



# General Assembly

Seventieth session

**29**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Monday, 12 October 2015, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Lykketoft . . . . . (Denmark)

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

## Agenda item 114

### Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

#### (i) Appointment of the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

##### Note by the Secretary-General (A/70/388)

**The President:** Members will recall that the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/218 B, of 29 July 1994, decided to establish the Office of Internal Oversight Services, under the authority of the Secretary-General, the head of which would be at the rank of Under-Secretary-General.

By the same resolution, the Assembly further decided that the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services should be an expert in the fields of accounting, auditing, financial analysis and investigations, management, law or public administration. That official should be appointed by the Secretary-General, following consultations with Member States, and approved by the General Assembly. For that purpose, the Secretary-General should appoint the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services with due regard for geographic rotation and, in doing so shall be guided by the provisions of paragraph 3 (e) of resolution 46/232, of 2 March 1992, whereby the Assembly decided in particular that, as a general rule, no national of a Member State shall succeed a national of that State in a senior post and that there should be

no monopoly on senior posts by nationals of any State or group of States. The official should serve for one fixed term of five years without possibility of renewal and may be removed by the Secretary-General only for cause and with the approval of the General Assembly.

In the light of the provisions of resolution 48/218 B, the Secretary-General proposes to appoint Ms. Heidi Mendoza as Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services for one fixed term of five years, beginning on 15 November 2015 and ending on 14 November 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to approve that appointment?

*It was so decided.*

**Mr. Thöresson (Sweden):** I have the honour today to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries, namely, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden.

The Nordic countries warmly welcome the appointment of Ms. Heidi Mendoza as Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services. We would like to congratulate her on her new functions, and we look forward to working closely with Ms. Mendoza over the coming five years.

The Nordic countries attach great importance to the oversight functions at the United Nations. Those functions are crucial to the whole United Nations system and to the Member States in ensuring an efficient, effective, transparent and accountable United Nations. Over the past few months, we have been concerned

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

15-30802 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



by the negative attention that the Office for Internal Oversight Services has attracted as a result of the United Nations handling of the situation in the Central African Republic. Independence and transparency are prerequisites for effective oversight. An operationally independent Office for Internal Oversight Services is key to fulfilling the many important tasks assigned to the Office as well as to rebuilding the confidence among Member States that the Office can play a role in protecting the integrity of the United Nations and promoting accountability within the Organization.

On the eve of the United Nations seventieth anniversary, and with several large transformative reform initiatives on the table, the importance of oversight cannot be overestimated. The Nordic countries are confident that Ms. Mendoza will lead the Office for Internal Oversight Services effectively and efficiently through these important times at the United Nations, and she can count on our full support in that endeavour.

**Ms. Yparraguirre** (Philippines): The Philippines welcomes the appointment by the Secretary-General of Ms. Heidi Mendoza as Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services. We would like to express our deep appreciation for the endorsement of that appointment by the regional groups and for the affirmation it received today from Member States. It is a great honour for the Philippines that a highly qualified woman from the developing world has been chosen to serve in a senior position in the United Nations. We are fully confident that she will serve with the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity and will continue the good work of her predecessor in the Office for Internal Oversight Services, Ms. Carman Lapointe.

Ms. Mendoza will leave her post as Commissioner in the Philippine Commission of Audit, where she has served for over 20 years in the areas of audit, investigation, fraud examination and good governance. Her vast experience as Chairperson of the Audit Committee of the Public Sector Standards Board and External Auditor for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization renders her most able to take on that important new portfolio.

Her qualifications and wealth of experience, coupled with her commitment to excellence and integrity, make her a wise choice for the job. Those

qualifications are crucial at this juncture in the history of the United Nations, which is celebrating its seventieth anniversary, moving forward with the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and pursuing a platform for reforms in various fields of United Nations work.

Good governance, the rule of law and effective, accountable and transparent institutions within the United Nations itself are necessary for ensuring that the United Nations continues to be a credible champion in the global fight against corruption and achieves its lofty goals. We are fully confident that Ms. Mendoza will live up to those challenges as she steps into the role of assisting the Secretary-General in fulfilling the oversight responsibilities over the resources and staff of the Organization through internal audit, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and investigation services.

**Ms. Coleman** (United States of America): The United States welcomes the appointment of Heidi Mendoza as the next Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services. We extend our warm congratulations to her and take this opportunity to underscore the importance of the Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and its independent role in providing critical oversight over the United Nations. The United States is committed to ensuring a strong OIOS that is able to carry out robust audits and effective investigations to ferret out waste, fraud and corruption. The Office must have the ability to conduct performance evaluations of key programmes, thereby enabling management and Member States to ensure effective use of resources. We look forward to working with Ms. Mendoza and engaging with Member States to strengthen OIOS.

**The President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 114.

### **Agenda item 138**

#### **Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations**

##### **Draft resolution (A/70/416)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment

of the expenses of the United Nations: requests under Article 19 of the Charter”, without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/2).*

**The President:** The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 138.

## Agenda item 122

### Strengthening of the United Nations system

#### Report of the Secretary-General (A/70357)

#### Identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (A/70/95)

**The President:** Peace operations are the heart of the United Nations global engagement. They are among the major innovations since the inception of the United Nations that have enabled the Organization to better fulfil its mandate and have contributed to peace and security in our world. But peace operations, like any tool, are in constant need of refinement. Evolving challenges and threats to international peace and security make it necessary for the United Nations to strengthen its role, capacity, efficiency and, more particularly, the effectiveness of its field operations.

Today’s debate is both necessary and timely. The dramatic global refugee crisis and other humanitarian and ongoing security crises demonstrate just how complex today’s conflicts have become. In the light of those new realities, we must review our practices and instruments, how we approach policy and operational questions and how we address budgetary and management issues. I therefore commend the Secretary-General for having taken the initiative to launch this review. The High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations consulted rigorously, and its work resulted in a number of concrete recommendations. Subsequently, Member States have received the Secretary-General’s implementation report (A/70/357).

Having examined those important contributions, it is now up to the membership to consider how that key initiative can be transformed into concrete steps that will ensure that the United Nations peace operations can adequately respond to our changing world. That is a unique opportunity and, at the end of today’s debate, I will return to the question of how best to offer procedural clarity on the next steps. It is of course also

worth bearing in mind that that review of the United Nations peace operations is complemented by the 10-year review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and a global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. An effort to ensure the synergy and coherence generated by those three reviews will promote a holistic reflection on matters that are clearly interconnected. Facts on the ground, including threats to global security, such as epidemics, violent extremism and proliferation, among others, are powerful evidence that a comprehensive and more integrated approach to peace and security is urgently needed. On 10 and 11 May 2016, I will convene a high-level thematic debate in order to advance synergies generated by those three reviews. The participation of Member States and all stakeholders in the preparations for that debate, in the event itself and in its possible follow-up will be crucial. We have a common interest to have a United Nations that is truly equipped to translate the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations into concrete reality, and a shared responsibility to make that happen.

I now give the floor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to start the discussion.

**The Secretary-General:** I thank the President of the General Assembly for bringing us together for a particularly timely debate on how to best to strengthen United Nations peace operations.

In recent years, all of us have grown deeply concerned about the escalating challenges confronting United Nations peace operations, both peacekeeping and special political missions. One year ago today, I appointed a High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations to assess our operations and suggest ways to meet those tests. President José Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste, with wide-ranging national and United Nations experience, was uniquely suited to lead that effort. Ms. Ameerah Haq, who has served as Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and as Vice-Chair of the Panel, has also had extensive exposure to the realities that the United Nations faces in the field. I am very pleased that both are with us today. The task was ambitious and the timing was short, yet the Panel delivered its report, entitled “Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people” (see A/70/95). The Panel’s report is wise and bold and reflects the results of consultations with the diverse stakeholders in every region of the world. I thank the

Panel for its outstanding service on behalf of all those around the world living under the threat or the reality of conflict.

Last month, I submitted to Member States my implementation report (A/70/357). It conveys my strong support for the Panel's recommendations and identifies those areas where I believe we can move forward immediately. My report calls for the General Assembly and the Security Council to consider a number of important recommendations directed at Member States and which I fully endorse. It deliberately leaves some of the structural proposals to my successor, but I wholeheartedly support the need for those changes to be given serious consideration.

United Nations peace operations are a global instrument. Making them fit for purpose is a collective responsibility. I hope that today will mark the start of early and concerted efforts to strengthen a set of vital tools at this time when they are most in need. The historic adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, last month, underscores a long-standing truth — there will be no peace without development, no development without peace, and neither without respect for human rights.

The case for renewed investment in United Nations peace operations is urgent and clear. We are living in a time of global turmoil. Large-scale conflicts have tripled since 2008. More than 60 million people have been forcibly displaced, the most since the Second World War. Violent extremism is on the rise. I fully endorse the Panel's call for a focus on politics, people and partnership. United Nations peace operations are political tools. Their objective is to pursue and sustain negotiated political settlements. They cannot substitute for a clear political strategy to bring an end to conflict. Nor should they be used to give the appearance of action, or given mandates without the means. Peace operations must be used responsibly. United Nations peace operations must be judged by their impact on people. They must make every effort to protect civilians and defend the rights of people in conflict. And they must never abuse that trust.

The United Nations cannot tackle today's challenges alone. We must strengthen partnerships to meet the growing complexity of conflicts. In my implementation report I set out an agenda for action to translate those priorities into concrete steps over the next 18 months.

First, we need to bring prevention and mediation to the centre of our efforts to promote international peace and security. Early action saves lives and money. Effective prevention and mediation keep politics at the fore. As the toll of human lives rises and humanitarian needs and costs escalate dramatically, I am calling for a concerted prevention agenda that makes greater use of the full range of tools, including my good offices.

Secondly, we need to change the way we plan and conduct United Nations peace operations. We need to become faster and more agile in limiting the spread of violence and seizing opportunities to resolve a conflict. We need to move away from template-determined approaches to a more targeted approach with mandates tailored to specific demands on the ground. We need a shared understanding of the tasks involved so as to strengthen coordination between the Security Council and troop- and police-contributing countries. And we need to work hand in hand with national actors and local communities. We also need capabilities, uniformed and civilian, that can deploy quickly and operate effectively in challenging environments. We must ensure that administrative procedures are systematically configured to support dynamic field environments. I thank those Member States that came forward with their commitments of scarce and valuable resources at the summit on United Nations peacekeeping held on 28 September. That is a significant step forward in equipping United Nations peace operations for today and tomorrow.

United Nations personnel, civilian and uniformed, must always uphold the highest standards of conduct and be held accountable when they do not do so. It is shameful that that has not always been the case. We must work together to eliminate the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse, which tarnishes the reputation of the United Nations and detracts from the contributions of so many brave men and women. We must also do everything in our power to enhance the safety and security of our personnel. Those courageous men and women often work in difficult and dangerous conditions to help make the world a better place. We should do our utmost to keep them safe.

Thirdly, we need stronger and more partnerships. Effective peace operations are those in which multiple actors — United Nations bodies, troop- and police-contributing countries, regional organizations, host countries and others — pull together and take

advantage of each other's strengths. Each partnership will be distinct, thus reflecting the overall strategy and specific demands.

In our partnerships with regional organizations, we will aim to prioritize standing arrangements for early consultation and rapid response, including bridging arrangements. The African Union is bearing an increasingly heavy burden, along with several of the continent's subregional organizations. It is time to take United Nations-African Union ties to a new level, including through predictable and sustainable financing for African Union peace operations. We must also deepen our ties with the European Union and other organizations that can contribute.

United Nations peace operations are an essential tool, but they are not the only international tool. I welcome the ongoing intergovernmental reviews on peacebuilding and on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. My report has drawn on those reviews and identified the links among them. There is far more we can do to sustain peace and help post-conflict societies avoid a relapse into violent conflict. And despite important gains in advancing the women and peace and security agenda, we have still not done enough to involve women in peace processes and other decision-making processes.

The coming World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in Istanbul in May 2016, is a further piece of the picture. That will be an opportunity to reinforce our common endeavour to save lives and prevent and alleviate suffering. Taken together, those efforts can enable us to renew the instruments available to the United Nations.

We do not have many opportunities to reform United Nations peace operations comprehensively. The last major effort of that kind was 15 years ago. Yet we all understand how much the world has changed since that time. It is essential that we act urgently and collectively and not wait, as in the past, for crisis or tragedy to propel reform. I stand ready to work with Member States in the months ahead.

I thank members for their presence here today. Let our actions speak louder than our words on behalf of the people around the world who look to us for leadership and support.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

**Mr. Halfaoui** (Morocco): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

I thank the President of the General Assembly for his initiative, the Secretary-General for the presentation of his report (A/70/357) and the Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and its members for their comprehensive report (see A/70/95).

As the group representing 90 per cent of the troop-contributing countries, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has a clear and well-known position on all aspects of peacekeeping, which I will not reiterate at this stage. I will focus my intervention on the following points.

The Movement is of the view that both the report of the High-level Panel and that of the Secretary-General should be studied carefully, as they will enable us to cover all critical aspects of peace operations.

On the procedural front, NAM reiterates that the development of concepts, policies and strategies should be part of an intergovernmental process and that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations is the sole body in charge of policymaking in peacekeeping. Therefore, all recommendations relating to peacekeeping should be addressed to the Special Committee. In that connection, recommendations relating to special political missions should be addressed to the Fourth Committee, and those with financial implications should be addressed to the Fifth Committee.

To conclude, I wish to assure the Assembly that NAM is following the review process closely and will engage constructively with the Secretariat and the relevant bodies of the United Nations. However, in order to ensure a successful interaction among all of the relevant stakeholders, transparency, clarity and information-sharing are essential.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the former Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

**Mr. Mayr-Harting** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

Let me first thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/70/357), which gives us a valuable and comprehensive picture of the state of play with regard to peace operations today and the challenges that we need to address collectively. We are grateful for the work done by the Secretariat and by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, led by President Ramos-Horta. It is a pleasure for me to welcome both him and the members of his Panel here today. We equally value the consultative approach that underpinned the process.

In adopting the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), the General Assembly agreed on a development framework that will ultimately contribute to global stability. The link between security and development is unquestionable. We very much welcome the inclusion of Sustainable Development Goal 16, on peaceful societies, in the 2030 Agenda. The security-development-human rights nexus is critical to achieving long-lasting stability, and in that sense, the global 2030 Agenda and the global peace and security agenda cannot be separated.

The global security environment has changed dramatically in recent years. The report of the Secretary-General clearly identifies the challenges that need to be tackled. That can be done only in a truly global partnership, as the Secretary-General has just underlined. We are happy to attest that the European Union and the United Nations enjoy such a partnership. We have recently identified joint priority areas for strengthening the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the European Union on peacekeeping and crisis management up to 2018.

At the same time, we are encouraged by the opportunities provided by the review of the United Nations peace and security architecture. Business as usual is no longer an option. With the imminent release of the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the launch of intergovernmental negotiations on the peacebuilding architecture, we now have all the three building blocks needed for efforts to enhance United Nations effectiveness in the global security environment. The outcome of the ongoing reviews should be bold in ambition and propose concrete steps to enhance effectiveness. No one reform should be undertaken in isolation from the others. The search for coherence, synergies and complementarities among those reviews should guide our work ahead.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report on the future of United Nations peace operations. Many of the suggestions of the High-level Independent Panel have been picked up and further developed. Key issues that the European Union and its member States have identified have found a place in the Secretary-General's report, such as the need for coherence, for linking development and security efforts, for making use of the full spectrum of responses, for placing the protection of civilians up front, for mainstreaming gender aspects throughout and for better and more clearly defined mandates and transition arrangements. Allow me to reflect on some of those aspects.

First, we fully support the notion that the full spectrum of peace operations should be used in a continuum of responses. We encourage all within the Secretariat to work collaboratively to ensure a coherent response.

Secondly, even the most successful peace operations cannot be a substitute for political processes. Prevention and mediation, making full use of the Secretary-General's good offices, the early deployment of United Nations special political missions, United Nations regional and bilateral peacebuilding and mediation tools and public diplomacy must become a priority. That would show that the global system is intent on reducing armed conflict. Likewise, consolidating peacebuilding efforts must be on the agenda throughout, and the peacebuilding agenda must be fully synchronized with peacekeeping efforts. Wider peacebuilding activities must be given the means to be effective.

Thirdly, the protection of civilians and the prevention of atrocity crimes must be at the core of any peace operation's mandate. We welcome the emphasis on a regular assessment of the mission's political and protection effect, the extent to which the mission has the capabilities to fulfil its protection mandate and the additional political and practical support required.

Crucially, the protected must not be harmed by those meant to protect them. We welcome the Secretary-General's emphasis on increased accountability and his efforts to strengthen the system's ability to deal with sexual exploitation and abuse swiftly and decisively.

Local ownership is an important factor in protecting civilians. We welcome the suggestion for mission-wide strategies and guidance to engage with the local populations. Similarly, corruption should also be recognized as a driver of conflict and instability.

Fourthly, we are committed to advancing the women and peace and security agenda, both internally and in relations with third countries. The focus on gender mainstreaming in mission settings is welcome, as is the intention to strengthen gender expertise in missions.

Fifthly, United Nations peace operations need to be equipped with clear, coherent and achievable mandates that include a strong human rights component. Adequate resources needed for peace operations, including special political missions, should be ensured so that they can deliver on their mandated tasks. Operations should make the most efficient use of human, political and financial resources.

We are keen to understand better the benefits of the Secretary-General's proposal that the dedicated capacities for child protection and conflict-related sexual violence should cease to exist as separate entities in peace operations and should instead be consolidated within the human rights components of missions. The European Union attaches great importance to those special protection mandates, and changes in mission structures should not curtail missions' ability to effectively protect women and children in situations of armed conflict.

In the light of the complex and dangerous environments in which such missions are operating, we underline the important role of information and intelligence for delivery on mandates and personnel protection. We support efforts by the United Nations to further develop those capacities for current and future missions.

Finally, we welcome the reference to reinforcing global-regional partnerships. As stated earlier, our two organizations recently agreed to cooperate more deeply on topics of mutual interest, ranging from rapid response to facilitating the contribution of European Union member States to United Nations peacekeeping, security-sector reform, mutual support and enhanced information exchange.

We also conduct missions and operations in support of United Nations objectives and United Nations peacekeeping across the world. Currently, 17 European Union crisis missions are deployed, of which 6 are military and 11 civilian. They allow for burden-sharing and support for United Nations activities, notably in Mali, the Central African Republic, Somalia and the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as in the Balkans.

We also remain committed to giving full support to Africa's efforts to manage its own security. I would also underline that fact in response to the comments made by the Secretary-General in his presentation. The European Union has agreed to increase funding for its African Peace Facility from €750 million to €900 million for the period 2014-2016.

The role of regional organizations within United Nations-led interventions could be better defined, whether it entails facilitating rapid deployment when appropriate, acting as a complement to United Nations operations or being deployed in a bridging capacity gaps.

Let me conclude by reiterating our commitment to a strong global order and to an effective United Nations. More than ever, Europe is ready to play its part. Those words — "more than ever, Europe is ready to play its part" — are probably the last words I have the honour to pronounce in my capacity as Head of Delegation of the European Union in the Assembly, and I am very pleased that it was precisely those words.

**Mr. Koroma** (Sierra Leone): Let me by thanking you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor to make a statement on behalf of the Group of African States.

The African Group holds in high regard the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95). That is understandable, given the fact that a high proportion of United Nations peacekeeping operations are concentrated in Africa. It is for that reason that Africa has taken the High-level Panel's work very seriously. We acknowledge the great length to which the Panel went to consult with Member States, regional and subregional bodies and other stakeholders. The common African position on the United Nations review of peace operations was adopted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at its five hundred and second meeting, held on 29 April, in which Africa as a region articulated its position regarding the work of the Panel.

Having reviewed the High-level Panel's report, we wish to underscore that it provides a comprehensive approach to strategic and operational aspects of peace operations. In that respect, we welcome the four strategic shifts identified in the report that would be required so as to enable the international community to

successfully adapt to the changing nature of conflict, namely, the need for a political approach, the need to view peace operations as encompassing a continuum of options ranging from the appointment of special envoys to the deployment of peacekeeping operations, the need to forge partnerships with regional organizations in order to exploit fully the comparative advantages of each organization, and the need to adopt a field-focused and people-centred approach.

We wish to express our deepest appreciation to the High-level Panel for taking into account many of the views expressed in the African common position, as transmitted to the United Nations for the consideration of the Panel in the preparation of its report.

We wish in particular to emphasize, first of all, that the core principles of peacekeeping operations — consent, impartiality and the limited use of force — remain relevant but need to be interpreted with flexibility in the face of the new, emerging challenges to peacekeeping.

Secondly, conflict prevention and mediation should be given paramount importance; hence the primacy of political solutions.

Thirdly, partnerships with regional and subregional organizations are key to operating in future in order to be able to address some of the constraints facing the United Nations. The legislative basis for partnership lies in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Fourthly, the strategic partnership that has been forged with the African Union should be identified as a template for the relations of the United Nations with regional organizations generally.

And, fifthly, in the light of the slow deployment of forces into the field, the United Nations should bear in mind the capacities being developed by the African Union to speed up the deployment of peacekeeping operations.

We wish to express support for the principles that should underpin that partnership, namely, consultative decision-making, a division of labour based on respective comparative advantages, joint analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation, an integrated response to the full conflict-cycle, including prevention and transparency, accountability and respect for international standards, in consonance with the principles endorsed in the African common position

and other documents relating to the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union.

We express our particular appreciation to the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations for its resuscitation of the recommendations of the Prodi report (see A/63/666), entitled “Report of the African Union on the African Union-United Nations panel on modalities for support to African Union operations”, with regard to the founding of the Security Council-authorized African Union-led peace support operations.

We acknowledge that the recommendation made by the High-level Panel for the use of United Nations assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis, including the costs associated with the deployment of uniformed personnel, marks a significant step. We therefore urge that that proposal be endorsed by the United Nations decision-making organs, and we hold ourselves ready to follow up on that recommendation with the relevant organs, committees and interested parties within the United Nations.

We also take note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations” (A/70/357). We are willing to engage with the Secretariat on how to implement the important recommendations made by the High-level Panel, including the lessons learned in the transitions from African Union peacekeeping operations to United Nations peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic and Mali.

We take particular note of the following recommendations. First, there is the conduct of the lessons-learned exercise aimed at reviewing and assessing the various mechanisms available to improve the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of the financing for African Union peacekeeping operations, authorized by the Security Council. Secondly, there is the joint identification of context-specific benchmarks that could be used to determine the conditions under which a transition should take place, given the needs in the country and the situation on the ground. Thirdly, there is the development of a creative and flexible transition tool box, embodying a common vision that the African Union and the United Nations would employ, when and where appropriate, to inform future transition processes.

We once again express appreciation to the Secretary-General for his wisdom in establishing such a high-profile panel with the requisite mandate.

**Ms. Bird** (Australia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the group of countries made up of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (CANZ).

We thank the Secretary-General for his candid assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the United Nations peace operations architecture. Let me also acknowledge today the presence of President Ramos-Horta, Ms. Ameerah Haq and other members of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations, and to thank them for their excellent work.

As the peace operations review report (see A/70/95) makes clear, the nature of global conflict has changed. United Nations peace operations are operating in increasingly difficult environments and must adapt to meet those new challenges, with the protection of civilians remaining the core priority. The CANZ group agrees with the Secretary-General's assertion that political solutions must be paramount in the design of peace operations. Comprehensive approaches that utilize all of the United Nations conflict prevention and resolution tools are needed if political solutions and sustainable peace are to be achieved. The recent leaders summit on peacekeeping has provided much-needed focus on, and new commitments aimed at, the enhanced capability of United Nations peace operations.

The CANZ group strongly supports the initiatives within the Secretariat, outlined by the Secretary-General today, to tangibly improve the performance of United Nations peace operations. The CANZ group supports improved strategic force generation and capability development, better operational and strategic planning, enhanced safety and security assessment and management tools, strengthened United Nations policing and the use of new technologies for effective mandate implementation. The CANZ group encourages the Secretariat to continue its efforts to improve contingent training and performance through measurable, effects-based and performance-focused measures.

Consistent with the High-level Panel's report, we also support improved systems, approaches and structures in the Secretariat with a view to becoming more field-oriented in its peace operations preparation and supporting better operability in the field. We believe that involving women in peace operations

greatly contributes to missions' performance and success. Accordingly, we strongly support the ongoing efforts to promote women's participation in peace and security, in particular participating in the brokering of ceasefires, peace negotiations, conflict resolution and monitoring of peace. Women's participation must be central to all processes, not just on women's issues. Operational effectiveness will be enhanced through the implementation of the review's recommendations, such as the call to conduct gender-sensitive analysis throughout the mission-planning, mandate-development, implementation, review and mission-drawdown processes. The CANZ group also encourages the Secretariat to continue to forge ahead with its implementation of a robust, transparent and accountable zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

Member States are key to the effective implementation of the review's recommendations. To that end, we must all engage constructively in United Nations negotiating forums to make that a reality, including in the Fourth Committee and the Fifth Committee negotiations and within the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations. As others have mentioned, the parallel reviews of the United Nations peace operations, the peacebuilding architecture and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) provide an opportunity for broader and transformative change in the United Nations engagement in fragile and conflict-affected States. The CANZ group urges a coherent and the holistic approach to implementing the reviews and initiatives already under way, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/70/357) on the peace operations review, and we look forward to the high-level thematic debate that will be convened by the President in May.

We all provided substantial support over the course of the peace operations review. It will now be important for Member States to collectively reach an early and clear understanding of what we wish to achieve. More than ever, we must ensure that our work reflects a realistic and contemporary understanding of United Nations peace operations and of the ever-evolving challenges faced in the field to help those who need us most.

**Mr. Kandeel** (Egypt): Egypt aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and by the

representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group.

We thank the President for conducting this important debate on the report of the Secretary-General on the future of peace operations (A/70/357). We thank the Secretary-General for his initiative in setting up the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, and we take note of the Panel's report (see A/70/95) and its recommendations. We believe that this is an opportunity to develop a common understanding of peacekeeping and create an effective coordination mechanism among the main stakeholders in peacekeeping, including regional actors and troop-contributing countries. As we deliberate on the future of peacekeeping, let me highlight the following points.

First, it is crucial to re-emphasize the three main pillars of peacekeeping, namely, consent, impartiality and limiting the use of force. Secondly, peacekeeping should ordinarily follow the signing of a peace agreement. Peacekeeping forces are not universal armed forces that are entitled to impose peace agreements on parties to the conflict. Thirdly, it is crucial to ensure the robust nature of peacekeeping operations so as to ensure sufficient deterrence and achieve the necessary level of protection of civilians.

The lessons of history have taught us that peacekeeping, and the use of force for that matter, cannot on their own achieve everlasting peace. The international community needs a holistic approach to tackling threats to international peace and security. Therefore, peacekeeping efforts should be closely coordinated with other peace missions, starting with the necessary efforts prior to peacekeeping, such as prevention, mediation and conflict management, all the way to post-conflict efforts to sustain peace, including peacebuilding, State-building and tackling the root causes of conflict. It is also necessary to consider any possible nexus between peacekeeping operations and sanctions regimes.

It is important, however, to distinguish between prevention and premature intervention. Our discussions should draw the fine line between them. While prevention efforts are recommended at an early stage, foreign intervention could, in many instances, be premature and sometimes worsen the situation rather than resolve it, especially when some parties to the conflict use international attention and pressure to reach political goals.

We commend efforts to establish global regional partnerships for peacekeeping. It is important to recognize regional peacekeepers as the first responders when conflicts erupt in the region. It is therefore imperative to establish concrete mechanisms for cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional actors on peacekeeping. We look forward to a thorough discussion in the relevant General Assembly committees on the implementation report of the Secretary-General, which should be a starting point for further developing ideas to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping efforts.

**Ms. Coleman** (United States of America): The United States welcomes the Secretary-General's initiative to reform the United Nations peace operations. That effort comes at a critical time, with over 125,000 personnel deployed and 27 peacekeeping, political and peacebuilding missions. United Nations peace operations remain an indispensable tool for preventing and responding to conflict.

*Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

As we know, peacekeeping operations and the essential prevention and peacebuilding work performed by special political missions face immense challenges today. They are deployed in increasingly dangerous environments, as demonstrated most starkly by the number of casualties among peacekeepers in Mali. They are performing diverse mandates and complex operations, such as protecting civilians in the midst of South Sudan's civil war, supporting Liberia during the Ebola crisis and assisting Haitians after the earthquake. Amid those challenges, the United Nations systems, policies and procedures are again straining to keep pace.

We welcomed the widely consultative process of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and its efforts to complement parallel reviews on the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and on women and peace and security, as well as its inclusion of strategic as well as tactical-level recommendations. Building on the High-level Panel's recommendations, the Secretary-General's implementation report (A/70/357) identifies proposals to address long-standing, chronic challenges facing peace operations, including a renewed focus on prevention and mediation, stronger regional-global partnerships and new ways of planning and conducting United Nations peace operations. Let me briefly highlight three priorities for the United States:

First, on the protection of civilians, we welcome the Secretary-General's emphasis on the need for United Nations peace operations to protect civilians, one of the mission leadership's critical responsibilities. Essential to that are mission-wide strategies to assess civilian insecurity and to make use of all available tools, from mediation and non-military means to the use of force, where appropriate and necessary, to support protection. In addition, we welcome the establishment of an assessment and planning cell in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, and we urge the Secretary-General to ensure that strategic assessments and planning incorporate protection and atrocity risks in an effective and systematic way.

Secondly, on empowering missions in the field, administrative and financial policies and procedures must be configured to support dynamic field environments. That will require a change of culture, policies and approaches, including aligning authorities with responsibilities and empowering missions, while ensuring accountability. That includes enabling missions to recruit and rapidly deploy the right expertise at the right time, giving force commanders more control over medical and casualty capabilities and ensuring that planning is aligned with capacities.

Thirdly, on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, which is the collective responsibility of the United Nations and all its Member States, we welcome the Secretary-General's recent initiatives to combat such behaviour. We urge him to continue his efforts on sexual exploitation and abuse prevention, while enforcing the zero-tolerance policy, transparency, accountability and remedial measures.

The Secretary-General's implementation report focuses on reforms that can be implemented over the coming 12 months. Some of the reforms he sets out have already received prior authorization from the General Assembly. Others will require Member States' approval, and still others call upon the membership to act. In that regard, I would ask that the General Assembly consider early action to acknowledge the Secretary-General's initiative before consideration in the relevant bodies.

The United States stands ready to work with the Secretary-General and Member States to ensure that the momentum generated by the High-level Independent Panel's review is not lost. As the Assembly knows, and as President Obama said at the United Nations peacekeeping summit on 28 September,

“We know that peace operations are not the solution to every problem, but they do remain one of the world's most important tools to address armed conflict.”

For peace operations to remain an effective and efficient means of addressing threats to international peace and security, we must seize this opportunity together.

**Mr. Mukerji (India):** I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this plenary meeting on the report of the Secretary-General entitled “The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations” (A/70/357). It is significant that this meeting has been organized by the President among the first agenda items on the important issue of United Nations peace operations.

We align our statement with that made by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement earlier today.

My delegation's views on today's topic are based on our experience in both the peacekeeping and the peacebuilding operations of the United Nations. India is the largest cumulative troop contributor to United Nations peace operations, with over 185,000 troops having served in 48 of the 69 missions mandated so far. The recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, appointed by the Secretary-General in October 2014, carry great importance for us. We have expressed our satisfaction with the report (see A/70/95) earlier and warmly welcome the presence here today of the High-level Panel's Chair, Mr. Ramos-Horta, and the Vice-Chair, Ms. Ameerah Haq.

The most important issue — the elephant in the room — is the big picture, namely, the way in which mandates for peace operations are formulated by the Security Council. We are dismayed at the opaque manner in which the Council continues to mandate peace operations without any accountability or transparency. The human costs of that failing are evident in both the rising number of casualties among United Nations peacekeepers and the alarming growth in the number of civilians — now reaching, according to the Secretary-General, 60 million — whose lives are being disrupted by conflicts that an ineffective Security Council is powerless to resolve. As a declared advocate of human rights, we believe that the President of the General Assembly must take the lead to prioritize agreement on an early reform of the Council during the seventieth

session of the General Assembly in order to bring hope to millions of ordinary men, women and children.

The Secretary-General has proposed three pillars for conducting United Nations peace operations. Of them, primacy must be given to the pacific settlement of disputes as the core objective of United Nations peace operations, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, which will enable every peace operation to have a clear implementation time frame. The Secretary-General has recommended that sustained dialogue among the Council, the Secretariat and troop and police contributors is essential for shared understanding of appropriate responses and their implications for the mandate and conduct of a peace operation. He has further stated that such a dialogue should begin before a mission is established, something that we strongly support.

The Secretary-General, in his report, and the High-level Panel have rightly recognized that United Nations peace operations are not designed or equipped to impose political solutions through the sustained use of force, and that United Nations peace operations are not an appropriate tool for military counter-terrorism operations. We endorse that view, since United Nations peacekeepers are not deployable for targeted offensive action against armed militias, non-State actors or terrorists. We should not abandon the cardinal principles of United Nations peacekeeping, which have withstood the test of time, namely, the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. We urge that the current allocation of resources within United Nations peace operations be reviewed with the aim of supporting political efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement of conflicts, which would considerably mitigate the growing resource constraints facing United Nations peace operations.

The Secretary-General has reaffirmed his commitment to informing and briefing the Security Council about situations where there is an escalating risk for civilians or a serious shortfall in a mission's ability to fulfil its protection mandate. That is a welcome step. As a troop-contributing country, we look forward to participating in such briefings in an interactive manner. United Nations peacekeepers are not only the Organization's boots on the ground, they are its eyes and ears, and by interacting directly with Member States, the Security Council can only benefit from the ground-level assessments that the troop-contributing

countries can provide. Such interaction will contribute to more effective implementation of the mandate for the protection of civilians. That is why we are calling for Article 44 of the Charter to be implemented in letter and spirit.

The Secretary-General has reported that sexual exploitation and abuse by a small minority of United Nations personnel continue to shame our Organization. Such abuse scars the lives of men, women and children, and we take such cases extremely seriously. The United Nations must apply one standard, that of zero tolerance, when dealing with all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse in its field operations, whether peacekeeping, peacebuilding or others.

We request that all issues referred to in our debate today be referred to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations for consideration along with the High-level Panel's report.

During the recently concluded leaders' summit held in New York on 28 September, the Prime Minister of India announced a 10 per cent increase in our troop contributions to existing and new operations, which is already more than 8,000; an additional three police units, with a higher representation of female peacekeepers, and a commitment to providing critical enablers, deploying technical personnel in United Nations missions and providing additional training for peacekeepers, both at our facilities in India and in the field. Such commitments show that India is willing to walk the walk when it comes to supporting United Nations peace operations.

**Mr. Wang Min** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

Peace is a shared aspiration and noble goal of all humankind. United Nations peacekeeping operations were born of the desire for peace, and they continue to exist for the same reason. Sixty-seven years have passed since the first United Nations operation was established. Such operations have brought about peace in regions of conflict, and hope for the people living there. Peacekeeping operations were an innovative aspect of multilateralism for the international community and have become an important way of maintaining peace and security around the world.

Today, people continue to suffer severe hardships as a result of conflicts and wars in many parts of the world, and their desire for peace and their hopes and

expectations of the United Nations and its peacekeeping operations are all the more anxious and intense. At the same time, issues such as the threat of terrorism, the expansion of peacekeeping operations' mandates and the absence, in some cases, of a peace to maintain are posing new challenges for peacekeeping operations. United Nations peacekeeping operations must innovate if they are to evolve.

China supports the Secretary-General's initiative in launching a review of the Organization's peacekeeping operations and his report (A/70/357) based on the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95). It is China's hope that the review will enable us to further improve the philosophy behind peacekeeping operations, optimize their mandates, strengthen their capacity-building and enhance their efficiency. In that regard, I would like to stress the following four points.

First, the basic principles for peacekeeping operations should be observed. Peacekeeping operations should abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles espoused by Dag Hammarskjöld. They should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries concerned, have due respect for their leadership and take great care where the use of forceful measures is concerned. The Security Council should be realistic and avoid overreaching, make clear the priorities and focus at various stages of peacekeeping missions, and adjust the mandates and scale of peacekeeping operations according to the realities on the ground. In implementing Security Council resolutions, operations should not exceed their mandates and should formulate and implement exit and withdrawal strategies in a timely fashion based on local circumstances and needs.

Secondly, the peacekeeping operations system should continually be improved; it should be connected vertically to the processes of preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding and horizontally to the exercise of political good offices and the institution of the rule of law, national reconciliation processes, and improvement of people's lives. The Council should hear the views of the countries concerned and troop-contributing countries more often, and should be better coordinated with regional organizations and take the best possible advantage of the assistance of the World Bank, the African Development Bank and other relevant financial institutions in order to create synergies.

Thirdly, we should increase the rapid-response capabilities of operations, shorten the deployment cycle and speed up the rate of deployment, which may improve operations' image and credibility, with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of Security Council provisions. Considerable efforts should be made to improve the process of establishing and deploying peacekeeping and special political missions and optimize logistics-support systems in order to ensure a force's timely deployment, as well as the transfer of the necessary resources so as to avoid waste. We should improve peacekeepers' discipline. China welcomes the efforts of the United Nations to establish the new Peacekeeping Capabilities Readiness System, and we call on other Member States to participate in it.

Fourthly, we should give greater support to Africa, where more than half of United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed. The Organization should give greater attention to the important role that regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, play in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. The United Nations and international community should strengthen their coordination and cooperation in peacekeeping with regional organizations in Africa, and help Africa build its peacekeeping capacity. We should give full play to the strengths of regional organizations, such as the African Union, in peacekeeping operations and help Africans solve African issues in African ways.

As one of the permanent members of the Security Council and the world's largest developing country, China has always provided appropriate support to United Nations peacekeeping operations and has duly contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security. Last month, when President Xi Jinping attended the United Nations summit on peacekeeping operations, he made six commitments aimed at supporting and enhancing United Nations peacekeeping operations.

First, China will participate in the new United Nations peacekeeping standby mechanism and, in addition to a regular peacekeeping police force, will build an 8,000-strong standby peacekeeping force. Secondly, at the request of the United Nations, China will favourably consider sending more engineers, as well as transport and medical personnel, to peacekeeping operations. Thirdly, during the next five years, China will train 2,000 peacekeepers for other countries and will engage in 10 de-mining assistance

projects, including through the provision of training and equipment. Fourthly, over the next five years, China will provide \$100 million in cost-free military assistance to the African Union to support the building of regular forces and rapid-response crisis forces in Africa. Fifthly, China will deploy its first helicopter contingent to a peacekeeping mission in Africa. Sixthly, part of the China-United Nations Peacekeeping Development Fund will be earmarked for United Nations peacekeeping operations. United Nations peacekeeping operations have become an important means of maintaining peace and security at the global level. They must be strengthened, not weakened.

China will make every effort to implement the six commitments made by President Xi Jinping. We are ready to work unremittingly with the Secretariat, the countries concerned, the troop contributors, the African Union and the other stakeholders to make a greater contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Mr. Manongi** (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

We also join in welcoming the report (A/70/357) of the Secretary-General on the future of peacekeeping operations based on the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, led by former President José Ramos-Horta. As noted by the African Group, the issues raised in both reports should be accorded ample space for discussion in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and in the Fourth and Fifth Committees. We shall state our positions further in the deliberations of those bodies.

In the meantime, it is beyond doubt that the demands for fulfilling the promise and vision of the Charter of the United Nations, namely, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, are proving more challenging today than at any other time in the history of the Organization. It is therefore not surprising that the limitations of the Organization's global engagements are increasingly reflected in its peace operations. Those limitations or shortcomings are not attributable solely to the Organization. As Member States, we bear the larger responsibility. Consequently, the Secretary-General's call for an urgent change in the way peace and security instruments are conceived and applied to maximize impact is an appeal that should be heeded with the urgency it deserves.

We support the primacy of politics over military and technical engagements. We have underscored on several occasions, including in our statement (see A/70/PV.17) in the recent general debate of the Assembly, the essential role of increased investment in conflict prevention. We therefore agree with the Secretary-General and the Panel on the importance of early engagement by the Security Council, of supporting national and regional prevention and mediation efforts and of bolstering the Secretariat's prevention and mediation capabilities.

The three core pillars that the Secretary-General proposes in his action plan — focusing on prevention and mediation, strengthening regional/global partnerships and devising new ways of planning and conducting peace operations to make them faster, more responsive and more accountable to the needs of countries and people in conflicts — require priority attention. We view those three pillars as the main supports of a framework that corresponds to Africa's peacebuilding landscape, which has undergone a dramatic evolution in terms of conflict dynamics and the emergence of new conflict actors.

It is often pointed out that Africa has served as the laboratory for many of the United Nations peacebuilding initiatives since the end of the Cold War. That also holds true with respect to the post-2005 peacebuilding architecture, which has increasingly focused on State-building and technocratic capacity-building in post-conflict situations. In addition, the focus on holding so-called democratic elections, without addressing the root causes of conflicts, is not conducive to successful undertakings. The lack of resources and political will for long-term peacebuilding have also undermined its sustainability. Better and more innovative ways of tackling those challenges need to be developed and supported.

We must also be modest enough to concede that, in certain circumstances, there are limits to what can be achieved by foreign intervention and global institutions, despite their best intentions. In that regard, the African Union (AU) is striving to become a more prominent actor in the crises that afflict the continent. We believe that there are situations where regional and subregional institutions may prove to be the best first responders. Credible partnerships with such institutions and actors must be central to our common effort.

That is the essence of the appeal launched by the African Union Peace and Security Council at its high-level meeting held at the United Nations on

26 September. In welcoming the Panel's report (see A/70/95), the meeting reaffirmed the importance of strengthening the relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. We are encouraged that that constitutes a vital component of the Secretary-General's plan of action. We also welcome the Secretary-General's intent to carry out, jointly with the AU and in consultation with other partners, a review and assessment of the various mechanisms currently available for financing and supporting the AU peace operations authorized by the Council. We are confident that the outcome of the review will bridge one of the critical gaps that the AU has often brought to our collective attention.

We note with great concern that peacekeepers are operating in hostile environments with little or no peace to keep. Attacks against peacekeepers and other United Nations personnel in the field are perpetrated by nefarious elements that perceive them as an obstacle to their objectives. We must ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel. We welcome the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General in that regard. While strengthening United Nations peace operations, we must also endeavour to ensure that peacekeepers are held accountable for their misdeeds. We must not allow the transgressions of a few to sully the reputation of the Organization and the courageous work of many other valiant peacekeepers.

Finally, as a country with several contingents in the field, we wish to recognize the valuable work being done by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, especially through the Department of Field Support and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Their work and timely responses have been a source of valuable operational support and backstopping for our forces.

We are therefore delighted to note the Secretary-General's directive to undertake a comprehensive review of issues related to in-mission mobility, as well as command and control of military-enabling assets, by the spring of 2016. We strongly encourage actions to ensure greater effective performance in the field.

**Mr. Pedersen** (Norway): This important debate is timely, as it is taking place just after the high-level week, during which a main theme was the proliferation of violent conflicts and their grave humanitarian consequences.

A clear message that came from our leaders at the seventieth anniversary of the Organization is that a strong United Nations is more vital than ever in tackling critical global challenges to international peace and security. The diverse range of United Nations peace operations has become an essential means of upholding the Charter of the United Nations. As we speak, United Nations peacekeepers are in stronger demand than ever before, and they operate in increasingly hostile environments. Millions of people count on them to provide a minimum of protection and stability and to lay the foundations for a better life.

In addition to the uniformed peacekeepers, the United Nations has developed a whole range of tools for conflict prevention, mediation support and peacebuilding that have become indispensable. However, as important as those instruments are, they have proved incomplete and unable to meet the growing needs in ever more complex situations on the ground. The Secretary-General's initiative last year to launch a process to reform United Nations peace operations was therefore timely and important, and Norway has been a strong supporter of the initiative from the very start.

The High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, under the able leadership of Mr. Ramos-Horta — and let me also pay a compliment to the other members of the Panel here — has been widely praised for its consultative approach. The Panel travelled extensively and received input from Governments, regional organizations, think tanks and civil society from all regions of the world. Through that inclusive process, it has vastly increased our collective understanding of the challenges confronting United Nations peace operations.

There seems to be broad consensus on the urgency of reform, adequately summed up as the four essential shifts: first, the need for a political strategy in all missions; secondly, the need for more responsive and tailored operations; thirdly, the need for stronger partnerships; and, fourthly, the need to make United Nations peace operations more field-focused and people-centred. The strong commitments to United Nations peacekeeping demonstrated during the recent summit on United Nations peacekeeping is also a sign of that political momentum. That is good news as we now move forward to implementation.

The Panel's report (see A/70/95) and the Secretary-General's report (A/70/357) together represent a

unique opportunity. We now need to discuss them in detail and to act on the proposals. The two reports are complementary: together they constitute a whole. Their relationship is explained in the Secretary-General's report, which focuses on reforms that can be enacted over the short term. Other proposals require a longer-term perspective. Both are equally important. Together the reports give us the best opportunity in a long time to implement necessary changes. We are responsible for making the United Nations peace operations fit for purpose for the coming decades. The General Assembly and its committees have a crucial role to play. We agree that the time has now come to establish a clear procedure and a road map for the follow-up phase in the General Assembly, and our support can be counted on as we move ahead under the leadership of the presidency.

**Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil):** Brazil has a long history in peacekeeping operations. Since 1948, we have participated in more than 50 United Nations peacekeeping missions through the deployment of troops, police and military experts and have provided more than 46,000 Blue Helmets in four continents. Our experience has shown us first-hand the value of United Nations peacekeeping operations as one of the main instruments available to the international community to address threats to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Brazil welcomed the initiative by the Secretary-General to appoint a High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations to conduct a comprehensive review of the peacekeeping operations and special political missions. I take this opportunity to commend the Panel and its Chair, Mr. Ramos-Horta, for their serious work.

There is no doubt that nowadays peacekeeping operations are more complex than they were when the first missions were established by the Organization. The Security Council is resorting to peacekeeping in ever more volatile environments, while conferring increasingly ambitious mandates. Against that background, we must learn from the past and build on positive experiences.

We welcome the strong emphasis placed by the Panel on the primacy of politics and on preventive diplomacy, as they are approaches that Brazil has long supported. Those recommendations must be translated into concrete strategies. We also congratulate the Panel on addressing crucial funding issues. The establishment of a special account for special political missions separate from the regular budget would boost

efficiency and alleviate budgetary pressures on other critical activities financed under the regular budget, such as development and human rights. However, we are concerned about the flexible interpretation given to the basic principles of peacekeeping operations, as paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's report seems to imply. It is true that innovative solutions are required to cope with the challenges of contemporary conflicts, but they cannot come at the expense of the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and underpinning United Nations peacekeeping practice.

The United Nations should not deviate from its central goal, which is to promote peace and development through diplomacy and cooperation. Brazil endorses the Panel's conclusion regarding peacekeeping missions and counter-terrorism activities. It is not the role of peacekeeping missions to perform such activities, and they are not equipped to do so. The militarization of peacekeeping operations would deflect the United Nations from its purpose, which is to promote peace through peaceful solutions. It will therefore be necessary to examine how to conceptualize counter-terrorism tasks, not only in pragmatic terms but also in their doctrinaire and political implications.

Brazil believes more emphasis should be placed on the interdependence between security and development and its impact on peacekeeping operations. Progress in the area of economic and social development can help foster a greater and more lasting commitment to stability on the part of the local population, which in turn is crucial to achieving conditions for sustainable peace allowing for the successful drawdown of a peacekeeping mission.

Brazil favours the institutionalization of consultations among the Secretariat, the Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries before the renewal of the mandates of peacekeeping missions. The experience of the Friends of Haiti is one to be borne in mind in that respect. We need to overcome the illusion of sequencing between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. At the earliest possible stage of the drafting of a mandate, the Security Council should look into the root causes of the conflict, including its economic and social dimensions, and incorporate key peacebuilding objectives into the mission's mandate. In that context, we encourage the Assembly to undertake the review of peacekeeping operations in conjunction with the review of the peacebuilding architecture, with a view to

their increased synergy. It is of the utmost importance that the recommendations of the Panel be discussed in a comprehensive manner by the broad membership under the auspices of the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General's recently released report on the Panel's recommendations, entitled "The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations" (A/70/357), reiterates points made by the Panel and mentions initiatives to be undertaken by the Secretariat during the remainder of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's term. The report suggests that the initiatives to be favoured are those which may, in the opinion of the Secretariat, be implemented without the need for the express authorization of the Member States, namely administrative endeavours aimed at improving the methods, planning and overall efficiency of the system.

In our view, the general membership, and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) in particular, should be given the opportunity to pronounce themselves on those opinions. At the same time, we are disappointed to note that the Secretary-General's report gives scant attention to a key administrative recommendation contained in the Panel's report (see A/70/95) that a significant majority of Member States endorses. I am referring to the creation of a separate account for the financing of special political missions.

In sum, improving efficiency is a collective effort that depends on the collaboration of all 193 Member States. We look forward to discussing all aspects of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Secretary-General's reports within the framework of the C-34 and the Fourth and Fifth Committees.

**Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan): Let me start by thanking the Secretary-General for his briefing this morning and acknowledging the presence of several Panel members at this important debate.

The work of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations was seminal in nature. The Secretary-General's initiative in convening the Panel to review peacekeeping did not come a day too soon. Peacekeeping operations have been a critical instrument in the toolkit of the United Nations. Blue Helmets have become the most significant and visible contribution of the United Nations to international peace and security. Over the years, they have adapted to the changing nature and dimensions of conflict, and that process of

change continues. We hope that the report of the Panel (A/70/95) and the Secretary-General's implementation report (A/70/357) will take that process forward.

These reports outline key priority areas for United Nations peacekeeping, along with an agenda for action. The recommendations provide a pathway for much-needed reform endeavours, including assessments of planning capabilities, leadership and training, as well as more focused mandates. Let me briefly put forward Pakistan's view on the reports.

The overall tone of the reports is rightly optimistic and forward-looking. We are gratified to see several of our ideas find resonance in the reports. They include the importance of consultations with troop-contributing countries, the provision of better resources for peacekeeping missions, a two-phased mandate formation process and the non-deployment of peacekeepers for counter-terrorism operations. We believe the principles of peacekeeping should retain their primacy. The edifice of peacekeeping has been built on those principles. Adherence to them should remain the norm. Reform has taken place in the past without affecting the fundamental principles of peacekeeping, and so it should in the future.

We agree that political processes should take pre-eminence in conflict prevention. Peacekeeping must be accompanied by a clear political track and political objective, on whose successful pursuit should rest the success of the peacekeeping mission. Increasing the Secretariat's capabilities in the fields of prevention and mediation should be supported, as that would enhance its conflict prevention role. Complex mandates can be implemented only if peacekeeping operations are provided with adequate resources. Where mandates and capabilities are out of sync, the Secretariat should candidly counsel the Security Council on remedial measures, and those proposals should be given due weight by the Council.

On the issue of the protection of civilians, the Panel has proposed laying down requirements for reporting and accountability to the Security Council. That concept needs to be explored and further clarified, as it is not entirely certain what would be entailed. The core principles of peacekeeping are not an impediment to the protection of civilians mandate. The Security Council frames those mandates, and the use of force in defence of the mandate is an integral part of the principles. Adequacy of resources is critical to the fulfilment of mandates. When mandating enforcement tasks, caution

is needed, as such operations should be on an exceptional and a time-limited basis. In that regard, mandates need to be carefully crafted to retain the distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement. The concept of proactive defence needs further elaboration.

Rapid deployment and standby capabilities need resources and the streamlining of Secretariat procedures, some of which cause delays. Compensation and the reimbursement of troop costs should continue to get the focus they merit. A periodic mechanism for that purpose needs to be established. We do not support morphing the concept of peacekeeping into peace operations. We believe that is a recipe for confusion and ambiguity.

The safety and security of peacekeepers remains an absolute and overriding priority for my delegation. Pakistani troops serving in peacekeeping operations are highly motivated, trained and professional. They certainly do not shy away from mandated tasks. The cautious approach that we advocate is merely that the United Nations carefully study the impact of those changes, including with regard to international humanitarian law, the immunity of United Nations peacekeepers and the safety and security of peacekeepers when their neutrality is compromised.

We believe that the reports need thoughtful examination and careful study. For that purpose, we believe that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) is the most appropriate body to deliberate on the issue. The idea of convening a special session of the C-34 to discuss the finer details and chart out an implementation plan might also be considered.

Pakistan has not only consistently been among the world's top troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping, but is also at the forefront of norm-setting on the subject. By way of reinforcing and reiterating our enduring commitment, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif co-hosted the leaders' summit on peacekeeping last month and announced a series of new pledges to support future endeavours. Let me assure Member States that our commitment to peacekeeping is as strong as our commitment to peace itself. Despite challenging circumstances at home, we will continue to provide peacekeepers, as we consider it our sacred duty to do so. We will continue to support that common cause.

**Mr. Cardì (Italy):** Italy aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union.

I join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his report (A/70/357) and the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, led by Mr. Ramos-Horta, for its work.

As the Panel's report (see A/70/95) clearly highlights, the global security challenge has dramatically changed over the years. We need renewed partnerships and updated tools to face today's challenges. As the foremost Blue Helmet contributor among Western countries, Italy has a strong and direct interest in contributing to the future of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Thanks to our presence in the field, we have gathered considerable experience in peacekeeping through the years, which we are ready and willing to share.

Before addressing the more detailed aspects, I want to stress the need for the United Nations as a whole to continue to work towards political responses to crises. We need to engage much more in mediation and prevention. The report on peacekeeping operations, the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (A/69/968) and the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security all have a common denominator: the reinforcement of the tools pertaining to preventive diplomacy. We think that we need to return such activities to the core business of the United Nations.

Conflict prevention, confidence-building measures and mediation instruments must be given the necessary space and resources. At the same time, those building tools are key to ensuring reconciliation and lasting peace and security and therefore must receive the proper political and financial support. We are of the opinion that as the United Nations reviews its tools with a view to being more fit for purpose in addressing the challenges, those three tracks must proceed in an integrated, coordinated way, encouraging every possible synergy.

The Italian contribution to peacekeeping is not limited to supplying troops, as it is complemented by providing training, naval vessels, air assets and intelligence resources, integrated by an experienced military leadership. Italy is not only engaged abroad; it is also providing training, education and logistical support to United Nations operations on Italian territory, through the United Nations logistical base in Brindisi, which is the first permanent logistical base to support peacekeeping operations and has been in operation since 1994.

Training is crucial to ensure the success and reputation of the missions. Italy has a strong record in training national personnel for peace operations. Respect for human rights, protection of civilians and a gender perspective are embedded in national military training curricula. Since 2005, the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units, in Vicenza, run by our Carabinieri, together with the United States and other African and European countries, has offered training programmes and developed standards and common operating procedures to be applied during robust police activity. Twenty countries have already sent personnel to be trained at the Centre.

Italy is also ready to strengthen its engagement in capacity-building, to support police and military units of Member States willing to contribute to United Nations missions. Our focus will be on predeployment training and other sectors where Italy's expertise is well established, such as civil military cooperation, countering improvised explosive devices and protection of civilians. We are all conscious, of course, of the importance of predeployment training.

I confirm Italy's full support for the zero-tolerance policy against sexual abuse. Italy, as one of the major troop-contributing countries and one of the original signatories of the Kigali Declaration, has reaffirmed its commitment to working to prevent abuse, from the level of the training phase in which we are involved, to the deployment of more female peacekeepers. Italy can also count on the specialized units within its contingents. The Carabinieri units, acting as military police, are able to monitor and investigate any wrongdoing.

The protection of civilians is a growing challenge for United Nations missions when the security context remains volatile and the reconciliation process is fragile. As a relatively new task of the United Nations and its missions, the review offers an opportunity to provide a strategic vision on such a crucial topic. In order to deliver the effective protection of civilians, strong unity of intent among the United Nations membership is needed. Furthermore, greater effort should be invested in supporting regional organizations, especially on the African continent, through training and assistance. The United Nations should seek closer synergies with the European Union in that respect.

There is an emerging dimension to which I would like to briefly draw attention. It concerns Italy's belief about what should be done to protect cultural heritage in a crisis situation and may provide a substantial

contribution to the prevention and reconciliation efforts led by the United Nations. The cultural dimension, which has already been integrated into the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, could represent an additional capability of United Nations peace operations. Based on our national experience, we stand ready to promote that approach.

We live in challenging times and are confronted by the legitimate expectation, as expressed by public opinion on behalf of the most severely affected people, that the international community should be able to implement comprehensive policies, accompanied by effective tools. We must live up to that expectation while ensuring the credibility of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security.

**Ms. Rodríguez Pineda** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this important debate and for his leadership in initiating a process that will mark the starting point of the work to be carried out in the coming months. I also express my thanks to the Secretary-General for his comments.

As we have said on other occasions, Guatemala welcomes many of the recommendations proposed by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations in its report (see A/70/95) on the modernization of those operations. We have also taken note of the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Panel's recommendations (A/70/357). We hope to be able to discuss and to implement the recommendations and proposals contained in both reports; we believe that they are mutually complementary and should therefore be examined as a whole.

We have taken note of the differences between the two reports and hope to have a substantive dialogue on all of the issues, particularly regarding regional partnerships, innovative approaches to planning and leading peacekeeping operations, the focus on the ground and the involvement of individuals, and the establishment of a separate fund for the financing of special political missions. In that regard, it will be necessary to discuss the question of terminology that is acceptable to all Member States, including the definition of a peace operation.

We must all address the fundamental challenges faced by United Nations peacekeeping operations today. We recognize that peacekeeping is not an end in itself, but rather a process. We must bear in mind

all stages of a conflict, because the end of a conflict does not necessarily signal the establishment of peace. The review process also provides an opportunity to reduce the fragmentation evident in the activities of the various United Nations bodies endowed with peace and security mandates.

In addition, we must achieve greater coordination and cohesion with other review processes to be undertaken this year. We hope to better harmonize the three agendas. Unlike in the process to review the United Nations peacekeeping architecture, where two facilitators have already been appointed and where a road map on moving forward already exists, we are not quite sure about how to proceed with the two reports before the Assembly. In that regard, we believe that in each of the spaces that exist to examine the various issues addressed in both reports, we can achieve the agreements necessary to advance the work of the United Nations peacekeepers.

We recognize the value of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in providing a forum for countries such as mine to join in the discussion on ways to improve and increase the effectiveness of the peacekeeping operations. We also recognize the relevance of the discussions in the Fourth Committee on political issues associated with the special political missions and in the Fifth Committee on budgetary and administrative matters. This does not mean that we will settle for any agreement, but we hope that it will be the type of agreement that will lead to significant reforms for a new collective vision of the Organization and what the United Nations should be doing in the maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation is ready to actively participate to advance the work of the United Nations.

**Mr. Delattre** (France) (*spoke in French*): The Secretary-General took the initiative to launch a strategic review of peacekeeping operations, and today we are considering his proposals on the basis of the work done by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, led by Mr. Ramos-Horta, to whom I am pleased to pay tribute. France is grateful to the Secretary-General for having taken this initiative and congratulates the Independent Panel and the Secretariat for carrying out this major undertaking under tight deadlines. Allow me to make three observations.

First, we support the conceptual framework proposed by the Secretary-General. France agrees that

priority should be given to seeking political agreements in order to achieve lasting solutions to crises. That is the very *raison d'être* of peacekeeping. Similarly, France welcomes the fact that the protection of civilians and human rights are recognized as fundamental goals in peacekeeping. In this connection, we support the Human Rights Up Front initiative and the Secretary-General's intention to promote an active and early engagement by the United Nations where there is a threat to civilians.

These two requirements call for dynamic, engaged and sometimes, when necessary, robust peacekeeping. We believe the Secretary-General has found the right balance in this regard. A United Nations peacekeeping operation cannot impose solutions by force, but must know how to use force in support of the search for political solutions and the imperative of protecting civilians when circumstances require it.

My second point is that France supports the main principles, such as the immediate measures identified by the Secretary-General, as a guide for United Nations action in crisis situations. First of all, there is the principle of being exemplary. The Blue Helmets embody the values of the Charter of the United Nations and our shared conscience. They serve the people. In this regard, the recent cases of sexual abuse are unacceptable. France supports the proposals of the Secretary-General to further strengthen the zero-tolerance policy applied to the Blue Helmets and ensures that the same principle applies to our national troops when they are abroad.

We should also support the principle of accountability. It must be applied at all levels, from the local level of operations on the ground to the strategic level of the decisions taken by the Security Council. We believe it is important to strengthen the accountability of the heads of missions. France will continue to ensure that this principle guides the decision-making by the Council, in particular in the development of targeted, coherent and sequenced mandates. The principles of partnership and coordination are also compasses for United Nations action. Partnership with regional organizations, on the basis of Chapter VIII, must be strengthened. The principle of coordination should allow the various United Nations funds and agencies on the ground to work together more effectively.

Thirdly, our main concern, ultimately, is that the United Nations be more effective and proactive on the ground, as the Secretary-General has just stated. This imperative of efficiency can be achieved quickly

through simple and inexpensive reorganization and procedural reform measures. The first of these, in the spirit of the report before us, is to empower the actors on the ground and make them accountable and to adapt the procedures to enable the necessary flexibility. Competencies and capacities should be in place at Headquarters and on the ground, and we count on the mobilization of the Secretariat on this subject. In the same spirit, the Secretariat's internal procedures must be thoroughly reviewed. Some rules for hiring civilian personnel are too cumbersome and slow. Similarly, some rules allowing for the provision of support and equipment to troops should be improved in order to be more responsive.

Finally, as the Secretary-General has stated and as is indicated in the report (A/70/357), we must protect the security of the staff of the peacekeeping operations and that begins with better governance of health-care issues in the operations. Better supervision and an accountability framework must be established. There are other priorities we could mention, such as the use of new technologies and a strengthening of intelligence capacities, which also lead to important improvements in peacekeeping.

France will continue to participate and support United Nations peace operations and participate fully in order to enhance their effectiveness.

**Mr. Drobnyak** (Croatia): I thank the President for organizing this important meeting.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union, and I will make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

First, we thank and commend the Secretary-General for his report (A/70/357) on the future of the United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is a very timely report not only because it comes as we mark the seventieth anniversary of our Organization, but even more so because it comes at a time when we are faced with unprecedented challenges — more armed conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, more than 60 million refugees and internally displaced persons, migration and humanitarian crises.

For many years United Nations peacekeeping operations have helped to maintain international peace and security around the world. Croatia can bear witness to that. In the early 1990s, Croatia was the theatre of one of the largest United Nations peacekeeping operations in history. Important lessons were learned during that

time, and we must constantly remain mindful of them, especially when it comes to the clarity of mandates and the means of implementing them.

Today, with the growing complexity of challenges in the international order, United Nations peacekeeping is as important to international peace and stability as ever. Nothing short of a comprehensive and thorough analysis is needed in order to help United Nations peacekeeping adapt to the realities of a globalized world and its regional specificities. For that reason Croatia strongly welcomes and commends the excellent work done by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations led by Mr. Ramos-Horta, as well as the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Panel.

We are confident that the report will provide a strong basis and guidance for increasing the effectiveness of United Nations peace operations and enhancing synergy between all the components of United Nations peacekeeping. I would like to reiterate in particular the following points that were raised by Croatia at the highest level earlier this month. Rapid-deployment capacity should be efficiently ensured. Mandates should be clear, precise and realistic. They should be designed according to specific circumstances in a given context. There must be no ambiguity concerning the tasks that should be accomplished.

Creating more clarity in mandates is a way to improve their outcome. Mandates must be focused on protecting civilians and those most vulnerable in conflicts, namely, women, children and the elderly. In our view, the protection of civilians is one of the crucial dimensions of peacekeeping and is often decisive for the success and legitimacy of United Nations peacekeeping operations. The failures and successes of the past must serve as lessons for the future. What happened in Srebrenica 20 years ago is a poignant example that must not be repeated under any circumstances.

We stress the need for the active and meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace processes, including the need to increase their role in decision-making in all areas. We all need to increase our efforts to mainstream gender aspects into peace operations. Promoting respect for human rights also has to be an essential part of conflict prevention and peacekeeping and, as such, should be reflected in the mandates. One of our priorities should be the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. We are particularly concerned about accusations of sexual

exploitation and abuse by several of the peacekeeping troops. It has to be clearly stated that such conduct is unacceptable, that those cases should be thoroughly and rapidly investigated, that such actions must be publicly denounced and that their perpetrators must be held accountable. United Nations personnel are there to protect and help, and any misuse of that noble role must be condemned unequivocally.

The link between security and development should constantly remain in our focus. Once a conflict is contained and the peacekeeping mission proves to be operative in practice, it must be accompanied by timely and clearly defined development efforts. In that context, we see a clear linkage between the Secretary-General's report (A/70/357) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution A/70/1), as well as other review processes. We believe that the parallel review processes of the peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding architecture and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, will provide strategic and operational recommendations that should be read together to create constructive synergy.

Peace operations today encompass a range of operations that take place in all phases of the conflict cycle, including prevention, peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, and reconstruction and development roles. There is a clear linkage between all of those roles, all of which require our attention. Nevertheless, we welcome the Secretary-General's call urging that prevention and mediation be put at the centre of international peace and security efforts and that United Nations tools to prevent and mediate crises be strengthened in order to help create faster and more cost-effective responses to conflicts.

In conclusion, let me say that the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations is the responsibility of all Member States. On our behalf, I can reiterate Croatia's readiness and determination to continue to actively contribute to making United Nations peacekeeping even more effective and efficient. Croatia recently participated in the peacekeeping summit hosted by President Obama, where we announced our new contribution to United Nations peacekeeping efforts, to which we remain committed.

Lastly, let me reiterate our words of gratitude to the Secretary-General for his leadership in preparing the United Nations to rise to the challenges of the future.

**Mr. Menelaou** (Cyprus): Cyprus aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union, and would like to add the following in its national capacity.

We express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (A/70/357) and to the members of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, chaired by Mr. José Ramos-Horta, for their invaluable work and the inclusive and transparent way, in which they accomplished their task.

Cyprus has served as host to a United Nations peacekeeping mission for over 50 years. We therefore have first-hand experience of the evolving nature of United Nations peacekeeping. We are also aware of the fact that for every dimension of the work of the Organization, peacekeeping needs to be harmonized with contemporary challenges in order to effectively respond to present-day needs, while upholding its purposes as defined in the Charter of the United Nations. From that angle, we wish to reflect on several aspects that were identified and then developed in the report, which in our view, should be among the fundamental components of effective peacekeeping.

First, we fully share the position advanced in the report that negotiated political settlements should be the fundamental objective of United Nations peace operations and that such political solutions to conflicts depend ultimately on a country's people and leaders. The United Nations role is, as the report also states, to assist parties to arrive at sustainable political agreements. Let us underline, in that regard, that in discharging that role, the United Nations must be neutral but not neutralized, and that impartiality is not the same as being equidistant between the Charter and resolutions, on the one hand, and illegality, on the other. In the same vein, we consider that sequenced mandates constitute an innovative notion that can strengthen the adjustability of peace operations without outweighing political primacy or overemphasizing methodological considerations.

Secondly, Cyprus fully agrees that human rights, gender equality and the participation of women in peace operations, as well as the humanitarian role of peacekeeping, should be placed at the heart of peace operations and the security agenda. Specifically, with regard to the humanitarian aspects, efforts must be redoubled and resources increased in the area of truth and reconciliation for the purpose of discovering and revealing past wrongdoing.

In conclusion, let me once again express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts and reassure him of our support for more coherent, transparent and effective United Nations peacekeeping.

**Mr. Yoshikawa** (Japan): I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation for the President's leadership in convening today's timely meeting. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his report (A/70/357) and his briefing today. My gratitude also goes to Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations, who is present among us today, and to the other Panel members for their excellent report (see A/70/95).

Two weeks ago, leaders of more than 50 countries and organizations, including my own, discussed United Nations peacekeeping operations at the United Nations, under the chairmanship of President Obama of the United States. My hope is that the momentum created by the leaders' summit on the issue will give a strong impetus to our upcoming intergovernmental discussion on the two reports on United Nations peace operations currently before of us. Before discussing the reports, let me say a few words about United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Although this is not stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations, peacekeeping operations have been an integral part of United Nations activities on peace and security. Because of their excellent results, and the high expectations placed in them, their roles and responsibilities have been expanded. In fact, over the past decade, the number of deployed peacekeepers has doubled, from 65,000 to 123,000. The peacekeeping budget has also increased. For the biennium 2004-2005, it was approximately \$4 billion; the budget 10 years later has hit a historic high of \$8.5 billion. While we can acknowledge the excellent work done by peacekeeping operations in the maintenance of international peace and security in places like Cambodia and Timor-Leste, the challenge we now face is how to make peacekeeping operations sustainable with the limited financial and human resources available.

Fifteen years ago, we were all involved in finalizing a very comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations known as the Brahimi report. I took part in that review. I believe that the most important sentence of the report is the one that says, "But force alone cannot create peace; it can only create the space in which peace may be built" (A/55/305, p. viii). The primary role of military

operations is to create space for the political process to achieve a viable peace.

We should conduct a thorough review of peacekeeping operations that examines the need for each mission based on that criterion. In that context, military missions that have been deployed for a long time should be called into question. I would like to point out that six of the current 16 peacekeeping missions have had military troops deployed for more than a decade; three of those missions have had troops deployed for more than three decades. We all know which missions they are. Are so many years of military presence not sufficient to give the political leaders of the parties to those conflicts the space in which to build peace? If not sufficient, then for how many more years do the peacekeepers need to continue their work? We should continuously check whether the current configuration of peacekeeping missions and other United Nations instruments for international peace and security, including special political missions, are the most effective means for achieving sustainable peace.

The two reports before us today urge that each mission be more adaptive to the situation and needs on the ground. To that end, we need to ensure that the mission's mandate is elaborated in accordance with the reality on the ground and that it is responsive to the changing field situation. The Secretary-General should keep a close eye on developments on the ground and should make timely and realistic recommendations to the Security Council. The Security Council should review each mission's mandate in a timely manner to ensure the effectiveness of the mission's activities. The automatic renewal of mission mandates should be avoided, and the mandates of prolonged missions should be thoroughly reviewed.

We also need to enhance our human resources. Even though highly qualified personnel are necessary for today's peacekeeping operations, we all too often struggle to meet that requirement. There is a pressing need to increase the number of qualified personnel. Training is an indispensable tool for creating qualified peacekeepers. The two reports welcome capacity-building initiatives through so-called triangular partnership arrangements between the Secretariat, troop contributors and third-party countries with specific capabilities. The Department of Field Support and Japan jointly launched a pioneering project for African troop-contributing countries, to which Japan contributed approximately \$40 million for funding

the project and for trainers. In September, the project started trial training in Kenya; full-scale training will follow next year.

Before closing, I regret having to touch on one negative aspect of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Recent allegations of reprehensible sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, particularly the latest allegations in the Central African Republic, have damaged the Organization's integrity and credibility. The bad news is that this is neither the only nor the first such case. Such unacceptable misconduct tarnishes the noble contributions of the more than 100,000 peacekeepers being deployed today. Concrete and robust measures against such unacceptable behaviour are necessary. To that end, Japan strongly supports the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy and calls for the immediate implementation of the measures recommended in his report.

Finally, I would like to mention one point regarding the budgetary issues with respect to all categories of United Nations peace operations, including peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Although the two reports include numerous important initiatives, we are concerned about their possible cost implications. Every single dollar spent by the United Nations comes from the taxpayers of the Member States. We therefore urge the Secretariat to absorb any add-ons, to the greatest extent possible, within the existing resources.

In line with the points that I have raised today, my delegation will proactively contribute to subsequent discussions on the recommendations of the two reports in the relevant bodies of the General Assembly, such as the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Fourth and Fifth Committees.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all field personnel serving in United Nations peace operations and to offer my deepest condolences for those personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

**Mr. Skoog** (Sweden): Sweden aligns itself with the statement made this morning by the observer of the European Union.

Sweden warmly welcomes the opportunity to discuss the very timely review of United Nations peace operations. It has set out important steps, not just towards strengthening United Nations peacekeeping

capabilities, but also towards reforming United Nations responses to challenges to peace and security as a whole. That review, together with the review of the peacebuilding architecture and the global study on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), has created a real momentum for reform, an opportunity that should not be missed.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/70/357) on the future of United Nations peace operations, which takes up many of the recommendations of the excellent work of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. We find the report balanced, constructive and operational. In that regard, we would like to highlight three aspects as we move forward.

First, we particularly welcome the focus on the entire conflict cycle of planning and executing peace operations. Operations should be designed not only to keep the peace but also to facilitate post-conflict peacebuilding, to help prevent lapses and relapses into conflict and to assist with progress towards sustainable peace and development. Also, peacebuilding activities need to be given adequate resources to work effectively. We support the concept of a continuum of peace operations, thereby moving away from the increasingly artificial distinction between traditional peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

Secondly, it is crucial that a gender perspective and the conclusions of the review of resolution 1325 (2000) be integrated into all aspects of United Nations peace operations, throughout mission life cycles and across mandated tasks. Unfortunately, we have a long way to go to achieve that objective, but we nonetheless welcome the Secretary-General's resolve to increase accountability and root out sexual exploitation and abuse among the ranks of United Nations personnel in the field.

Thirdly, partnerships with regional organizations are central to effective international peace and security engagements. As recent history has shown, not least in Africa, regional forces are often faster to deploy and better able to act swiftly and decisively. The African Union (AU) has led the way with its efforts to fully operationalize its African Standby Force. Sweden is already a major supporter of institution and capacity-building endeavours within the African Union and remains fully committed to facilitating further integration between United Nations and AU capabilities.

In conclusion, we must be realistic about the challenges ahead but ambitious in our responses, and we all have a responsibility to see the process through. The Secretary-General's leadership in implementing the recommendations in his report that fall within his remit is crucial, but we would also like to call on the States Members of the United Nations to seize this opportunity to reform the United Nations peace and security architecture in all relevant forums and make it fit to tackle the security challenges of today and tomorrow. Sweden stands ready to do its part in that.

**Mr. Toro-Carnevali** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are very grateful for the convening of today's meeting to discuss the two reports before us.

The report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95) — the “Nyakhat report” — provides us with a profound reflection on the future of the United Nations peacekeeping architecture. While the report makes specific recommendations on how to reform and improve the work of the Organization, its greatest contribution lies in having put on paper the complexity, challenges and the contradictions that face any agenda for reform in this area.

Turning to some concrete examples of such challenges, the report stresses the importance of giving priority to political solutions in the design and deployment of peacekeeping operations, but at the same time recognizes that most conflicts today are more intricate and less conducive to political resolution than formerly. The report urges that peacekeeping operations leave behind the culture of white sport utility vehicles and armoured trucks and focus more on people, on showing a more human face and interacting more with local communities in order to better understand their needs and aspirations. At the same time, however, the report stresses that 90 per cent of political missions and two thirds of peacekeeping operations are deployed in high-risk situations where conflicts are still ongoing and there are serious security concerns for personnel.

The report sees prevention and mediation as playing a key role, with an emphasis on discreet preventive diplomacy that by its nature will go unrecognized if it is successful. At the same time, the report stresses that precisely because such preventive mediation and diplomacy is discreet and quiet, it does not attract

donors' attention and suffers from chronic budget shortfalls.

The report agrees with the view of humanitarian workers that peacekeeping operations must be committed to an maintaining an open dialogue with all parties to a conflict, State and non-State actors alike, and should explore all alternatives to violence. However, it indicates that at times some peacekeeping operations with exceptional mandates can themselves become parties to a conflict, with serious consequences for their impartiality and for the Organization's humanitarian tasks. There are many examples such as these that highlight the deep complexity of peace operations. The Secretary-General's report (A/70/357) makes a significant effort to take the more operational aspects of the Panel's report and translate them into concrete policies, although it does not always follow the Panel's recommendations and sometimes introduces new elements. Both reports are important and should be carefully considered. Privileging one report over the other as the sole source for intergovernmental negotiation processes would be a serious error. Both have much to contribute.

The work on the High-level Panel's report was done transparently and was the product of extensive regional consultations, but its legitimacy, and that of the Secretary-General's report, will depend on the decisions to be adopted by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the only body charged with designing the policies and doctrines that govern those operations, and by other relevant committees of the General Assembly.

**Mr. Alday González** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is grateful for the convening of this meeting to discuss the Secretary-General's report on the future of United Nations peace operations (A/70/357). The recommendations of the Secretary-General and of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, skilfully led by Mr. José Ramos-Horta, along with the seventieth anniversary of the Organization, have given us a unique opportunity to reflect on the role we believe the United Nations should play in international relations in the future. Mexico sees it as a test of the will and commitment of Member States to finding solutions to the multidimensional problems we face, and to formulate and implement solutions to political, security, development, human rights and humanitarian issues.

The world increasingly demands more of the staff of our peacekeeping operations and special political missions, and we the Member States have not been able to agree on providing the Organization with all the resources it needs to discharge its mandate. We believe that, in order to be effective and efficient, the future of peacekeeping operations cannot continue to be subject to unpredictable resource allocation. We therefore urge that immediate steps be taken to improve the situation. We strongly support the clear and convincing recommendation of the High-level Independent Panel for the immediate adoption of measures to set up a special separate account for special political missions, and we regret that the Secretary-General has not placed more emphasis on that proposal in his report (A/70/357).

In our collective efforts, we must acknowledge the growing importance of the role that regional and subregional organizations play in conflict resolution, as well as the relevance — emphasized by the Independent Panel and the Secretary-General — of prevention, providing mediation and favouring political over military solutions, which has been one of the historical pillars of Mexican foreign policy. The General Assembly, the Fourth Committee, the Fifth Committee, and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should, in Mexico's opinion, play an important role in the discussion of all proposals presented in efforts to define any implementation process.

We believe that the innovative solutions referred to by the Secretariat should not contravene the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in that regard, we strongly support, for example, the Independent Panel's recommendation that the mandates for peacekeeping operations not include anti-terrorist activities. At the same time, we cannot allow current conflicts to continue to wreak havoc and past conflicts to return with renewed violence. For my delegation, there is no better investment than to invest in the peace and security of our societies; we all have a global responsibility.

In our discussion, as we carry out an analysis of the future of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, it is essential that we take every possible measure to prevent the recurrence of sexual abuse perpetrated by United Nations personnel and bring to justice all those who have committed it. The most visible face of the United Nations around the world cannot serve as a cover-up for that minority. Accountability must be an imperative, not just an aspiration or a goal.

It is essential that the civil and military personnel of the United Nations behave in a manner consistent with the values of the Organization and that all States that contribute personnel to United Nations operations assume our responsibilities in that matter.

The exercise on which we are embarking today ought to help us to clearly define the road map that will enable us to strengthen the performance and the influence of the Organization in confronting the challenges to international peace and security so that we can save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The delegation of Mexico will continue to participate constructively in the review process as well as in other areas that are being conducted simultaneously, such as the Peacebuilding Commission and the high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000). We hope that those processes generate synergies and will reinforce each other so as to enable the United Nations system to offer the best possible response.

**Ms. Faizunnesa** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The consultation process carried out by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations kicked off in the capital of Bangladesh, Dhaka. Today, we are indeed pleased and encouraged to see that its report (see A/70/95) has been issued in a timely manner. We wish to thank the High-level Panel and welcome its report. We are also particularly thankful for and welcome the Secretary-General's report (A/70/357) presented this morning.

We look forward to the recommendations of the High-level Panel being implemented in an effective way. Bangladesh remains committed to supporting the Secretary-General's initiative in implementing the High-level Panel's report and in addressing the existing and projected gaps in United Nations peace operations. As one of the largest troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and police-contributing countries (PCCs), we consider the High-level Panel's report very important. The Secretary-General has provided a pragmatic road map for implementing the recommendations in the report. We would like to see a full and effective implementation of those recommendations in a transparent manner through the due involvement of the relevant United Nations committees and bodies.

On 28 September, Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,

in her capacity as a host of the 2015 leaders' summit on United Nations peace operations, underscored Bangladesh's strong and steadfast commitment to United Nations peace operations. We shall support efforts aimed at bringing into effect the recommendations of the High-level Panel. We are ready to further engage on the constructive ideas that the Secretary-General has put forward in his report. We would also like to urge that all the TCCs and PCCs be taken on board to participate in discussions and consultations during the implementation process.

We reiterate our full support for the effort to strengthen the hands of the United Nations by providing capable, well-trained and equipped peacekeepers to fulfil the mandated tasks. In that regard, let me share with the Assembly that Bangladesh has a state-of-the-art centre in situ for peace-support operations and training, which is called the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training. We are developing it as a centre of excellence for training peacekeepers, particularly female peacekeepers. With the evolving nature of peace operations, Bangladesh has constantly updated its deployment capabilities. We have demonstrated the capacity to respond to the needs of missions in high-risk conflict nations on very short notice. In Mali, the eastern Congo and the Central African Republic, Bangladesh was the quickest to deploy troops under the Blue Helmets. We aim to promote the protection of civilians and the mainstreaming of gender and human rights issues, as well as to offer language skills to our peacekeepers, through training.

There is an imperative need to have a better system in place to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers. As the Secretary-General's remarks indicated this morning, we must show zero tolerance for sexual misconduct by peacekeepers.

Lastly, we wish to highlight that Bangladesh looks forward to the high-level thematic debate to be convened in May 2016 by the President of the General Assembly. We reiterate our full commitment to the implementation of the High-level Panel's report.

**Mr. Dehghani** (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to thank the President for convening this meeting on an issue of importance to the international community, namely, that of strengthening the United Nations system, and for enabling Member States to express their views on the outcome of the Secretary-General's High-level Independent Panel on

Peace Operations. My thanks also go to Mr. Ramos-Horta, Chair of the High-level Panel, and to the Secretary-General for their valuable reports, contained in documents A/70/95 and A/70/357, respectively.

I align myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

While we are grateful to the troop- and police-contributing countries of the United Nations for their efforts to assist countries in crisis, we should not ignore the shameful actions of some individuals that have tarnished the efforts of tens of thousands of United Nations peacekeepers and other personnel. We must do more to tackle such profound challenges, and we therefore need new approaches, solutions and initiatives to deal with those problems. We appreciate the initiative of the Secretary-General in establishing a high-level panel to review the past practices of the United Nations in its peace operations.

While we attach great importance to the Secretary-General's report and respect his views on how to implement the recommendations in the High-level Panel's report, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran would like to emphasize the following points.

First, we should avoid hasty implementation of the recommendations. Giving them sufficiently careful thought in an appropriate forum is a must if we want to have successful peacekeeping operations in the future.

Second, we stress the importance of the General Assembly's role as the most democratic organ of the United Nations where peacekeeping operations are concerned. The Assembly has the primary role and responsibility for formulating concepts, policies and budgetary decisions relating to peacekeeping operations. In that regard, I would like to point out that, in accordance with paragraph 20 of the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/68/19), the Special Committee is the only United Nations forum mandated to review comprehensively the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

Third, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran fully supports strengthening and enhancing the capacity of the United Nations in the fields of peacemaking, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, mediation and so forth, with the aim of maintaining international peace and security.

Fourth, in all United Nations peacekeeping operations, we must respect the principles of the sovereign equality, political independence and territorial integrity of all States and of non-intervention in matters that are essentially within States' domestic jurisdiction.

Fifth, it is vital that we observe the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in all peace operations, along with the basic principles for such operations that have guided them thus far, namely, the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence. They remain valid and relevant, and must be fully preserved.

Sixth, we must take great care when considering the adoption of any new concepts aimed at addressing emerging needs and demands emanating from the complexity of peacekeeping operations. Any such concepts should be formulated and agreed on by the entire United Nations membership through a relevant intergovernmental process.

Seventh, any contribution in support of a host country in its restoration or establishment of the rule of law should take into account national ownership as well as the cultural diversity and specificity of each country.

Eighth, the role of host countries in formulating and implementing activities relating to the peacebuilding process should be fully recognized.

Ninth, the protection of civilians is the primary responsibility of the host country and should not be used as a pretext for military intervention in countries that are in a state of conflict or emerging from conflict.

Tenth, primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the United Nations, and the role of regional arrangements and agencies in that regard should accord with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Eleventh, we need to take full account of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the staffing and structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

Twelfth, the United Nations should use the available capacities of the whole membership in peace operations, including in the areas of the military, police, civilians and logistics. Any requests from the Secretariat for contributions from Member States to peacekeeping missions should, therefore, be transparent

and be extended to all current and potential troop- and police-contributing countries.

Thirteenth, the Islamic Republic of Iran fully supports efforts to restore the quest for peaceful political settlements to the centre of United Nations efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts.

Lastly, it is also essential that we give full attention to the root causes of conflicts, since it is clear that prevention is possible only if the root causes are known.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's commitment to supporting any endeavour aimed at peacemaking, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and mediation and to fully cooperating and working constructively with the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and all Member States in that regard.

**Mr. Zehnder** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the President for organizing this important debate. In the wake of the work of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95) and the publication of the Secretary-General's report on the recommendations of the High-level Panel (A/70/357), it is essential that we maintain the current momentum in order to strengthen the United Nations peacekeeping and conflict-prevention architecture. At this point, instead of deeply into the rich subject matter before us, Switzerland we will simply make some general remarks on the two reports and on the way forward.

Switzerland welcomes the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and looks forward to the implementation of its recommendations. The High-level Panel was able to provide a balanced analysis and a set of recommendations that should be carefully examined. That was made possible, in particular, by extensive consultations among all of the stakeholders involved in peace operations, including Member States.

Switzerland also welcomes the report of the Secretary-General, which further elaborates the fundamental challenges that often significantly impede the effective functioning of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, which include, inter alia, the lack of resources in certain areas and the lack of adequate structures and procedures. We welcome the conclusion of the Secretary-General expressed in his three priorities. They pave the way forward for both political solutions and improved administration.

To implement the recommendations effectively, it is advisable to develop a road map that appropriately sets out the tasks of the various United Nations bodies, including the Secretariat, and the areas of responsibility of the Security Council and Member States in the implementation of the recommendations. Such a road map would outline the various stages of implementation of the recommendations.

In that context, Switzerland shares the view expressed in the report that only a joint approach

will lead to the effective implementation of the recommendations. Indeed, no single entity will be able to address the current challenges to peace and security. Close cooperation throughout the United Nations system and the establishment of ongoing partnerships between the various competent agencies and actors is essential.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*