Hamas as a terror organization and to call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

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

Mr. Shatil (Bangladesh): I congratulate Japan on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month and thank it for organizing this open debate on conflict prevention. We also thank the briefers for their insightful presentations.

While we are having this discussion on preventing the occurrence and recurrence of conflicts, we are also witnessing the decades-long failure of the

United Nations to prevent the conflict and the killing of civilians and innocent people in the occupied Palestinian territory, and especially in Gaza since 7 October of last year. Indeed, the genocidal atrocities and the subsequent humanitarian situation in Gaza defy the imagination. That shows us how critical it is to address the root causes of any conflict, in order to avoid escalation and recurrence.

Allow me to highlight a few points regarding conflict prevention.

First, it is very important to take preventative measures in a timely manner to avoid the eruption of conflict. The United Nations has a major role to play by investing in the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in order to address the drivers of conflict, including by promoting socioeconomic development, creating opportunities and eradicating poverty, among others. However, creating an environment conducive to conflict prevention is also a prerequisite for investing in preventative measures. In order to create such an environment, there is a need to ensure non-discrimination and human dignity.

Secondly, the Security Council can support Member States' nationally led efforts to prevent conflict and its recurrence in many ways. One way is to appropriately incorporate preventative measures into the mandates of special political missions and peacekeeping operations, in line with national priorities. We need to invest in the peacebuilding activities of peace operations from the very beginning of the mission, with a view to ensuring a smooth transition and an effective drawdown.

Thirdly, the role of regional and subregional organizations is also critical in addressing the root causes of conflict, as those organizations' understanding of the regional and local dynamics and environment can help in finding the best solution. In that regard, we refer to resolution 2669 (2022), which acknowledges the role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in helping to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in Myanmar. We urge ASEAN to redouble its efforts to implement its five-point consensus in order to create an environment conducive to reaching a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis through safe, voluntary and sustainable repatriation.

Fourthly, we emphasize the importance of increasing the engagement between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. The Peacebuilding Commission is in a better position to

empower all actors by convening all stakeholders in conflict situations and thus, bringing their views and perspectives before the Council.

Finally, we would like to refer to resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015), regarding the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas, respectively. We highlight the importance of implementing those resolutions in order to ensure the empowerment of women and youth while promoting United Nations conflict prevention. We believe that the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace is an important milestone insofar as it recognizes the importance of the women and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas in conflict prevention.

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

Mr. Kiboino (Kenya): Kenya appreciates your efforts, Madam President, in organizing this debate. We thank all the briefers for their insights. In particular, we associate ourselves with the recommendations submitted by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) during his briefing on behalf of the Commission.

Over the past decade, Kenya has embarked on a journey that has been marked by significant strides in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. From the adoption of a national policy on peacebuilding in 2015 to a comprehensive review of our peacebuilding architecture initiated in March 2023, our commitment to inclusive peacebuilding has been steadfast. We have witnessed first-hand the value of incorporating the diverse perspectives and contributions of women, youth, marginalized groups and local communities in addressing root causes, including historical grievances and socioeconomic disparities, and in strengthening governance institutions to foster resilient societies.

In line with today's debate, Kenya makes four recommendations for consideration by the Council.

First, the Security Council should maximize the use of its comprehensive toolkit, including enhanced collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission. As an advisory, convening and resource mobilization body, the PBC has the capacity to deliver catalytic and impactful initiatives as part of both nationally and regionally led conflict prevention efforts.

Secondly, the Security Council must align its decisions and actions with resolution 1325 (2000). Experience from the theatres of armed conflict,

including in the Gaza Strip, Ukraine and elsewhere, has shown that women disproportionately bear the brunt of conflict. And yet women are the indispensable, but all too often overlooked, agents of peace. The Council must advocate not only for the protection of women as victims in conflict, but also, and more importantly, for their full and meaningful participation in conflict prevention frameworks as peace brokers, decision makers, community resilience builders and promoters and defenders of human rights.

Thirdly, the Security Council should support all efforts to ensure adequate and predictable financing for peacebuilding through voluntary, innovative and assessed financing, as envisaged by the resolution on financing for peacebuilding (General Assembly resolution 76/305).

Fourthly, and in conclusion, the upcoming Summit of the Future should be an opportunity for the community of nations to commit to a surge in preventive diplomacy and exponential investment in inclusive and comprehensive peacebuilding that leaves no region, no country, no community and no individual behind.

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

Mr. Tun (Myanmar): Myanmar thanks the presidency of Japan for organizing this open debate. I wish to express our appreciation to all the briefers.

It is indeed high time to reflect on the lessons learned from our past experiences of preventing conflict and its recurrence and identify concrete actions that we should take in collaboration within and beyond the United Nations system. The key words here are, in my view, “concrete actions”. The most effective way to protect civilians is to prevent conflicts by taking effective and concrete action in a timely manner.

Conflicts with global and regional ramifications are ongoing, resulting in devastating human losses, and violent conflicts with little global attention are ripping apart communities and their future across the world. Essentially, the rule of law is being undermined at both the national and the international levels. The principles of the Charter of the United Nations are being ignored. Basic humanity safeguards, such as international humanitarian law, continue to be violated with impunity. In many situations, the Security Council has responsibility and power, but unfortunately, it is neither willing nor able to address

these challenges. We understand that building conflict prevention infrastructure requires the involvement and empowerment of all actors, including the full, meaningful and equal participation of women and youth. For that to happen, there must be a foundation of the rule of law for democratic decision-making supported by effective, accountable and transparent institutions. International cooperation plays a key role in strengthening such national institutions.

The joint statement by 67 countries, including Myanmar, issued today stressed that effective and collective prevention is needed to save succeeding generations from this culture of war. I thank Japan for its leadership in that regard.

In my country, Myanmar, the people have already passed the conflict prevention stage. We are now in the middle of the nationwide widespread struggle to achieve lasting peace once and for all. That is to overcome the brutal military dictatorship that has, time and again, proved to be the biggest obstacle to sustainable peace and development and the biggest threat to the people of Myanmar and their future. The unaccountable military perpetrated an illegal coup in 2021, denying the democratically expressed will of the people of Myanmar. The illegal junta then destroyed the rule of law and imposed its brutality. The women and youth of Myanmar are at the forefront of resisting this military reign of terror across the country. Even in the face of violence, including sexual violence, the courage of the women of Myanmar to resist the military dictatorship and their commitment to achieving a just, inclusive and democratic society has not been weakened.

Now Myanmar youth are at extreme risk, owing to the lawless military conscription being enforced by the illegal junta. The people of Myanmar and the National Unity Government have kept calling for the international community to take the necessary action to stop forced conscription by the military junta. The current security, economic, human rights and humanitarian disaster in Myanmar was caused by the illegal military coup. The solution to addressing the crisis and preventing future recurrences lies in the elimination of the military dictatorship and the establishment of a federal democratic union. We have repeatedly urged the Security Council to take concrete action to help to address the suffering of the people of Myanmar.

To conclude, we, the people of Myanmar, me included, are tired of appealing to the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, to help the helpless people of Myanmar, as our appeals have thus far been met with a lack of concrete action or even serious attention from them. The people of Myanmar are asking a valid question: where is the United Nations, when it is needed to save lives in Myanmar? I do not want the Security Council to be directly or indirectly responsible for the loss of so many innocent lives in Myanmar after the illegal military coup in February 2021. Instead, I want the Security Council to become a part of the solution by taking concrete action to save lives in Myanmar. Though the people of Myanmar are tired of doing so, on their behalf, I must again urge the Security Council to adopt an enforcement resolution

as a follow-up to its resolution 2669 (2022), adopted in December 2022. I appeal to the Council to help to save innocent lives in Myanmar by preventing arms and jet fuel flows to the military junta, ensuring accountability for serious international crimes, addressing the blockade of humanitarian access and helping to create an environment that is conducive to the establishment of the rule of law and democracy in Myanmar.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I thank the Member States for their active engagement with this agenda item. I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting to a date and time that will be announced shortly.

The meeting was suspended at 6.05 p.m.