



# Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

## 7247<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 21 August 2014, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Sir Mark Lyall Grant/Mr. Wilson . . . . .	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina . . . . .	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia . . . . .	Ms. King
	Chad . . . . .	Mr. Cherif
	Chile . . . . .	Mr. Barros Melet
	China . . . . .	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France . . . . .	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan . . . . .	Ms. Kawar
	Lithuania . . . . .	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg . . . . .	Mr. Flies
	Nigeria . . . . .	Mr. Sarki
	Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda . . . . .	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Klein

## Agenda

### Maintenance of international peace and security

#### Conflict prevention

Letter dated 5 August 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/572)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Maintenance of international peace and security**

#### **Conflict prevention**

#### **Letter dated 5 August 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/572)**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Navanethem Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/572, which contains the text of a letter dated 5 August 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to warmly welcome His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to whom I now give the floor.

**The Secretary-General:** I thank the United Kingdom presidency for convening this important debate.

Before I begin, allow me to pay tribute to an outstanding United Nations leader who joins us for the last time as High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay. As the Secretary-General — and I believe Council members as well — I have benefitted from her honest views and unvarnished reports on the terrible human rights abuses we confront in our world. High Commissioner Pillay tells it like she sees it. When people face discrimination and human rights abuses, they know Navi Pillay is their advocate. Where others may wish to avoid certain issues, Navi Pillay speaks forthrightly, without fear. I am sure the Council joins me in wishing her well in her next chapter. I have no doubt that she will remain a key voice on the issues facing the Security Council and humankind. I am very proud and grateful to have worked with her during the past six years. I am sure she will remain an outstanding leader and honorary ambassador of the United Nations in defending human rights. I wish her all the best.

As Secretary-General, one of my core priorities is to improve the Organization's ability to act early and act preventively. We know that, if we do not address emerging crises, they risk becoming bigger and costlier for all. Today's debate takes place as the world is gripped by multiple violent conflicts. That highlights the enormity of the challenge of prevention, and the need to re-examine and refine our approach.

This year, we mark the one hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War, which left an estimated 17 million dead. It was called the war to end all wars. Yet in the same generation, a second World War would claim another 60 million lives. The United Nations rose from the ashes of that devastation with a mission to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We can take heart, even at this bleak moment, that over the past quarter century wars between States have become rare.

Yet we cannot speak of positive trends when we look at Syria, Iraq, Gaza, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Ukraine and elsewhere. Conflicts continue to exact an unacceptable toll. Events around the world today clearly demonstrate the changing nature and complexity of contemporary conflict. Many countries face repeated cycles of turmoil. Civil wars are no longer contained by national borders. Complex

threat environments tend to emerge in contexts of state fragility, extreme poverty, weak institutions, a lack of unifying leadership, porous borders and marginalized populations. Terrorism and organized crime fuel violence and instability. Distinctions between terrorists, armed opposition and criminal enterprises are blurring. Such evolving patterns of violence pose a major challenge to our prevention work. Are our common tools fit for the purpose? What must we do better? How can we anticipate what lies ahead? The Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has a unique responsibility.

Hard-won experience has taught us a number of lessons about what works in prevention — allow me to highlight five points.

First, being present early is essential. I speak not just about early warning, but also about early action: quickly mobilizing effective and unified diplomatic action to defuse tensions in order to urge restraint and to open up space for dialogue before perspectives become hardened and more hostile. In recent cases, the United Nations has played an important role in providing parties with a ladder to climb down from polarized positions.

It is said that no news is good news. In many cases the opposite is true — good news is no news. Because of their very success, such cases do not make the headlines. But they nevertheless demand our attention and resources. It takes our collective leadership and courage to address seemingly far-off, simmering problems, particularly when one may never get proof of the value of that investment. We surely have plenty of proof of the cost of not doing so.

Secondly, we must hone our skills. Conflict-prevention and mediation are complex and increasingly specialized fields. We have made strides in building up expertise that is high-quality, rapidly deployable and in great demand — in contexts as varied as peace negotiations, constitutional reforms, electoral processes and national dialogues.

Thirdly, partnerships are crucial. We can succeed only if we build coalitions. I am encouraged by the number of new peace and security initiatives that have grown out of our strategic partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in the Sahel, the Great Lakes region, the Central African Republic and elsewhere.

Fourthly, we must learn from collective mistakes. My Rights up Front initiative places human rights considerations at the very centre of United Nations efforts in the field, at Headquarters and in our discourse with Member States. It seeks to ensure that we avoid the systemic failures of the past and recognize that human rights violations are early-warning signals of mass atrocities.

Fifthly, perhaps most important, comes leverage. The Secretary-General can draw on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and use the power of persuasion. Those are powerful tools in their own right, and they reflect a shared understanding among Member States. But to be effective they require that the international community be closely aligned, empowering the Secretary-General to speak on behalf of a common voice.

When Member States join forces, we can achieve much. The Council's consensus on removing chemical weapons from Syria is one recent case in point. Even modest United Nations actions can have an important impact when we have the Security Council's united support — speaking with one voice — for early engagement. However, when consensus is limited or when our actions come late and address only the lowest common denominator, the consequences can be measured in terrible loss of life, grave human suffering and tremendous loss of credibility for the Council and our institution.

No more important challenge stands before us than improving our ability to reach stronger and earlier consensus. It is time for a new era of collaboration, cooperation and action from the Security Council. There are millions of people around the world hoping for, and counting on, decisive joint action by the one and only global body entrusted with the obligation to maintain international peace and security.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Pillay.

**Ms. Pillay:** Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to interact with the Security Council a few days before the end of my term. I also thank the Secretary-General for his very kind words and for his support for my mandate, without which we would not have been able to advance as we have.

Conflict-prevention is complex, but it can be achieved. In many States, democratic institutions de-escalate disputes long before they reach the boiling point. Even after violence has broken out, international actors can help broker and enforce peace. In my own country, South Africa, the United Nations helped end 300 years of injustice when it declared apartheid a crime against humanity and imposed sanctions, and democratic institutions were installed to resolve future disputes.

In Nepal, following almost a decade of armed conflict, my Office's efforts included the deployment of both short- and long-term strategies. They included support for Constituent Assembly elections, capacity-building for police and civil society and important Government initiatives, such as addressing caste-based discrimination.

Following the 2007 massacres in Guinea — a country at high risk of violence and civil war — the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) demonstrated the criticality of early engagement, notably in building civil society's capacity to investigate and document human rights violations. There was coherent action by national, regional and international actors, and the Council established a commission of inquiry. Today OHCHR's country office continues to support stronger institutions, transitional justice and reconciliation.

In Colombia, the United Nations efforts to promote human rights and our capacity-building for democratic culture and institutions helped to establish a climate of respectful dialogue. A transitional justice process included compensation for victims and a truth commission. We facilitated high-level governmental recognition of indigenous authorities. Mediation helped contain local disputes. One particular good practice that merits highlighting is Colombia's unique early-warning system to detect and prevent violations of human rights.

Human rights are always central to conflict-prevention. Patterns of violations, including sexual violence, provide early warning of escalation. The human-rights agenda is also a detailed road map for ways to resolve disputes. My Office's years of practical experience, including through human-rights components of peacekeeping missions, demonstrate a number of good practices that address both proximate triggers of conflict and root causes. To emphasize three, let me cite strengthening civil society actors, increasing participation by women in decision-making

and dialogue and addressing institutional and individual accountability for past violations of human rights.

Yet, as the Secretary-General has pointed out, the conflict in Syria is metastasizing outwards in an uncontrollable process whose eventual limits we cannot predict. Other complex and potentially highly eruptive conflicts are under way in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, the occupied Palestinian territory, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Ukraine. Those crises hammer home the full cost of the international community's failure to prevent conflict. They combine massive bloodshed and devastation of infrastructure with acutely destabilizing transnational phenomena, including terrorism, the proliferation of prohibited weaponry, organized crime and spoliation of natural resources.

None of those crises erupted without warning. They built up over years — and sometimes decades — of human rights grievances: deficient or corrupt governance and judicial institutions, discrimination and exclusion, inequities in development, the exploitation and denial of economic and social rights and the repression of civil society and public freedoms. Early detection systems, such as the 51 special procedures experts of the Human Rights Council, and systematic scrutiny by treaty bodies repeatedly alerted us to those shortfalls. Therefore, although the specifics of each crisis could not necessarily be predicted, many of the human rights violations that were at their core were known. They could have been addressed.

That was, in the first place, the duty of the relevant States. But when Governments are unwilling or unable to protect their people, it is the responsibility of the international community and, singularly, the Security Council, to intervene and to deploy the range of good offices, support, inducements and coercion at its disposal to defuse the triggers of conflict.

The Council's interest in human rights increased markedly during my tenure. But despite repeated briefings regarding escalating violations in multiple crises by OHCHR and other human rights mechanisms, there has not always been a firm and principled decision by members of the Council to put an end to crises. Short-term geopolitical considerations and national interests, narrowly defined, have repeatedly taken precedence over intolerable human suffering and grave breaches of and long-term threats to international peace and security. I firmly believe that greater responsiveness by

the Council would have saved hundreds of thousands of lives.

A broader conception of national interest would be more appropriate to a century in which a growing number of challenges face humankind as a whole. In those terms, the use of the veto to stop actions intended to prevent or defuse conflict is a short-term and ultimately counterproductive tactic. The collective interest, defined clearly by the Charter of the United Nations, is in the national interests of every State.

State sovereignty is often invoked to deflect United Nations action to prevent serious human rights violations. But as I have often said to the representatives of Governments: “You made the law; now you must observe it”. Sovereign States established the United Nations and built the international human rights framework precisely because they knew that human rights violations caused conflict and undermined sovereignty. Early United Nations action to address human rights protects States by warding off the threat of devastating violence.

The Council can take a number of innovative approaches to prevent threats to international peace and security. Within the Rights Up Front initiative, the Secretary-General can be even more proactive in alerting it to potential crises, including situations that are not formally on its agenda. To further strengthen early warning, the Council could also ask for more regular and comprehensive human rights reporting by protection actors. For example, my successor as High Commissioner could provide an informal monthly briefing.

The work done by commissions of inquiry to establish clarity and prepare accountability should be followed by Council implementation of many more of their recommendations for follow-up. I trust that, in future, the commissions too will benefit from regular, official channels of communications with the Council.

Finally, the Council could adopt a standing consensus on a menu of possible new responses to violations alerts, such as rapid, flexible and resource-efficient human rights monitoring missions, limited in time and scope. Another innovative option could build on the new Arms Trade Treaty, which requires arms exporters and importers to confirm that weapons will not be used to commit violations. States parties could agree that, where there are concerns about human rights in States that purchase arms, one condition of sale would be that

they accept a small human rights monitoring team with deployment funded by the Treaty’s trust fund.

The laws of the United Nations are most needed when conflict looms, and the Council has the mandate to address crises before they escalate into threats to international peace and security.

It has been an honour to serve the United Nations.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Pillay for her powerful briefing this morning.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2014/605, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Australia, Chad, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

Argentina, Australia, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America

**The President:** There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2171 (2014).

Before we proceed with statements, I would like to recall that, in accordance with the provisions of note S/2010/507, which encourages both members and non-members of the Council to deliver their statements in five minutes or less, it is our intention to use the flashing light on the collar of the speaker’s microphone to indicate when five minutes have elapsed. I shall strongly encourage both members and non-members of the Council to conclude their remarks promptly once the five minutes have elapsed.

I wish to inform all concerned that we will be carrying on this open debate through the lunch hour, as we have a large number of speakers who wish to participate.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Kingdom.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their compelling and frank briefings today. I also pay tribute to the exceptional work of Navi Pillay during her time in office. Ms. Pillay has been fiercely and fearlessly independent and principled. Her presence today at this conflict-prevention debate reinforces the critical link between peace, security and human rights.

This month, the world commemorates the start of the First World War. We recall with grief and horror the devastation that that and subsequent conflicts have inflicted upon humankind, ravaging societies and States. Last week in Belgium we discussed whether we might have prevented the First World War had the Security Council existed in 1914. My answer: not unless the Council was prepared to take conflict prevention more seriously than it currently does. Today's debate is an opportunity for the Council to reflect upon its role in preventing conflict and to recall the moral, humanitarian and political imperatives of early preventive action.

The nature of conflict has changed in the past 20 years. Intra-State conflicts with complex root causes have largely replaced conflicts between States. Because of the international dimensions of such conflicts, the Council's agenda is full and our capacity is stretched.

Yet we seem to have forgotten that prevention is better than cure. The Council cannot continue to act only in crisis mode. The Council was designed to be a smoke detector, not just a fire extinguisher. That is clear from Articles 1 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations and from its Chapter VI.

There are two main reasons that we have sometimes failed to act on early warnings. First, the root causes of brewing civil wars are complex; it can be hard to predict exactly when they will flare. The answer to that is regular and timely briefings on early-warning indicators from early-warning actors across the United Nations system. Secondly, the Council is being constrained by a perceived tension between the principle of sovereignty and its conflict-prevention role. However, the true enemy of sovereignty is conflict itself, as Ms. Pillay has just said. Conflicts can shatter States and divide peoples. In contrast, early cooperation with, and support from, United Nations or regional conflict-prevention tools can bolster State sovereignty. A good example of that was the deployment to Nepal in 2005 of a small civilian team, which supported the Nepalese in ending conflict and launching a Nepalese-led peace process.

While the Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, many actors have a role to play. Flexibility is key. Like many other things, peace and security begin at home. Individual States must develop the key foundations for minimizing, managing and resolving tensions and for respect for human rights, democracy and strong institutions founded on the rule of law. At the United Nations, we need more horizon-scanning and early discussion of potential conflicts. We must make better use of the conflict-prevention tools listed in Chapter VI of the Charter, including negotiation and mediation, as the Secretary-General has just reminded us.

We have had some successes. The proactive engagement of Said Djinnit and the United Nations Office for West Africa in Guinea has had a clear stabilizing impact. In Yemen, unanimous Council support for the good offices of United Nations Special Adviser Jamal Benomar has helped paved the way for peaceful, if fragile, transition.

But our success rate is patchy at best. Resolution 2171 (2014), which we adopted today, recognizes the cyclical nature of conflict and the key role that United Nations regional offices, special political missions, peacekeeping operations and regional and subregional organizations can play in breaking that cycle. Peacebuilding is a thread that must be woven into all such activities.

Another core element of resolution 2171 (2014) is the recognition that serious violations of human rights can be an indicator of conflict, as well as a consequence of conflict. The use of rape as a weapon of war can exacerbate conflict as well as ravage lives. That point was made with characteristic clarity by Sergio Vieira de Mello, whose tragic killing we commemorated two days ago. He observed that what was missing in geopolitics was the recognition that flagrant and systematic violations of human rights were frequently the principle cause of global insecurity.

In order to break the cycle of conflict, accountability, including for the most egregious crimes, is therefore critical. Societies must heal, and future perpetrators must be deterred. For moral, political and humanitarian reasons, the United Kingdom fully supports the Secretary-General's drive to put rights up front. He has called upon his staff to act with moral courage by reporting early-warning signs of human rights violations. The Council must display the same moral courage by heeding and acting upon all early

signs it receives from the Secretary-General and United Nations protection actors.

As the threats the world faces change and as our understanding of the root causes of conflict deepens, our collective security system needs to adapt. As we seek to plan for tomorrow while managing the crises of today, the Council must consider the best preventive medicine and who should administer it. In short, the Council needs to switch from a culture of reaction to a mindset of conflict prevention. Only then shall we properly fulfil the responsibility given to us by the Charter of the United Nations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

**Mr. Flies** (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General for his presentation. Allow me also to take this opportunity to warmly thank the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, for what is doubtless her last appearance before the Security Council.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be made later by the observer of the European Union.

Over the past few months we have witnessed one conflict after another, some more deadly than the others. Faced with the annihilation of so many human lives and such misery and suffering, there is reason to ask ourselves whether the solemn promise that accompanied the founding of the United Nations has been kept. Yes, successive generations have been spared the scourge of worldwide war, but not the numerous conflicts that in many areas of the world continue to destroy the lives of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of men, women and children.

With that in mind, it becomes all the more pressing to ask whether everything has really been put in place to prevent such conflicts. Today's open debate and resolution 2171 (2014), which we have just adopted, are therefore timely, and I would like to congratulate the United Kingdom for having taken this initiative.

Even if we are sometimes caught off guard by the emergence of a crisis situation, no conflict arrives without warning signs. Training ourselves to recognize them, analyse them and understand them in order to take the most appropriate and effective measures to prevent a situation from degenerating into open conflict — that, in a few words, is the essence of conflict prevention. In reality, such an undertaking is complex and requires

the coordinated implementation of many tools and multiple actors.

Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations enumerates the tools that States and the Security Council can use to bring about the peaceful resolution of disputes. Those tools are well known and include, inter alia, negotiation, investigation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. Those instruments have not always been fully utilized in the context of conflict prevention. We welcome the fact that, with today's resolution, the Council has committed itself to making better use of them.

But we must also look beyond current conflicts, beyond those already on the Security Council's agenda, to recognize the signs that alert us to emerging ones, keeping in mind that prevention is easier than cure. We know that most conflicts are preceded by a significant degradation of the human rights situation. The Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative belongs in that context, and we welcome it. We welcome it not only because it places the question of human rights at the heart of the activities of the United Nations system, but also because its goal is to better inform Member States about populations that are suffering serious human rights violations or violations of international humanitarian law, or are at risk for that, and thus to contribute actively to the conflict-prevention effort.

The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect also have a crucial role to play in that context. The very notion of the responsibility to protect, as defined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), is inseparable from the setting up of an early-warning mechanism. The Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect fulfil that role for the Secretary-General, but also for the Security Council and the international community as a whole. The Council would benefit from inviting them more often to report on their work.

By virtue of the provisions of the Charter, the Secretary-General likewise can contribute to conflict prevention, in particular by drawing the Council's attention to any matter that could jeopardize international peace and security. That prerogative, which is granted him by Article 99 of the Charter, allows him particularly to broaden the horizon of the Council. We strongly encourage the Secretary-General to continue to employ that important tool.

Conflict prevention that is worthy of that name cannot ignore the cyclical nature of conflicts related to the root causes that trigger and maintain tensions — poverty, discrimination, a lack of the rule of law, and impunity, to name but a few. The Peacebuilding Commission, established nearly 10 years ago under the auspices of the Security Council and the General Assembly, has an important role to play in preventing a relapse into a situation of conflict and in supporting countries emerging from conflict towards sustainable peace. It is another significant tool in the prevention architecture.

In this year of commemoration of the centenary of the Great War, it is natural that we consider the causes of past conflicts. However, that should also prompt us to look ahead and convince us of the need to make every effort not to repeat past mistakes. Today we have available means that were inconceivable a century ago. It is up to the Council to use those tools by focusing on action, not only on reaction. Maintaining international peace and security also involves the more important aspect of conflict prevention.

**Mr. Liu Jieyi (China)** (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the initiative of the United Kingdom to organize today's meeting. We support the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2171 (2014). I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms. Pillay for their briefings.

In the history of humankind, war and conflicts have brought untold suffering and loss to peoples throughout the world. They have always hampered social development and progress. Preventing conflicts and the recurrence of disasters has always been a common objective of the international community. The foundation of the United Nations fully embodies the joint commitment of Member States to prevent the recurrence of conflict and war. At the heart of the collective security mechanism, the Council has actively worked to prevent conflict and has played an important role in preventing and limiting the escalation of some regional conflicts.

At the same time, owing to the interlinking security threats and challenges, the nature and manifestation of conflict are increasingly complex. We should ponder about how to prevent the emergence and escalation of conflicts under the new circumstances and how to stop

post-conflict countries from sliding back into conflict, I would like to emphasize the following four points.

First, the Charter of the United Nations is the cornerstone of conflict prevention. The Charter stipulates that Member States bear the primary responsibility for conflict prevention. Any action taken by the international community, including the United Nations, to prevent conflict should comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter and respect the ownership of the countries concerned, seek to support their efforts and take the understanding and cooperation of those countries into account. In undertaking actions to prevent conflicts, priority should be given to peaceful means, such as dialogue, negotiation and mediation. Forceful measures can be only a last resort and must meet the conditions provided for by the Charter.

Secondly, a locally adapted approach is a necessary condition for successful conflict prevention. Countries have different national conditions and there are complex and diverse causes of conflict. There is no one-size-fits-all approach for conflict prevention. Measures must be adapted to the local conditions of the countries concerned. Adopting conflict prevention approaches that are not based on reality is often problematic and ineffective. When actions such as early warning are undertaken to prevent conflicts, reliable early-warning information should be acquired in a timely way. The differences among countries in terms of their history, ethnic composition, religion and social and economic development should be fully taken into account in order to prevent hasty interventions that could affect efforts to achieve the peaceful settlement of a conflict.

Thirdly, tackling the root causes is the key to conflict prevention. Ethnic and religious tensions, a lack of development, poverty and weak capacities can all lead to sectarian tensions and exacerbate social problems or even give rise to bloodshed. Conflict prevention should address both the root causes and the symptoms and should address the fundamental political, economic, social, cultural and other problems. Through an inclusive political dialogue, it should promote a national reconciliation process and establish a peaceful environment that is conducive to social harmony and ethnic unity.

The United Nations and the international financial and development institutions should vigorously support developing countries, in particular post-conflict countries, in achieving economic and social

development, in increasing their capacity-building and in promoting social cohesion, peace, reconciliation and unity in order to prevent the emergence of discrimination and rivalry.

Fourthly, the international community should strengthen its coordination and cooperation in order to ensure smooth conflict prevention efforts. The relevant United Nations bodies should fully utilize their respective advantages and potential and act in a coordinated and consistent way in accordance with their mandates. They should assist Member States and regional organizations, such as the African Union, in capacity-building and conflict prevention and support such States in playing a leading role in developing concepts and adopting policies in that regard. They should also help States to assess their experience and to explore effective conflict-prevention strategies. In an international community, of which we are all members, promoting democratic international relations that abide by the principle of the rule of law is very important for conflict prevention.

Sixty years ago, China, India and Myanmar jointly advocated the five principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. Over the past 60 years, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, as a transparent and inclusive principle of international law, have fully embodied the values of sovereignty, justice, democracy and the rule of law. They have significantly contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security, safeguarding the interests and rights of developing countries and working for a new reasonable and fair kind of international relations.

China will continue to implement the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, to work with all parties to support the United Nations and the Security Council in playing their due role in preventing conflict and to make our own contribution to the achievement of the common security and lasting peace of the world.

**Mr. Barros Melet** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile thanks the presidency of the United Kingdom for having convened this open debate. We also thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings. We are grateful to the High Commissioner for her tireless efforts in the difficult task of protecting and promoting human rights.

Chile supported resolution 2171 (2014), recently adopted, because it reaffirms the obligation of States to settle their international disputes through the peaceful means provided for by the Charter of the United Nations or by other peaceful means. That contributes to the maintenance of international peace and security and to conflict prevention. All such actions should take place under the principle of the free choice of States and the strictest respect for international law and existing international treaties. That is how we should interpret paragraph 4 of the resolution.

At the same time, we regret the fact that the resolution did not include in its text the right to the truth, enshrined in the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Chile knows that it is on the basis of the truth and by dealing with the root causes of conflicts that true reconciliation is achieved, while making it possible to prevent future conflicts.

The early prevention and warning of conflicts should be considered in a multidimensional approach, linking sustainable peace and security with important objectives such as attaining the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion and protection of human rights as a whole. National, subregional, regional and international efforts must be seen as an integrated whole in order to respond to indicators of instability and the threat of conflict. The United Nations, in particular the Security Council, must be an integral part of that approach. A multidimensional approach to conflict prevention and settlement must include the gender perspective, which is key to ensuring a lasting peace. If incorporated in the formulation of policies, programmes and laws, such a perspective would guarantee greater cohesion and social peace.

We reiterate the obligation of all States to resolve their international disputes through peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and in strict respect for international law and existing international treaties. We highlight in particular the work of international courts — primarily the International Court of Justice, which is the main judicial organ of the United Nations — given their work to resolve international disputes submitted to their jurisdiction and their function of issuing advisory opinions on legal matters. We also value the work done by important specialized courts such as the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, by regional human rights courts such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, by

ad hoc international tribunals and by the International Criminal Court. We also highlight the work of by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in resolving various disputes, including territorial disputes concerning treaties and respect for human rights and international law.

In that regard, strengthening the rule of law can be seen as one of the most important tools for stability. We highlight the Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels (General Assembly resolution 67/1), adopted on 24 September 2012, in particular its paragraph 28, in which the contribution of the Security Council to the rule of law at the international level is recognized.

Cooperation is crucial to achieving everything to which I have referred. In that connection, we reiterate our support for strengthening political, social and economic cooperation mechanisms, which would finally make it possible to ensure international peace and security.

**Mr. Klein** (United States of America): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this important discussion. I also thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their insightful and informative briefings. I also thank the High Commissioner for her service to the United Nations and to the cause of human rights.

The United Nations was established in the wake of two devastating world wars, with the intent of saving future generations from the scourge of such conflict. Now the United Nations, including the Security Council, remains the focal point for the maintenance of international peace and security. Yet we look out at a world mired in crisis and conflict.

The complex conflicts of today increasingly involve heavily armed non-State actors, some of whom are infused with extremist ideologies. Those actors push clashes across borders, traffic illicit goods, undermine Governments and destabilize entire regions. While the international community did not fully imagine such conflicts at the inception of the United Nations, the United Nations system has nonetheless developed ever more nimble and well-suited tools to respond to the early warning signs of conflict and instability. Today's debate offers us a valuable chance to broaden our focus beyond the crisis of the day and to think strategically

about how we can better leverage United Nations tools now and in the future to prevent conflict.

In that connection, the United States commends efforts by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to monitor and analyse political developments around the world and to alert the Security Council and the international community about brewing crises. For example, last year, Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco warned the Council that heightened frictions around an election dispute in the Maldives could lead to violence. Calls for restraint by high-ranking United Nations officials coupled, with the Assistant Secretary-General's visit to the Maldives the week before the elections, helped to usher in a peaceful transfer of power. In that vein, we welcome DPA's continued efforts to deepen its analysis, work with other United Nations offices and take measures to identify potential triggers of violence.

The Department of Political Affairs has also used active responses to potential conflict scenarios through its regional political missions. In Guinea, for example, the United Nations, with the savvy diplomacy of Said Djinnit, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Office for West Africa at the time, engaged successfully in mediation efforts ahead of the 2013 legislative elections after recognizing key warning signs of potential conflict.

Likewise, we welcome DPA's Standby Team of Mediation Experts. The demand for such experts has increased every year since the Team's inception. Mediators are playing a critical role in peaceful dispute resolution in Africa's Great Lakes region and in Mali, where mediators have facilitated the difficult reconciliation process between Bamako and northern rebel groups.

At the same time, dozens of United Nations special envoys, political missions, mediators and good offices of the Secretary-General work tirelessly to bridge political differences. There is a common thread for successful missions: they need sound and credible leadership, strong mandates and monitoring and reporting capacity on potential drivers and flashpoints of conflict. We now need better mechanisms for recognizing the earliest signs and for delivering the right prevention tools at every stage of a conflict to address root causes, end impunity and save lives.

One key aspect of that is peacebuilding. In each Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) country-specific

configuration, the PBC coordinates efforts to build national political, economic, judicial and civil society institutions. In Burundi, the PBC Chair's regular engagement with local leaders has helped to highlight potential flashpoints, such as problematic practices by Burundian leadership, that have the potential to exacerbate societal frictions and result in violence in the run-up to elections.

This year's headlines also remind us that serious human rights abuses, including sexual violence, can be an early indication of imminent conflict, as well as a consequence of it. The horrible accounts of abduction, detention, rape, murder and other acts of violence against women in Iraq at the hands of the militants of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and in Nigeria by Boko Haram appal and concern us greatly. Supporting the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the efforts of the High Commissioner on Human Rights is an essential tool in addressing and preventing such injustices.

Finally, we welcome today's resolution 2171 (2014), on conflict prevention. We share a common responsibility to do everything in our power to pursue sustainable solutions to disputes and prevent violence and bloodshed. It is indeed the reason the Council was created.

**Mr. Cherif** (Chad) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay for their statements. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this debate and to congratulate it for presenting the resolution on the maintenance of international peace and security that we just adopted unanimously (resolution 2171 (2014)). Chad took part in the negotiation of the resolution and sponsored it. Its adoption by the Council has refreshed our memory on the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations on the topic of conflict prevention.

It is clear that a lack of efficiency or a certain laxness in utilizing conflict prevention mechanisms or the inability to discern the elements that are precursors to a conflict have often meant that the United Nations must face a situation of *fait accompli*. In many cases, the United Nations — and the Security Council in particular, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security — takes action only after the outbreak of hostilities. As highlighted in the

concept note (S/2014/572, annex), no one imagined at the time that when a young Tunisian street vendor, Tarek al-Tayeb Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself on fire that he was going to unleash the Arab Spring. Yet the early indicators and precursors were already visible in that country five years before. There was therefore plenty of time to prevent such an event.

Nothing can justify the silence, inertia and inability of the Security Council to prevent a conflict when it has the specific powers to do so. Cycles of violence imposed on children, women and elderly people around the world amply show that we have learned nothing from history, even as we commemorate the most heinous crimes in the history of humankind.

All of us have deplored the laxity of our institution and the inaction of the international community in the management of the Rwandan genocide. But that did not prevent the onset or worsening of the violence in Gaza, Syria, Iraq, Central Africa, Ukraine and elsewhere. Faced with the many conflicts shaking the world today, we are justified in thinking that the United Nations is far from fulfilling its primary mission to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. That sad fact should prompt the Security Council to break out of its customary mode, which boils down to adopting resolutions and sanctions, and use the powers conferred upon it by the Charter of the United Nations and use all the means at its disposal to better prevent conflicts and maintain peace and security in the world.

Chad welcomes the Council's initiative to organize missions made up of Permanent Representatives to countries in conflict in order to take in the reality on the ground. It is important that the Council develops a new comprehensive and inclusive approach to conflict prevention that takes the human development of States as the focus of its actions, while as much as possible avoiding possible outside interference that may cause an artificial conflict with incalculable consequences.

We also believe that the weaknesses of the Council are due in part to the frequent use of the veto by the permanent members, as well as the lack of shared vision in the deployment of peacekeeping operations. We believe that the maintenance of peace and security should not be seen simply in terms of a mechanism to prevent imminent conflict, but rather as an early-warning system that can detect causes of conflict. The United Nations would not have to expend huge efforts to manage crises around the world if good conflict prevention policy were adopted. In a speech at

UNESCO in 2012, former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali rightly stated that

“These conflicts, whose settlement is often long, difficult and complex, are not unpredictable. Most of them simmer for a long time before exploding, and those latent tensions are known to all. But it is clear that the international community only rarely mobilizes itself to contain them when there is still time to do so.”

The Security Council needs more than ever to improve the current trend in conflict prevention and maintaining international peace and security. The contradictions in that regard are among the causes of the Council's ineffectiveness. Strategic interests have long defined the world into spheres of influence, making it difficult or impossible to take decisions in certain situations. That is the case when it comes to many conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere, where all the symptoms are evident. Abuses and massive violations of human rights committed in some countries have been well known but, for unspoken reasons, they have been allowed to reach a climax.

Yet many initiatives have been taken at the United Nations, especially by the Secretary-General. But the results do not meet the expectations, owing to a lack of synergy in the efforts of the various organs. Furthermore, there is no real assessment tool to better measure the effectiveness of the efforts made. We think that the Security Council could increase its effectiveness by developing close cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the area of conflict prevention and maintaining peace and security.

With regard to Africa, the African Union is one of the largest organizations after the United Nations, with similar bodies, the most important being the Peace and Security Council. And at the subregional level we have, among others, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of the West African States. Under the auspices of the African Union, those organizations promote the search for peace and security by doing prevention work, which has sometimes proven effective.

We commend the existing cooperation in the framework of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. That model could also be extended to other areas of tension in the world — for example, cooperation with the League of Arab States, when it

comes to the problems in the Middle East, or with the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Council must use the sources of information available to it to increase its effectiveness in a country. To that end, the periodic reports of human rights organizations, women's groups and other civil society organizations provide indicators and warning signs in the respective countries that may help prevent conflicts. United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization and UNICEF, also inform the United Nations daily on the situations in different countries. As a principal organ of the United Nations system, the Security Council can effectively assist the Secretary-General, his Special Representatives and Envoys by taking firm, impartial and relevant decisions.

The ineffectiveness of the United Nations is in part rooted in the fact that the Secretary-General is simply reduced to playing an administrative role with no real means of coercion. In that regard, the Security Council's support for the Secretary-General would allow him and his team to better carry out his preventive diplomacy role.

**Mr. Nduhugirehe** (Rwanda): I thank you and your delegation, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate on conflict prevention and for the comprehensive concept note you circulated among States Members (S/2014/572, annex).

Let me first acknowledge the dedication of the United Kingdom to conflict prevention in the Council. I recall that during the United Kingdom's previous presidency in June 2013 the President convened a meeting on conflict prevention (see S/PV.6982) with a focus on the effective management of natural resources. I take this opportunity to reiterate our support for today's resolution 2171 (2014), which was introduced by the United Kingdom and sponsored by a large majority of Council members, including Rwanda.

I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing. His presence here today once again highlights his commitment to conflict prevention as being at the core of the work of his Office. I also thank United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay for her last briefing to the Council under that capacity. I wish her well in her future endeavours.

The concept note for this open debate provided by the presidency pertinently highlights the need for the Security Council to shift from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. With the numerous tragic and pressing conflicts that persist in the world today, if the Council is to remain relevant, it is inevitable that it improve its record in fully understanding early warning signs of conflict and responding through early action.

Although conflict prevention has become the centrepiece of the work of the United Nations in the wake of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, increasing intra-State conflicts, mainly on the African continent and in the Middle East, demonstrate that the concept of conflict prevention has become more of a theoretical concept than a practical reality. The activities of the Security Council in past years have shown more interest in crisis management than in conflict prevention, as the latter is considered, as a thematic debate, only once or twice per year.

That is not to suggest, however, that the United Nations has remained idle in efforts to prevent the emergence or relapse of conflict. Indeed, there has been a huge increase in the level of international preventive diplomacy, diplomatic peace-making, peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations — for most part by the United Nations and, more recently, in partnership with regional organizations.

I would like here to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts at conflict prevention, including by preparing important framework documents and by exercising his good offices around the world. As the Secretary-General stated, however, good news is not news, and most of his efforts have been fruitful.

The United Nations should be equipped to fully understand that different situations require flexibility as circumstances change and it should deploy a range of possible measures — both long-term structural changes and short-term operational changes — to deal with early warning signs of a situation that might lead to conflict.

We believe that the primacy of prevention resides in understanding the root causes of conflict, including the political, economic and cultural dimensions of each particular conflict, and that we must take effective measures to address them. Early-warning and response capabilities are a critical requirement for effective early prevention. That is a conversation that Rwanda brought to the Security Council when, during our first presidency, in April 2013, we organized a briefing on

preventing conflicts in Africa through addressing root causes (see S/PV.6946), which led to the adoption of a presidential statement (S/PRST/2013/4).

As the Council is aware, one of the biggest challenges in the United Nations system has been the Secretariat's capacity in conflict prevention, as pointed out in the recommendations of the 2000 Brahimi Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), which embraces the concept of the responsibility to protect and calls for the international community to support the United Nations in establishing an early-warning capability, was a positive step forward. Nonetheless, early-warning mechanisms are rarely used to respond to recurring crises, let alone to prevent them. We therefore call on the Security Council, especially its permanent members, to increasingly use and support the work of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and that of the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect.

The Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative should be supported and implemented so that the Organization can respond effectively and correctively curb the escalation of crises. Protecting human rights is one of the most effective conflict-prevention tools. Success in promoting and protecting rights and ensuring accountability for violations are effective means for de-escalating conflict and forestalling the human and financial costs of humanitarian crises. That is why the international community, including the United Nations, should support Member States in strengthening the rule of law and capacity-building for accountability mechanisms, including judicial institutions.

The evolving role of regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention should not be underestimated. We recognize the important role of the African Union and its subregional organizations in preventing and mitigating conflicts on our continent. We also recognize the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission and its country-specific configurations in addressing the recurring relapse into conflict. It is also important to acknowledge the role of other organizations in supporting and complementing the United Nations in peacekeeping, mediation, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance or in joint efforts in post-conflict reconstruction.

In conclusion, I would appeal to the Security Council to explore ways to address conflict prevention not through an annual thematic debate, which has

little impact on the ground, but through country-specific debates. We believe that a more frequent use of Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations and a more focused use of the horizon-scanning sessions and country-specific meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa can help us respond to that call.

**Ms. Murmokaitė** (Lithuania): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings. We sincerely thank the High Commissioner for her extraordinary service.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 2171 (2014), which Lithuania gladly co-sponsored.

The Council is entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. All too often, however, it has assumed that responsibility only when a conflict was in full swing and the loss of lives was too high to ignore.

A glaring case of the Council's failure to act was that of the genocide in Rwanda, whose twentieth anniversary was marked earlier this year. The Force Commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, Roméo Dallaire, warned the United Nations about plans to massacre Tutsis and offered to raid arms caches in Kigali. He insisted that where there was a will, there was a way. The will was not there, and some 800,000 people were murdered in the subsequent 100 days. Examples abound where the action taken was too little and too late, resulting in the loss of multiple human lives and in the exorbitant costs of dealing with a full-blown conflict.

On the other hand, when the United Nations has used its powers proactively it has managed to prevent major crises. One such example is Yemen, to which the United Kingdom delegation has already referred. United Nations mediation in post-election Bangladesh in 2013, the good offices of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, combined with the engagement of the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in response to an outbreak of violence in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, and the often-invisible work by the Standby Team of Mediation Experts at dozens of negotiations around the world speak to the importance of early preventive action.

Today, as the Council grapples with an unprecedented number of conflicts and four level 3 humanitarian emergencies in the face of an almost chronic shortage of funds for life-saving activities, we need a qualitative leap in conflict prevention.

As today's resolution points out, conflict prevention is a complex undertaking consisting of various interdependent, complementary and non-sequential components. I would like to dwell on a few of them.

First, with respect to informed early warning, the United Nations system, with its country teams in 136 countries, its peacekeeping presence and special representatives and envoys, is well placed to sound early warning and provide first-hand information from the field. Greater synergies and interactivity between the Organization's own early-warning capacities and those of regional and subregional organizations are essential. Early-warning mechanisms already exist within the EU, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community. We therefore welcome the call in the resolution to examine how cooperation with regional organizations could contribute to early-warning mechanisms and preventive actions.

The Council must make better use of information from the ground through interactive dialogues and briefings, including on situations of concern that are not formally on its agenda. My delegation sees great potential in briefings from the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), horizon-scanning and periodic human rights briefings, as proposed by the High Commissioner this morning. Making such briefings less formal, more flexible and needs-based, with an emphasis on interactivity, could allay some of the sensitivities related to the Council's discussing a particular situation. Further improvement of DPA's analytical/assessment capacities would be useful in that respect.

Furthermore, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Advisers on Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect play a key role in sounding an early alarm. Providing Member States with prompt, unsanitized information about serious human rights violations is fully in line with the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative, which we wholeheartedly support. In that respect, we welcome the United Nations efforts to integrate human rights monitoring into peacekeeping operations.

The second component is early mediation. As the Secretary-General said, early action does matter. My delegation recognizes mediation as an important tool for defusing emerging conflicts. The good offices of the Secretary-General and United Nations mediators could be engaged at the earliest possible stage, with all the necessary discretion. To enhance the effectiveness of that particular instrument, further support should be provided to strengthening United Nations mediation-support capacities, including the Mediation Support Unit, the Standby Team and the roster of experts.

The third element is ensuring accountability. Responding to human rights violations and acting before they reach tragic proportions is a core concern of preventive action. As we know, violations of minority rights, sexual and gender-based violence, intolerance and faith or ethnicity-based persecutions are among the root causes of conflict and humanitarian crises. If unaddressed, legitimate grievances caused by exclusion, marginalization, lack of accountability and lawlessness are bound to ignite or reignite a conflict.

A crucial element of conflict prevention, in our view, consists in putting an end to impunity and ensuring justice for all. The Council's strong voice and actions in support of the rule of law, accountability and justice matter a great deal. National truth and reconciliation commissions, commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions tackling past atrocities are essential elements in preventing relapse into conflict, and they merit the Council's full support. We must also extend all the necessary support to States in restoring their judicial systems and investigating and prosecuting the perpetrators of criminal doings during the time of conflict. In line with the principle of complementarity, international judicial mechanisms and tribunals, including the International Criminal Court, have an important role to play in tackling impunity and ensuring justice for the victims, thus laying the foundations for durable peace.

**Mr. Oyarzábal** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the presidency for having convened today's debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings.

This year is the one hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War, whose destruction and extremely high costs, in both human lives and material damages, led to the creation of the League of Nations — an innovative attempt to put an end,

through the establishment of a multilateral body, to wars between States. Fortunately, its failure to prevent the Second World War did not end the determination of the international community to work to promote peace through the establishment of the United Nations.

Since then, the nature of conflicts has changed deeply. We are now in an era dominated by internal conflicts, an era where there are serious violations of human rights, including genocide. However, something has not changed, namely, the fact that conflicts can be avoided. In the vast majority of cases, prior to the outbreak of a conflict there are clear indications that should serve as an early warning. Unfortunately, the international community and the Council have, in many cases, shown themselves unable either to recognize those early signs in time or to act decisively in preventing the conflict.

The multiplication of conflicts has left the international community and the Council with limited political and economic resources to effectively tackle the challenges to international peace and security. Likewise, we have witnessed the proliferation of humanitarian crises that are increasingly alarming. As a result of those conflicts, there has been a certain reduction in the financing of efforts in the sphere of humanitarian assistance, which seems to be structural and not to depend on the situational crisis that is being dealt with. That scenario means that we must think seriously about the conflict-prevention role of the Council, so that it can comply with its obligations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The fundamental principle of sovereignty gives rise to the competence and obligation of States to peacefully resolve international disputes, as established by Article 2, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the internal conflicts that affect them, by tackling the root causes of those conflicts. The action taken by the Security Council applies only to those situations that threaten international peace and security, and should avoid any interference in the internal affairs of States. The Security Council must focus its conflict-prevention efforts in a coordinated fashion, and in cooperation with other United Nations bodies and regional and subregional bodies, as well as with other agencies that focus their efforts on conflict-prevention and sustainable development. An undeniable link exists between the root causes of poverty and inequity and conflicts at the inter-State and intra-State levels.

The international community must focus on addressing such causes through an approach that takes into account the eradication of poverty and sustainable development and promotes a comprehensive approach, one that addresses the basic causes of the problem and avoids treating the development agenda solely in terms of security.

We also have to tackle the conditions that lead to the expansion of terrorism, an element that is increasingly influential in many conflict situations. The Charter of the United Nations gives the Security Council a variety of tools, namely, those of mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial adjudication, which could be used in conflict settlement. Likewise, we have seen the effectiveness of the roles played by the Secretary-General through his good offices and through his special envoys and special representatives, as well as by the regional United Nations offices. We believe that it is extremely important that resolution 2171 (2014), which we adopted today, should encourage the Secretary-General to continue to use his good offices in order to facilitate and bring about comprehensive agreements. We hope the renewal of that commitment by the Security Council will be reflected in facts on the ground.

Argentina believes that the Council must bear in mind, among other things, that the fights against impunity and for justice are factors that prevent conflict and arms trafficking. The fight against impunity is something that prevents conflicts. It makes a society stronger, it strengthens democracy, and in that context, the International Criminal Court certainly is the most important factor in international diplomacy and at the centre of the international justice system. But we must have an adequate regulation of the transfer of conventional weapons. We cannot expect the work of the Council in maintaining international peace and security to be effective if, at the same time, we allow Member States to provide weapons to parties to a conflict.

Lastly, the dimension of conflict-prevention must form part of the work of the Council in the context of current international politics. The Council must renew its commitment to tackle the prevention of armed conflicts, and the States that make up the Council must also show a strong political will to use the tools at the Council's disposal and a true commitment to multilateralism, thereby overcoming the divisions that often separate us, divisions which, with regard to some

agenda items, prevent the Council from acting. The cost of failure is, unfortunately, known to everyone. Both ethically and politically the international community is not in a position to continue in this fashion.

**Mr. Sarki** (Nigeria): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very important open debate and for the excellent concept note that preceded this meeting (S/2014/572, annex). We commend your delegation for the initiative that resulted in the unanimous adoption of resolution 2171 (2014) this morning. We thank His Excellency the Secretary-General for his sobering remarks on conflicts and their consequences all over the world. We pay tribute to the outgoing United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, the highly respected African judge, whom we are very proud of and indeed fortunate to have had in that office for the past six years. We salute her courage, her sense of justice and her dedication and commitment in protecting human decency. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

Edmund Burke, your countryman, Mr. President, in his study on the causes of discontents, recommended that in order to understand tumult and disorder, we must study the temper of the times. In our world today, the temper that is clearly discernible is one of foreboding and despair. Conflicts and disturbances to general peace and tranquillity are causing apprehension and unease everywhere. People are wondering if indeed the end of time and doomsday are at hand. A no-less respected authority than the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace echoed that sentiment in a recent article entitled "Is the World Falling Apart?", in which an assessment of instability around the world was made.

Conflicts nowadays seem to have a life of their own. They seem to have an automacity about them that gives them the character of an instantaneous eruption, thereby giving little room or time for intervention, mediation and reconciliation to happen. Conflict-prevention has therefore become a recurring topic in Security Council deliberations. Regional and subregional organizations like the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community are constantly engaged in conflict-prevention and resolution and post-conflict management activities. The AU Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council regularly meet to address conflict situations in Africa. Other mechanisms, such as the use of the good offices of eminent persons, and institutional frameworks like

the Intergovernmental Authority for Development are also deployed to address conflicts in Africa. The responsibility to protect was initially an African idea that has now become an integral part of conflict-prevention and mitigation in the United Nations. The observance of the rule of law and the opposition to unconstitutional changes of Governments are also some of the measures put in place by the African Union to prevent conflict in our region.

The Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights have enumerated the various natures of conflicts and their consequences. Various factors, including fragile constitutional frameworks, the absence of good governance, competition over limited natural resources and economic disparities, can come together and make a State vulnerable to conflict, and conflicts incur great human suffering and economic loss. Conflicts impede development and, in some cases, even reverse it. Professor Michael Chalmers, in his analysis of the cost of conflict-prevention, determined that \$1 in preventive action saved \$10 in the recovery costs borne by the international community, the nation concerned and the neighbouring States. That clearly makes a case for preventive action to forestall conflicts.

Another important dimension in the effort to prevent conflicts is restricting access to arms by non-State actors, terrorist groups and criminal gangs, who generally show no hesitation in engaging in hostile acts against States and communities, or in rival groups. The proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons is making that a very difficult task. We call on the Council to pay heed to the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and to ensure that the provisions of those treaties are scrupulously observed by all actors.

Horizon scanning and early warning are tools that are available to the Council for conflict prevention. They allow the Council to take a long-term view of situations in order to facilitate detection and assessment of issues that may emerge in the future with the potential of causing conflict or crisis. The tools provided in Article 1 of Chapter I and in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations on the Council's disposal for the provision of conflict do not function in isolation, and the means of their application is obviously highly context specific. The strategies are by nature anticipatory, relying upon early warning to be effective. Efforts must therefore be made to establish

trust with key local, national and regional actors well before a crisis reaches the tipping point.

Various parts of the United Nations system have a role to play in conflict prevention. It is essential that those offices function in a coherent manner and do not provide varying analyses of a potential conflict situation. The Council committed itself to a preventive approach to conflict management in resolution 1626 (2005). The Council has the potential to be a pivot in the process of generating political will, securing pre-position funding, building capacities on the ground and promoting the use of the full range of preventive diplomacy tools. We should also not forget the important role that the Office of the Secretary-General could play in the prevention of conflicts and in mitigating their impact.

That is why we believe that the time has now come for the United Nations to use its resources, all of it, to act in anticipation towards the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Ms. King** (Australia): I wish to thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings. We would like to acknowledge High Commissioner Navi Pillay's achievements over the past six years and to thank her for her dedicated pursuit of her vital mandate.

Conflict prevention was the reason the United Nations was created. It is enshrined in the first line of the Charter and it is central to the Council's responsibility. The prevention of conflict is always better than cure. As the Secretary-General said this morning, when actions come late, the consequences are measured in human lives. But, also, the cost of civil war is around 30 years of gross domestic product. Recovery averages 14 years. Those are staggering, generational consequences. It is natural to be crisis-focused, but it is short-sighted. Prevention is cost-effective.

The United Nations Office for West Africa, which has demonstrated concrete prevention results in places like Guinea, costs under \$10 million per year. The smallest peacekeeping operation costs almost five times that much; the largest over 150 times that much.

Early warning signs of conflict vary from political signals, such as social unrest, to humanitarian crises. The role of the media and civil society in shining a spotlight on them is invaluable. Different parts of the United Nations are best placed to monitor early warning signs from missions to envoys to development actors.

The United Nations needs an effective, system-wide approach to ensure that this is done effectively.

Information, of course, is not sufficient. Effective prevention strategies must be underpinned by strong analysis. The Department of Political Affairs has played a proactive role in bringing analysis of potential flash points to the Council's attention. We also welcome the pattern of increased briefings from the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We would welcome an informal monthly briefing by her successor, as she has proposed. We have consistently argued that human rights abuses can be one of the most important early-warning indicators — the canary in the coal mine.

The Rights Up Front initiative is a direct reflection of that link. Among its six action points is the provision of candid information about serious human rights violations. A culture of such reporting to the Council must be encouraged.

For the same reason, we support more Council briefings from special representatives and advisers on the prevention of genocide, on the responsibility to protect, on sexual violence and on children and armed conflict. We also support briefings from the Head of UN-Women, because that agency's role in supporting women's political participation is vitally important to reducing the risk of conflict. We should also increase use of Arria Formula meetings with civil society and non-governmental organizations, which often bring a sophisticated understanding of events on the ground.

All the early warning signs in the world will be of no use unless the Council acts on them. In that regard, we must be self-critical; our record is not strong. In Syria, for example, we failed to take early action as the Al-Assad Government's repression led to today's incredibly destructive and destabilizing conflict. Why do we have such a questionable record on prevention? The Council has struggled to agree on the balance between responses that are sufficiently early while respecting the primary responsibility of national actors. We have yet to get that balance right, but we must.

Faced with early warning, we need to take action in a strategic manner, focused on the most effective points of leverage. We should use the tools at our disposal proactively and gradually ratchet up of our response as necessary. And we should work with regional organizations. In all cases early action is vital. There are a number of areas where we can do more.

First, we need to support the Secretary-General — his good offices, advocacy and mediation efforts — and his representatives. Our vocal backing for the initiatives of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes is a good example. We should also be more proactive in mandating fact-finding missions, which can have a strong deterrent effect, and commissions of inquiry, such as that on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We agree with the High Commissioner for Human Rights that the Council needs to seriously consider and take action on the recommendations of those commissions and that the commissions should have an official channel of communication to the Council.

Secondly, we need to get behind the Rights Up Front initiative, lending our political and practical support to see it realize its full preventive potential.

Thirdly, we can do better to integrate sanctions into our responses. The mere threat of sanctions can bring parties to a negotiating table. Arms embargoes reduce the viability of force as an option. Targeted individual sanctions can constrain and disrupt the actions of destabilizing actors, slow conflict financing and change the political calculations of spoilers.

Fourthly, the Council must do more to implement its commitment to accountability, including by deepening its relationship with the International Criminal Court. Failure to address past crimes is often a powerful driver of future conflict, and accountability can have a strong deterrent effect.

In cases of possible mass atrocities, we have a responsibility to protect. It is important that we are not impeded from taking practical action in such scenarios by use of the veto.

Finally, we would endorse more preventive Council visits. Those need not involve all 15 members. The five-member Council mission to Indonesia and East Timor in 1999 helped end the violence and paved the way for the International Force for East Timor.

In conclusion, we need to build a culture of prevention which fully reflects the cost of failing to act. Only then will the aspirations of the Organization, which emerged out of the ashes of conflict, be fully realized. The Council has a responsibility to be vigilant, strategic and proactive.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation in today's

meeting of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Russian delegation voted in favour of resolution 2171 (2014) to prevent armed conflict, taking into account how important this issue is in the context of maintaining international peace and security. We believe that States have the main responsibility for conflict prevention. Any international assistance, including within the framework of the United Nations, should be carried out with the consent of the host country and cannot be imposed.

Today, most crises are internal in character, and the border between assistance in the area of preventive diplomacy and pressure on domestic political processes is becoming tenuous, especially when this kind of assistance is provided at an early stage of a crisis. Unfortunately, we have often heard proposals in the Security Council that border on attempts to manage the internal affairs of States or to interfere in their constitutional processes. It is clearly important to strike the right balance. Too much support for one political group can only further stoke a conflict and undermine trust in the international community, and in the United Nations in particular. The proliferation of mediation efforts, not to mention competition among ambitious players all trying to win kudos for their roles as mediators and peace brokers, can end up adding fuel to the fire.

Clearly, the actions of certain influential States are directly at odds with the goal of conflict prevention, thereby engendering serious crises. The consequences of those crises have led to the destabilization of entire countries or even regions. The situation following the invasion of Iraq has developed in such a way that the breakup of the country is now a possibility, and part of its territory could become a haven for international terrorists. We are also witnessing uncontrolled destabilization in Libya, with bleak prospects for overcoming that crisis.

In Ukraine, we see how some countries are openly prodding Kyiv to continue the bloodletting and to reject proposals that offer a way to peaceful settlement. The agreements of 21 February and the Geneva declaration have been forgotten. The road map proposed by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has been disregarded. Yet all those documents had real potential for resolving the political crisis before it morphed into armed conflict.

The United Nations, as a universal international organization with unique legitimacy, plays a significant role in preventing conflicts. We agree that the successful early prevention of conflicts depends on the comprehensive use of the various tools available to the United Nations. Yet we should have no illusions that the system can be improved to such an extent that it can automatically check the temperature of a crisis and write out a standard prescription. Each situation requires a delicate, balanced and impartial approach and a patient search for a unique solution.

We are convinced that early prevention cannot be based on an arbitrarily chosen mix of certain indicators of conflict; that paves the way for abuse. It is unacceptable to favour certain mechanisms available to the United Nations, even such important ones as human rights or development indicators. The evaluation methods of certain entities, which are not transparent and often biased in nature, should not be used as the universal bases for preventive action. Nor can we agree with insistent attempts to force the Security Council to take into account information and assessments of the Secretary-General and to adopt measures on that basis. In fact, that is an attempt to dilute the responsibility of the Council to maintain international peace and security.

Furthermore, we should take into account that the Council does not have a monopoly on discussions and the use of preventive measures in such areas as mediation, disarmament and, most recently, the general political aspects of special commissions under the purview of the General Assembly. We should also not disregard the significant potential of regional and subregional organizations. There is no doubt that the Secretariat can analyse relevant issues and communicate its experience in their solution, as reflected in the reports it prepares. Such reports can be useful if they are drafted in a professional and impartial way. It is important for them to focus on the practical benefits of the measures being proposed.

We see no point in having the United Nations draft research-intensive publications in which the principles of the Charter of the United Nations are lost behind a facade of so-called innovative concepts. That task belongs to academic institutions. Nor should we lose too much time on the bureaucratic side of matters by hatching various entities with unclear mandates. In fact, we should not be engaged in a race for accountability, invoking unrealistic figures on the number of supposed

conflicts resolved by the United Nations. It is better to have one example of real success than thousands of pages and millions of words.

Based on some of the proposals we have heard, one could conclude that many of the bodies and structures of the United Nations could be eliminated, with the exception of the Security Council. That would hardly be right. Finally, it is premature to speak of some sort of conflict-prevention architecture until there is a broader discussion of the matter. That should involve of all Member States.

**Ms. Kawar** (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express our thanks to the Secretary-General and to Ms. Navi Pillay for their briefings. We would also like to pay tribute to Ms. Pillay for her service, especially for her efforts on behalf of the United Nations under difficult circumstances.

The United Nations plays a crucial role in maintaining international peace and security. Thanks to its institutions, the Organization has been able to prevent or forestall the development of a number of conflicts. However, we must recognize that the United Nations could have prevented far more conflicts, and saved far more lives, if preventive measures had been taken in advance.

A number of factors highlight the shortcomings in conflict prevention, as some of the preceding speakers have mentioned. As they observed, things have substantially changed since the Charter of the United Nations was adopted almost 70 years ago. Most conflicts now are intra-State conflicts, involving State and non-State actors. That does not imply that the Charter of the United Nations is no longer valid in attempts to prevent conflicts before they break out. Nonetheless, we need to envisage a wholistic perspective for all the Articles of the Charter in order to implement all its purposes and principles so as to establish international peace and security worldwide.

Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States lies at the heart of international relations. It should not serve as a pretext to keep us from working together as an international community, as the United Nations or as the Security Council to prevent conflicts. On the contrary, it is armed conflicts that undermine the sovereignty and endanger the political independence and territorial integrity of States. The Charter provides guarantees that should serve as the framework for measures adopted by United Nations

bodies for the prevention of conflicts, namely, the rule of law. Politization has largely affected the ability of the Security Council and that of other United Nations organs to prevent conflicts and to effectively address hotbeds of tension.

We welcome the adoption a short time ago of resolution 2171 (2014). Its implementation could prevent conflicts from escalating. The resolution provides mechanisms, principles and strategies that could be implemented. We would like to stress, however, the importance of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter with regard to the peaceful settlement of disputes. That aspect has been absent from the Council's work for many decades, hindering the Council's ability to prevent conflicts. The measures set out in Chapter VI offer the best way to address situations that can endanger international peace and security, especially when States are the parties to a conflict. They are the least onerous measures for preventing or delaying the outbreak of conflicts.

The Secretary-General, his envoys and his representatives have major and crucial roles to play in early warning when a situation has the potential to degenerate into armed conflict. The Secretary-General should utilize all available mechanisms to notify the Council that action is needed when a situation requires it, based on the information he receives. The Council should use the ability of the Secretary-General to prevent conflicts and provide him with all the necessary means to fulfil his role. We call on the Secretary-General to use preventive diplomacy, good offices and mediation in coordination with the Council. United Nations missions, peacekeeping operations and special political missions could be used to prevent the outbreak of conflicts. We could also consider the establishment of working groups under the Security Council so as to establish mechanisms to follow hot spots of tension.

We underscore the importance of cooperation with international and regional organizations in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. There is no competition among such organizations and the United Nations. Their role is as a catalyst and is complementary to that of the United Nations. One element that limits the Council's ability to prevent conflicts is the absence of timely and accurate information. We should therefore support and adopt mechanisms such as the Arria Formula and consider new mechanisms in order to receive information from the field.

The United Nations and the Council should try to adopt a comprehensive approach and a clear strategy within the institutional framework so as to prevent conflicts. The correct approach requires a strategy that takes into consideration the operational, legal and thematic aspects of conflicts. We hope that the Secretary-General, other United Nations bodies and the Security Council can cooperate in devising such a strategy as soon as possible.

**Mr. Lamek** (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings. I would like to warmly thank Ms. Pillay, since this is the last time that we will have the pleasure of welcoming her as High Commissioner. I would like to pay tribute to her commitment and to the influence that she has had on the Council. We can say that during her term, human rights have become an essential part of our agenda. We can still do better, but that development is irreversible thanks to her.

Conflict prevention is at the heart of the Security Council's mandate and one of the primary tasks of the United Nations. However, with the increase in the number of crises in several regions of the world, we recall how much we still need to improve our prevention tools. In some cases, the threat was identified but the Council did not act owing to a lack of consensus. Clearly, I am thinking of Syria, where the blocking of early action by the Council and the United Nations allowed the crisis to reach the current level of seriousness. In other cases, the risk was not sufficiently understood owing to a lack of early warning. I am thinking of South Sudan, where the increasing tension and violence did not receive an appropriate response until the outbreak of hostilities.

All the tools established by the United Nations system should be used in order to allow the Security Council to have the best information. At the heart of that provision, as many of us have said, the Secretary-General plays a crucial role, as set out in Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations. On his own initiative, the Secretary-General may in particular bring to the attention of the Council any situation that may threaten international peace and security. In the same spirit, the regular briefings by the High Commissioner for Human Rights have demonstrated their usefulness. In that regard, I would like to say that we support the proposal made earlier by the High Commissioner for a monthly briefing to the Security Council. That is fully within her mandate and that of the Council. The same applies

to briefings by the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide.

From the first signs of the crisis in the Central African Republic, Mr. Adama Dieng warned the Council about the seriousness of the crisis and helped to mobilize the international community. Such interventions should therefore be more frequent and the Council should make more systematic use of the information provided to it. The Council should, for example, make good use of the information gathered by the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. As many of us have said, we should also increase the involvement of external actors, such as regional organizations and civil society, including in the context of Arria Formula meetings.

In conclusion, once the early warning signs have been received, the Council must clearly be able to act. To that end, the Council has additional tools — referral to the International Criminal Court, the imposition of sanctions and mediation, for example, can make it possible to defuse tensions, restore calm and stabilize the situation. The Council's ability to act along those lines is therefore decisive. To prevent is to act — a concept to which all States Members of the United Nations committed by adopting the concept of the responsibility to protect in 2005. In that spirit, France made a commitment to limit the abusive use of the veto by the permanent members of the Security Council in the case of serious crimes. We again call for the joint approach of the five permanent members. Such an approach, I am glad to say, has been broadly supported by civil society and by many States Members of the Organization. I thank all those that have spoken in favour of such a measure.

**Mr. Oh Joon** (Republic of Korea): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing. We also thank the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, for her presentation. We would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation for her prominent role as a defender of human rights principles during the six years of her service. We wish her all the best for the future.

As you, Mr. President, and other colleagues have pointed out, prevention costs much less than reaction. At the same time, however, proactive measures are much more difficult to take when there are still potential threats. It is therefore important that early warning signs should be accurately assessed and

analysed on the ground. South Sudan is a case where full-fledged United Nations engagement could not detect the sign of an imminent crisis. Interacting closely with all stakeholders, including civil society, field-based peacekeeping and special political missions should sensitize their antennae and sound the alarm to the Council. Early warnings should then be channelled into concrete preventive action. Sometimes different interpretations among Security Council members lead to a delayed response and a lost opportunity. Serious human rights violations are one important early warning sign for the Council. The Republic of Korea fully supports the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative in that regard.

The Secretary-General's good offices and mediation roles can be further strengthened on the basis of the united voice of the Council. Sometimes early action is obstructed by the reluctance and resistance of the Government in question. As is often the case, intra-State tension feeds on and deepens the lack of inclusivity. Refusing outside support for an inclusive political process does not therefore bode well for prevention. A balance should be struck between the national prerogative to deal with domestic crises and international efforts to maintain international peace and security. The standard for engagement needs to be clear, reasonable and coherent.

We believe that the horizon-scanning process at the Secretariat and the Security Council is one effective tool of preventive diplomacy. In that regard, the Security Council and the Secretary-General need to regularly take stock of their efforts for conflict prevention. That will help them in exploring the most effective United Nations system-wide strategy to fully utilize conflict prevention tools under Chapter VI, in particular Articles 33 and 34, of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council's inaction due to political divisions often disappoints people who look forward to the Council's action. As such, we believe that the Security Council should make further efforts to meet the high expectations of the international community in the maintenance of peace and security.

**The President:** May I remind non-Council members that they should keep their statements to five minutes or less, and that I shall interrupt them if they go significantly beyond that limit.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

**Mr. Gómez-Robledo (Mexico) (spoke in Spanish):** I thank your delegation, Mr. President, for convening this debate, and I thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their statements. I would like to pay tribute to Ms. Pillay for the significant work she has carried out and the support she has given to Mexico during her tenure.

Conflict prevention is a fundamental obligation that extends to others beyond the members of the Council. It is a joint responsibility that we all share, as permanent members of the United Nations. Rebuilding the social fabric of a country and re-establishing other conditions for governance after armed conflict takes many years. When those conditions are not restored, fertile grounds are laid for renewed conflict or for new conflict to emerge. Preventive diplomacy is then the only tool with which to break the vicious cycle.

The Organization has been accused of only reacting to crises. We do not believe that that is an accurate assessment. We must recognize the role of the Secretary-General in fulfilling his mandate. However, it is also true that we face increasing challenges. Every conflict is different, and there is no one-size-fits-all formula to prevent them. In the light of that reality, Mexico proposes three courses of action.

First, Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations should be approached from an evolving perspective. The implementation of its preventive measures must address the asymmetries of armed conflict in the twenty-first century. In addition, assistance must be provided to States that do not have the necessary human or financial resources so that they can be better acquainted with the various options offered by mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes. That is crucial work that must be entrusted to the Secretariat.

Secondly, prevention should also focus on avoiding the commission of any grave crimes of an international nature. Peace cannot be built if perpetrators, regardless of their status, position or rank, are not brought to justice for their crimes. It is therefore essential that the permanent members of the Security Council refrain from resorting to the use of veto in situations where war crimes or crimes against humanity could be or have been committed. Therefore, the Security Council reform process cannot continue to be hijacked by the definition of a single issue. Mexico will continue to support all initiatives that promotes the reform of the Council's

working methods. Consequently, along with France, we will co-chair, in September, a ministerial-level meeting to address the urgency of limiting the use of veto in such situations.

Thirdly, effective prevention requires collective efforts to strengthen the rule of law at the national and international levels, which is indispensable to ensuring development and just and inclusive societies. Development and the rule of law are two sides of the same coin.

As a country from the region that has recourse the most often to the International Court of Justice, Mexico recognizes the critical role that both the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court have in strengthening the rule of law and preventing armed conflict.

Engagement by the Secretary-General, either directly or through his special envoys and representatives, is of paramount importance in that task. Intervention by the Secretariat is therefore key to prevention efforts. In that regard, as we have done many times before, we call on all Member States to jointly explore the possibility of empowering the Secretary-General to request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice. In general, all conflicts have legal expression or purport to be justified by a violation of an obligation under international law. Recourse to an advisory opinion by the Court would be a tool of preventive diplomacy that would further strengthen the work of the Secretary-General in terms of his mandate.

It is essential to improve the coherence and effectiveness of the activities of the Security Council through the use of flexible early-warning mechanisms, such as in situ missions, and informal interactive dialogues with the disputing parties and to address emerging crises.

Moreover, the Council should of course continue to make use of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. In terms of the latter, it is essential to design a mechanism for true accountability that allows for appropriate structures, mandates and human, financial and political resources. Only then will such missions be efficient, effective, timely and endowed with the legitimacy that is needed for their work.

At the 2005 World Summit, Member States committed themselves to building a culture of prevention. Those efforts have obviously not been sufficient. Let us not

allow indifference to be globalized, as Pope Francis has said. Guaranteeing peace is a collective obligation.

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

**Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan):** For conflict prevention, the Organization and this body, the Security Council, derive authority from the Charter of the United Nations to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, suppress acts of aggression, uphold the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and promote international economic and social cooperation. This, then, is the full context of preventive diplomacy.

From experience, we have learned that the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention are closely related. States themselves bear the primary responsibility for preventing conflict — if necessary, with the help of the United Nations. Preventive action is effective if it is taken at an early stage, has a long-term human rights and humanitarian perspective and is geared towards addressing root causes. Peace and security and sustainable development should not be separated, because both processes are mutually reinforcing. The success of prevention would be ensured through a well-coordinated participation of multiple actors and entities, especially regional and subregional organizations.

Prevention should never become a pretext for interventionism. Preventive diplomacy does not mean preventive deployment or peace enforcement. We like your statement, Mr. President, that the Council should serve as “a smoke detector, not just a fire extinguisher.” Conflicts should not be brought to the Council’s table only after they have already erupted.

At the same time, the Council should avoid activism in situations where parties are in a position to handle and resolve their differences or where regional mechanisms can play a more effective role. The Council should not inadvertently become an instrument for igniting or fuelling crises. After hostilities have already broken out, such as in Gaza, the Council’s responsibility increases many fold to intercede and intervene to stop further deterioration. Passivity or a hands-off approach in the face of a raging crisis should not be an option.

In the recent past, there has been a growing tendency in the Council to adopt resolutions under Chapter VII. The Council feels that its action is not important

enough if it has not done so. Some situations do require immediate action under Chapter VII. But we urge the Council to make full use of the preventive diplomacy tools at its disposal under Chapter VI — especially mediation, arbitration, judicial settlement, inquiry, the involvement of regional organizations and the good offices of the Secretary General — to defuse tensions and to resolve conflicts that are simmering just below the surface but threaten to explode.

The Council has little appetite for Conflicts that are not news-driven. We would suggest that the Secretary-General conduct quiet diplomacy, rather than Council members. For its part, the Council can appoint special envoys and special representatives who can pursue such diplomacy on its behalf. The Council's preventive missions should be properly mandated and pursued to enhance the objectives of building confidence and finding solutions.

The Council is not omnipotent. Many decisions impinging on peace and security, especially those involving major Powers, are taken outside the Council. It is therefore important for those Powers to use the full cycle of early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management to avoid a descent into a new Cold War or the exacerbation of tensions. A timely agreement between major Powers on solutions for Syria and Ukraine, for instance, could have averted the escalation of those conflicts.

Finally, the Security Council's efforts to prevent conflicts will lack credibility if its resolutions are implemented selectively. The Council's resolutions on long-standing issues await attention and implementation, while the Council takes on new issues. The Council should uphold the international rule of law.

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

**Mr. Bishnoi** (India): I thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the briefings that they have provided.

We welcome this opportunity to share our views on the subject of conflict prevention, which cannot but be of the utmost importance to the membership of the United Nations. We note, however, that decisions are taken by the Council before the views of non-members are heard. That has been the case today as well. We therefore wonder about the purpose served by an open debate.

We have perused the concept note (S/2014/572, annex) with great interest. To be honest, it would be difficult for us to say that we are wiser after having done so. But then, that may have to do with the subject that we have at hand today.

The concept note refers to the need for the Security Council to move from a culture of action to one of prevention. In general terms, it would be difficult to take exception to that. Equally important, if not more so, is the need for the Council to establish a culture of introspection.

It is not that the Council has not had the tools that are required for it to fulfill its responsibilities. The fact is that the Council has decided to use those tools selectively and on the occasion that they suit the convenience of those who have taken the decision. These are political issues, and it is not as if they can be resolved by any technical fixes.

The concept note refers to the need to respect the prerogative of national authorities to resolve internal crises. That, we believe, is a cardinal principle. We are convinced that the interventionist trend of using humanitarian concerns as a pretext runs the danger of exacerbating conflict between and within countries. The Council should be cognizant of the fact that the developing world consists of nascent sovereignties. Its actions should not be such as to revive the insecurities of a bygone era.

The concept note also refers to the Council using innovative approaches and taking forward the idea of preventive missions. We would advise abundant caution. Unless help is requested by sovereign Governments, imposing solutions from outside can easily be a recipe for instant disaster.

Reference has been made to the role of the Secretary-General and of his so-called good offices function. Once again, only a role that is acceptable to all parties can be tenable. Anything else would be perceived as interference and would be counter-productive.

While action by the Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations is binding on all States Members of the United Nations, the efficacy of most of the conflict-prevention tools that are available to it depends on its moral authority. Moral authority, however, can only be limited if the composition of the Council is demonstrably out of touch with ground realities. The fact is that the Security Council is today

seen as neither representative nor reflective of the aspirations and views of the larger membership. It is only when the composition of the Council is reformed and it is seen as being responsive to the needs and wishes of the general membership that its actions will have the moral force that is required for them to be accepted in good faith and acted upon. That, in our view, is a matter that would greatly benefit from introspection.

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

**Mr. Patriota (Brazil):** We welcome this opportunity to highlight the importance of diplomatic tools in a world where we so often see a hastened resort to coercive measures.

I also thank the Secretary-General and Human Rights High Commissioner Navi Pillay for their briefings. I take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Pillay for her dedication, professionalism and personal commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights in a non-selective manner.

Two significant anniversaries that have close relation to the issue of conflict prevention are being celebrated in 2014. Two hundred years have passed since the Congress of Vienna, when an exercise in multipolar coordination, albeit circumscribed to the European continent, was conceived, fostering a century of relative peace. We also remember 100 years since the onslaught of the First World War, a war considered today by many historians as having been avoidable and the result of a failure of leadership and diplomacy. As we reflect on the legacy of those watershed events, it is appropriate that we ponder the effectiveness of the means available to prevent armed conflicts. In so doing, let us not concentrate only on the Security Council's business-as-usual approach, nor focus only on those conflicts that draw the attention of the Council.

Brazil values and encourages efforts in mediation, good offices, early warning and conciliation measures. Preventive diplomacy, nevertheless, goes beyond those diplomatic actions. The greatest threats to international peace and security need to be addressed in a much more encompassing way, touching on subjects on which the Council rarely dwells. First and foremost, preventing conflicts demands the fulfillment of commitments. In the field of disarmament, for example, scarce progress has been achieved towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Political commitments should also to be honoured. The Council can make an important contribution to conflict prevention if it truly engages in resolving protracted disputes that sow the seeds for renewed violence in many regions, as the latest conflict in Gaza attests yet again. Resolute action by the Security Council to face its responsibilities regarding the Israel-Palestine dispute would be a crucial measure to prevent renewed conflict in the Middle East and beyond. It is important to recall that resolution 1515 (2003), which endorses the vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders, remains unimplemented.

If we are to focus on situations of tension and threats to peace in parts of the world that are less developed, another way we can help prevent conflict is through the fulfillment of multilateral pledges to build more just and inclusive societies. Commitments to official development assistance remain far below the goals set by the Monterrey Consensus in 2002, as very few developed nations have achieved their national targets regarding aid flows.

Above and beyond such considerations, perhaps the most efficient way to prevent conflict is to support and sustain a strong and functional multilateral system that is able to respond to evolving challenges. The system, founded on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, is being eroded by actions or behaviour that a meeting such today's would do well to debate.

To strengthen the multilateral system and thus strengthen our capacity to prevent conflicts, it is necessary to abandon the reflex of resorting to coercive measures as the very first option. Unilateral sanctions, for example, corrode the credibility of the international order, frequently harm the civilian population and have demonstrably revealed themselves to be inadequate in changing behaviour.

Blind faith in the effectiveness of military action to promote stability is another threat to the kind of multilateralism that is most conducive to peace. The recent spiralling of violence in countries such as Iraq, Syria, Libya and Afghanistan should give us pause for reflection in that regard. In all of those scenarios, serious setbacks have demonstrated the limitations of strategies that attribute to the use of force a role that it does not and cannot fulfil in today's world. To counter such belligerent logic is to actively prevent conflicts.

The narratives of exceptionalism — the belief that universal rules and obligations somehow do not apply to a certain country or group of countries — equally challenge the strong system we need in order to prevent conflicts. Preventive diplomacy requires repudiating double standards when dealing with threats to peace, thereby avoiding incoherence when facing similar problems.

Issues of governance also hinder our ability to better prevent crises. To avert conflicts we should urgently reinforce the credibility of the institutions responsible for upholding international peace, the most important of which is the Security Council. Updating the composition of the Security Council in order to make it more inclusive and legitimate in line with the geopolitical realities of the contemporary world will decisively strengthen its efficiency and credibility, and thus enhance the overall preventive capacity of the United Nations. If no action is taken, the Council faces a real risk of becoming increasingly obsolete, in which case efforts to promote preventive diplomacy will ultimately suffer their greatest setback.

Among the various tools to promote conflict prevention at the disposal of the United Nations, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) deserves to be highlighted. By fostering joint international strategies on reconstruction, institution-building and policy-development in vulnerable environments, the PBC has a key role to play in averting the recurrence of conflict and in promoting a culture of prevention of conflicts. The issuance today of a PBC statement on the current Ebola crisis in West Africa is a good example of how the PBC can contribute to raise awareness — in that case in helping to prevent a public health emergency from becoming a post-conflict peacebuilding emergency.

As the current President of the PBC, Brazil convened the first annual session of the Commission in June, when we highlighted national ownership, regional engagement and programmatic interventions as three elements vital to the consolidation of sustainable peace. We are confident that the 10-year comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in 2015 will strengthen the role of the PBC along with that of the Peacebuilding Fund, to the benefit of prevention.

To conclude, let me recall that Brazil has inscribed the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes into its Constitution. Along with our neighbours, we are consolidating South America as an area of peace, democracy and cooperation. The Member States of the

zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic have shown their commitment to consolidating the South Atlantic as an area of peace, cooperation and sustainable development, free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Let me reiterate that Brazil, in the United Nations and elsewhere, will always privilege diplomacy, dialogue and persuasion over coercion and will continue to be an active supporter of improving multilateral tools to prevent and resolve conflicts.

**The President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

**Mr. Vrailas:** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement. In view of the strict time limit on statements, I will deliver a condensed version; the full version will be available in the Chamber and on our website.

We welcome the United Kingdom initiative in holding this important debate and welcome the adoption of resolution 2171 (2014) today. That initiative is also significant in view of this year's commemoration of the centenary of the First World War. In that context, we greatly appreciate the Council's visit to Belgium and the Netherlands earlier this month and thank Council members involved for their collaboration. We also like to thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings.

Conflict prevention inspired the construction of the European Union and is a key objective of its external action. Over recent years efforts have been made to strengthen our commitment and engagement. We have welcomed and actively supported the efforts of United Nations and regional organizations to strengthen their conflict prevention capacities, including on mediation and early warning. We contribute with expertise as well as political and financial support. At the same time, we have been actively engaged in developing our own conflict prevention support capacities.

Successful conflict resolution and peacebuilding are crucial to conflict prevention, given the cyclical nature of conflict and the high risk of recurrence. While diplomatic attention is often focused on brokering agreements that end hostilities, it is equally important

for the international community to stand behind peace agreements after they have been concluded and even more to support their actual implementation. The work of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund is also important in that respect and needs to be further strengthened. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to review the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations.

We commend efforts in different parts of the United Nations system to strengthen early-warning and conflict prevention capacities and we also support the call in resolution 2171 (2014) for strengthening the United Nations system-wide approach to conflict prevention and early warning. There are several elements we deem to be of particular importance in that context.

First, the risk of atrocities needs specific attention, as they can occur in situations where violent conflict has not yet emerged or where it is part of a sudden escalation of conflict. There are often important advance signs when atrocities such as genocide are becoming increasingly probable. The principle of the responsibility to protect provides us, in that regard, with various tools for a system-wide approach to atrocity prevention, including early warning.

In that regard, the EU reiterates its appreciation for the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative as an important element of the Organization's efforts. In cases where atrocity crimes were committed, accountability for those crimes is crucial in deterring and preventing future atrocities. The EU is committed to assisting States in strengthening their national judicial systems. The EU is also a steadfast supporter of the International Criminal Court, as it ensures accountability where States are either unwilling or unable to do so domestically.

Secondly, we highlight the importance of the nexus between peace, security and development. Sustainable development and poverty eradication require peace and security, and vice versa. And neither can be achieved without respect for human rights. That nexus is also a key underlying principle in the application of an EU comprehensive approach on conflict prevention.

Thirdly, conflict prevention requires an inclusive approach, without which it cannot be effective. We need to ensure the equal and full participation of women in peace processes and conflict prevention strategies. The full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions is crucial in that regard.

Finally, we welcome that the resolution clearly emphasizes the interconnectedness between human rights and peace and security. Building societies based on the rule of law, democracy and good governance are crucial aspects of conflict prevention. In that regard, we also want to highlight the importance of education in fostering a culture of peace and tolerance — a powerful tool for preventing conflict.

It is our shared duty to turn resolution 2171 (2014) and the commitments contained therein into reality. That will require focused determination from all of us. From our side we will continue to support steps to further maximize the prospects of success in United Nations preventive diplomacy efforts. The peoples of the world expect no less.

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

**Mr. Prozor** (Israel): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to thank you for convening today's important meeting. I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their respective briefings.

I speak to you today, Sir, as a man who has seen and experienced war — both on the battlefield and on the diplomatic field. My experiences have taught me that war does not begin when the first shot is fired. War begins when hatred and intolerance go unopposed. That idea was expressed by Martin Niemöller, a German pastor who bravely spoke out against the Nazis, when he wrote:

“First they came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Socialists and the trade unionists, but I was neither, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew so I did not speak out. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak out for me.”

We see the forces of tyranny grow stronger, and we must have the courage to take action. We must abide by our commitment to speak out and fight until freedom triumphs over oppression. When my father fled Berlin in 1936, the writing was already on the wall. Boycotts against Jewish-owned businesses were common, graffiti was being scrawled on synagogues and Jews were called “Untermenschen” or subhumans and were being beaten and harassed on the streets.

Now, 70 years after the Holocaust, Jewish communities from Cuba to Casablanca are being threatened, and on the streets of Europe cries of “Death to the Jews” can once again be heard. Yet the world seems to have learned nothing. When synagogues and Jewish-owned shops are burned and looted — is it enough to claim that anti-Semitism is wrong? When mobs beat Jews as they walk the streets — is it enough to only express disgust? When heads of State and ambassadors in this institution compare Israel to Hitler and the Nazis — is it enough to issue a condemnation? Did you, Mr. President, even make an effort to issue a condemnation?

This institution was born from the ashes of the Second World War to confront tyranny, but it is failing. Radical extremism has touched every part of the world from Buenos Aires to Burgas and from Bangkok to Burkina Faso. Oppression and extremism are not bound by borders. Nowhere is the threat more obvious than in the Middle East. In 2004, there were 21 Islamic terrorist groups spread out over 18 countries. Today, 41 Islamic terrorist groups are operating in 24 countries. Those groups have crippled communities and brought entire nations to their knees. And still the international community remains largely silent. It is silent as Hizbullah amasses and smuggles thousands of weapons, as Al-Qaida abuses and persecutes women, as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant slaughters Christian and Yazidi communities, and as Hamas intentionally places Gaza’s men, women and children in harm’s way.

Hamas — like the Islamic State of the Levant and Boko Haram and Al-Qaida — shares a disdain for democracy, a contempt for modernity and a determination to destroy our way of life. In Gaza, Hamas sees no problem with abusing international humanitarian centres and religious institutions for terrorist purposes. It stores weapons in United Nations facilities, transports terrorists in ambulances and fires rockets indiscriminately from mosques, schools and hospitals deep into the heart of civilian centres in Israel. Few nations have the courage to admit that Hamas is committing a double war crime — targeting Israeli civilians while hiding behind Palestinian civilians.

Every nation must ask itself whether it wishes to see a Middle East that is free, open and tolerant, or whether it wishes to see a Middle East in which a violent and radical minority suppresses the rights, beliefs and aspirations of millions of people. This

problem is not hundreds of miles and decades away. Radical extremism affects us all — right here and right now. Make no mistake: we are locked in a battle for our shared security. From this Chamber I issue a warning to the world — do not close your eyes to the threats around you.

War is not inevitable — it is not a force of nature, nor is it a part of human nature. It can and must be avoided. We all want to live in peace and see our children grow up in peace, but we cannot stand idly by in the face of the threats that we face every day. To prevent the next war, we must go to war against radical ideology. We must declare a war on incitement, a war on bigotry and a war on hypocrisy. Armed with our commitment to freedom, tolerance and peace, I have no doubt that, working together, we will emerge victorious.

This is a battle that we can win, and we must win.

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

**Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt):** I would like to express my appreciation to the President of the Council for holding this debate on a topic that is of paramount importance.

Egypt, as a founding Member of the United Nations, has always been a strong proponent of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which commit all Member States to the peaceful settlement of disputes to prevent armed conflicts.

As everyone here is well aware, Egypt is in a region that is, unfortunately, no stranger to armed strife. The conflicts occurring in our region have been the subject of numerous Security Council resolutions. Many of them have yet to be fully implemented, thus contributing to the continuation of decades-old conflicts. The conflict in Gaza, which Egypt is currently exerting strenuous efforts to mediate and resolve, is one such example. The continued occupation of land is a leading cause of conflicts. Therefore, in addition to exploring new ways for the Security Council to utilize the tools available to it under Chapter VI, it is also imperative to explore ways to implement pre-existing resolutions.

As the presidency’s concept paper accurately notes, conflict today “is driven by a wide range of factors” (*S/2014/572, annex, p. 2*) Egypt believes that there are indeed clear root causes for many of the conflicts under way in the world. The failure to eradicate poverty, to achieve development and to arrest the proliferation of

organized crime groups should be addressed as among the underlying root causes of many conflicts.

Another factor driving conflict today is terrorism. Egypt has long been a victim of that scourge and has long been at the forefront of the global effort to combat it. The case of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant is a clear example of the type of threats that a terrorist group can pose to international peace and security. There are also other aspects of conflicts. In Africa, drought has disrupted traditional ways of life and has led to several severe conflicts as a result of the adverse impacts of climate change.

Sometimes indicators may be less clear-cut, but nonetheless very salient. In that context, Egypt believes that the early detection of signs warning of potential conflicts, such as the marginalization of some ethnic groups, tribal-based clashes and the erosion or absence of State institutions, should be the basis for the effective containment of such conflicts at their early stages. We have seen that in the Central African Republic and Somalia, to name just two places.

While all those factors require a serious effort on the part of the United Nations and the Security Council in order to forestall armed conflicts, it is also important not to lose sight of the key components and cardinal principles of the Charter of the United Nations. With the exception of matters pertinent to the preservation of international peace and security, the Charter clearly prohibits intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States. We recall that, when that principle has been violated, conflicts have ensued, and some continue unabated until today. Therefore, the consent of the States that might be subject to conflict-prevention measures should always be sought and secured before undertaking due action.

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

**Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for organizing this very important debate and for the concept note (S/2014/572, annex) that you have prepared. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the comments that they have shared with us.

As we all know, the Security Council has been entrusted, since its inception, with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and

security. To achieve that, there has been recognition of the need for a set of mechanisms and tools that are applicable depending on the situation or circumstances. In most cases, they have been used to stop conflicts rather than to prevent them, but in recent decades we have seen a greater emphasis placed on prevention. We agree with that trend, which at the same time raises new questions. The first has to do with the role that the Council has played in using the various tools at its disposal. Secondly, we ask ourselves if those tools are appropriately suited to the current complexities and, perhaps more important, whether or not they enable us to undertake the early consideration of situations that can degenerate into armed conflicts.

As for the first aspect, we believe that any action that is undertaken in the area of conflict prevention must support and complement initiatives undertaken by the national Governments directly involved and their immediate neighbours. Nevertheless, in dealing with the dilemma, mistrust, a lack of knowledge or a lack of political will may be such that very often Governments and other actors are reluctant to heed warnings of potential conflicts. That explains, in part, why those mechanisms often have not been mobilized more frequently.

For that reason, we believe that the work of regional offices and regional organizations can be invaluable, since their early and timely involvement is crucial. All preventive actions must begin as soon as possible so as to reduce the likelihood that tense situations will degenerate into violent conflict.

With respect to the second matter, if the existing prevention mechanisms enable rapid responses, we must bear in mind that every situation has unique features, and that is why we cannot logically apply the same prevention model to all cases. The past experiences we have accumulated as well as the lessons learned can also provide important clues, including with regard to the need to focus on the main causes of tension and their mitigation, as well as the need to adopt multidimensional approaches. In that way, the response capacity of the mechanism will not depend exclusively on how the mechanism was designed or conceived, but rather on factors such as capability, experience and the presence on the ground of those who apply it. Nor is it appropriate to evaluate the different mechanisms that could have an influence on the parties on the basis of the speed with which they can bear fruit. What is important is to find a formula that reduces mistrust,

keeps the channels of negotiation open and limits the recourse to violence in each particular case.

In conclusion, strengthening and perfecting a combination of mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of disputes should better respond to the growing demands of Member States, particularly in terms of flexibility, agility and coherence. Ultimately, the effectiveness of those commitments will depend on a variety of factors, including the commitment of the parties, the existence of political freedom to operate and the decisive support of the international community.

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

**Mr. Raja Zaib Shah** (Malaysia): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the British delegation on assuming the Council's presidency for this month and for convening this timely debate. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their respective briefings, which we have heard with much interest.

In associating itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, my delegation wishes to make some additional comments.

Malaysia reaffirms its support for efforts aimed at preventing the escalation of conflicts into threats to international peace and security. Malaysia also believes that the United Nations system, including the Security Council, has an integral role to play in that regard. With a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations system in discharging such a role, Malaysia also supports efforts to achieve system-wide coherence, which could, among other things, enable the early detection of potential crisis situations.

On a related note, the nature of contemporary conflict situations also raises certain questions, including as to whether the United Nations, in particular the Council, is adequately equipped to respond to new types of conflicts or situations.

Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations clearly provides an array of tools and approaches that are available to both the Council and the General Assembly. In the context of securing the widest possible support for any proposed preventive measure or approach, there may be a case for exploring closer

cooperation between the Council and the General Assembly. It is noteworthy that, over the past few years, the United Nations has utilized a wider range of tools outlined in Chapter VI, including mediation. Malaysia views positively the possibility of strengthening the capacities and capabilities of the United Nations in that field.

Alongside efforts at the international level, the capacities and capabilities of actors at the regional and national levels are also important components of the international peace and security architecture. They merit serious, sustained attention and should be further strengthened.

It is distressing and unfortunate that we continue to witness instances of situations relapsing into conflict across various regions today. With regard to preventing such developments, Malaysia believes that the United Nations could do more to assist countries and societies facing such situations.

In particular, Malaysia is of the view that the potential roles of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) should be given more attention, particularly in the context of its upcoming review scheduled for 2015. Among other things, the PBC's role as a platform for exchanging expertise and experience could be further enhanced. Additionally, the role of women in conflict prevention should be further mainstreamed.

In conclusion, my delegation notes that the outcome of this debate has been reflected in the form of a Council resolution — resolution 2171 (2014). Malaysia reiterates its firm belief that the United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular should continue to play a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security, including in conflict prevention.

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

**Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this open debate. I would also like to endorse the statement made by the observer of the European Union. To save time, I would like to briefly summarize my statement, which will be circulated in writing to delegations when I finish.

As a preliminary comment, I would like to say that it is necessary to move firmly from a reactive culture to a culture of prevention. Prevention should occupy a central role in the efforts of the United Nations, and

the Security Council has a fundamental responsibility in the area of conflict prevention. As some speakers preceding the Spanish delegation have said, we need to utilize all the tools available in the Charter of the United Nations to contribute towards the effective prevention of conflicts. Among such instruments, I would like to mention such important ones as commissions of inquiry and sanctions, which can also play an important role in prevention.

Spain has placed mediation at the heart of its foreign policy. It is crucial, in our view, to devote special attention to the root and structural causes of conflicts and to their risk factors in order to work towards their prevention and to ensure the sustainability of the solutions achieved. For that reason, I am going to focus on the tools in which my delegation has invested considerable political and financial capital, namely, mediation and peacebuilding.

We are committed to preventive diplomacy and mediation as tools for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding. We are therefore a founding member of the Group of Friends of Mediation, and we contribute to the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs. In addition, along with our friends from Morocco, we have launched an initiative for mediation in the Mediterranean that we are currently in the process of developing further.

As the Secretary-General has observed in his reports, in order for mediation efforts to succeed, three conditions must be met. First, mediation must be based on a profound understanding of the local context. It is important to listen closely and with sensitivity to the local players. Secondly, there needs to be a spirit of local ownership; imposed mediation rarely works. And, thirdly, there needs to be coherence, coordination and complementarity among the concerned actors.

The second instrument in which Spain has invested considerable political and financial capital is peacekeeping. Peacekeeping operations and special political missions play a fundamental and invaluable role. I cannot fail to mention the important role played also by the Peacekeeping Commission, in which Spain actively participates, as well as the various regional entities. As several delegations have observed, we fully support better and more fluid interaction between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council.

Finally, several delegations have also mentioned the responsibility to protect. It is important for us to

continue to promote the excellent principle of the responsibility to protect, in particular in its second pillar, namely, the commitment to provide assistance to countries in order to enable them to effectively prevent atrocities.

To conclude, I wish to express my delegation's gratitude to you, Sir, for organizing this debate, and above all for today's adoption of resolution 2171 (2014), which represents a good step in the right direction.

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

**Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*):** Allow me to begin my remarks by thanking you, Sir, for organizing this debate on conflict prevention at a moment when the world is being convulsed by a number of conflicts and by the expansion of extremism, terrorism and fanaticism, with their toll of innocent victims and criminal atrocities.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his detailed briefing and his personal commitment to keeping conflict prevention at the heart of his priorities. I recognize the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, whose leadership has brought impartiality, neutrality and objectivity to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Since her mandate has run its course, I would like to take this opportunity to pay special homage to her for the progress achieved by her Office and to tell her that it was a personal privilege for me to work with her.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Enshrined in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations, conflict prevention lies at the heart of the United Nations mandate. Support for conflict prevention is not merely a choice but rather an international obligation aimed at preventing the horrors of war and armed conflict. Article I is more relevant than ever in the aftermath of the international community's commemoration of the outbreak of the First World War and at a moment when armed conflicts and a surge in extremism and terrorism are shaking a number of regions, with tragic consequences for their populations. That explains the duty of the international community to act together to prevent and resolve conflicts by investing in efforts at conciliation, negotiation and

mediation, instead of acting a posteriori, with the risk of exacerbating conflicts.

As highlighted in the concept note (S/2014/572, annex), for which we commend the British presidency, the Security Council is the primary organ with respect to conflict prevention and is supported to that end by various mechanisms. The mission of the good offices of the Secretary-General is also a highly valued instrument for conflict resolution, and we would like to register our appreciation for the Secretary-General's commitment, his diplomatic expertise and his vision for the noble aim of preventing and resolving conflicts.

Resolution 2171 (2014), unanimously adopted today, highlights the important conflict prevention role of peacekeeping operations, the special political missions and the regional offices of the United Nations, which have played a leading role, especially in Guinea and in Kyrgyzstan. The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa is currently playing a decisive role as mediator in the political process in the Central African Republic. In that regard, we believe that it is essential to increase the human and financial resources accorded to those offices, as well as to the special envoys of the Secretary-General, in order to ensure the successful fulfilment of their mandates.

An increasingly firm commitment to our continent on the part of regional and subregional organizations should also be stressed. In that context, regional integration comes to the fore as a factor in conflict prevention and as a means for considerably reducing the risk of conflict.

Despite their proven efficacy, those mechanisms for conflict prevention have struggled to adapt to the evolving nature of conflicts, which are increasingly intra-State. Indeed, they have not managed to keep situations from deteriorating, whether in the Sahel, in the Central African Republic, in South Sudan or in any number of other theatres of conflict.

Those conflicts have thrown a spotlight on the need for an integrated, global approach to conflict prevention that takes into account the changing nature of conflicts, with the advent of threats linked to terrorism and to signs of separatism, along with their root causes. It would be beneficial to revisit those mechanisms in order to improve their efficacy, bringing an innovative approach to the process and including new players who might have a positive impact. In that context, it is essential to strengthen the support offered to States

that request it, particularly with regard to technical assistance and national capacity-building, since in the end it is States that are responsible for preventing conflicts in their countries.

Recent events in North Africa have amply demonstrated that States with strong institutions can avoid civil war, while in others rival armed groups have faced off with consequences for the countries of the Maghreb as a whole, confirming the critical need for strengthening cooperation among neighbouring countries. Moreover, greater involvement on the part of civil society, in particular women and youth, should be encouraged, because they can have a positive impact with respect to promoting dialogue and reconciliation.

Morocco has made conflict prevention one of the main paradigms of its foreign policy. In that regard, our country has become an advocate for the values of tolerance, dialogue, conciliation and negotiation in Africa and the Middle East. The root causes of the recent conflicts, often traceable to ethnic or religious differences, highlight the importance of initiatives such as the Rabat plan of action on the prohibition of the advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred, which constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, an achievement and initiative for which Ms. Pillay deserves credit, or the recent international meeting on strengthening the dialogue between cultures and civilizations, which saw the adoption of the Fez appeal, which stresses the urgent need for new forms of interaction and understanding among civilizations.

To conclude and in direct alignment with Ms. Pillay's proposals, Morocco believes that conflict prevention is a complex problem. We are more convinced than ever that the difficulties can be surmounted if the international community and the Security Council unite in a proactive manner with good will and determination and commit themselves to that goal by prioritizing dialogue, conciliation and negotiation.

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

**Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to make the following points.

First, 100 years since the beginning of the First World War, the atmosphere surrounding international relations is not promising. It does not give the impression that the States involved in that war learned anything from the history of that catastrophe, since the

First World War was followed by the Second World War, which was more destructive and more painful.

The same policies now seem to govern most international relations, leading towards chaos and what could be called a third world war waged by the same colonial States in the same spirit of opportunism. However, this time, the agents are present in many conflict zones around the world.

Regrettably, the establishment of the United Nations did not lead to the noble goal for which it was created—to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, as is stated in the preamble to the Charter. Our peoples, whose voices joined those of the peoples of the United Nations in calling for the condemnation of war and for the prevention of its scourge on humankind following the Second World War, have suffered more than ever before from the effects of wars that have caused great harm to the world, in particular our Arab region, and that we still feel today. In our history, the suffering of our peoples has redoubled owing to the ongoing armed aggression and the various forms of armed military invasion, especially against Syria, Iraq, Libya and Gaza.

It is truly ironic that the end of the First World War in Europe was followed directly by the painful path of European colonial wars against other peoples. As soon as the weapons of war fell silent in that war, the Governments of France and Britain drafted the Sykes-Picot Agreement. It was a deplorable agreement that divided the States and peoples of the region into areas of influence and occupation and opened the way for the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which sowed Zionist settler colonization in occupied Palestine and led to the unprecedented injustice and Israeli settler occupation of Arab and Palestinian land that continue today. The Sykes-Picot Agreement also opened the way for the French occupying authorities that took Iskenderun from the lands of the Syrian Arab Republic and handed it to Turkey, which still occupies it today, in order to bribe Turkey's then-rulers not to enter the Second World War on the side of Nazi Germany.

What many States see in the crises in the Arab region compels us to question who benefits from such crises. That is particularly the case given the fact that we have seen organized and coordinated actions in our Arab region by many States, one after the other, with the same participating States and regional and local actors using the same tools, slogans, schemes and resources,

leading to the killing of millions of innocent people and destruction on a unprecedented scale.

The peoples of the region are paying the price of the military invasion of Iraq in 2003, which took place following unilateral claims that were rejected by the Security Council and the Secretary-General at the time. That led to the tragedies of which we are all aware. The Libyan people are also paying the price of direct military intervention, which has destroyed the country and put it in the hands of armed groups and Takfiri gangs that threaten the peace and security of every Libyan. We have now seen terrorists and weapons sent to my country, Syria.

Perhaps it is time to talk about the destruction of the State in Somalia and in other African States. The United Nations is called on to bear its responsibilities and to discharge the role entrusted to it by the States Members of the United Nations under international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular with regard to equality, sovereignty and non-intervention. The maintenance of international peace and security and preventive action to stop conflicts and to achieve their settlement are not limited to vying to condemn terrorism and to justify it with expressions such as “spring”, “revolution”, “popular uprising” and “peaceful movements”. There is a clear policy of double standards in the Organization that continues to frustrate the hopes of our peoples.

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

**Mr. Abdrakhmanov** (Kazakhstan): We believe that we need to strengthen the efforts of the United Nations in order to move from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. The United Nations needs to agree on a collective toolkit to assess the severity of the increasing problems that should be based on international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the multidimensional approaches of preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, reconstruction, rehabilitation and development.

It is of great importance that the political differences among the Security Council members should not hinder the Council's role in fulfilling its primary task of the maintenance of international peace and security. Since conflict, peace and development are interrelated, there is also a lack of consensus on what falls under the Council's mandate. Furthermore, Security Council statements issued because members do not agree on

resolutions are ineffective in the undertaking of any action. We therefore call for a united front in the Security Council.

The Council and Member States should strongly support the long-term work on conflict prevention of the Secretary-General and of his special envoys and special representatives. We support the activities of the United Nations regional offices in serving as platforms for good offices and preventive diplomacy. Kazakhstan proposed establishing a United Nations regional hub for development and humanitarian assistance in Almaty, which could complement the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. The proposal seeks a more robust political presence of the United Nations in the vast territory of the Eurasian region.

Besides United Nations regional organizations, we must also mobilize the African Union, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the League of Arab States and other regional entities in order to support fragile States in resolving their long-standing problems. Kazakhstan initiated the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA), which is a platform for cooperation and dialogue in Asia that works actively in the region. In order to increase its effectiveness and to further institutionalize it, Kazakhstan proposed transforming CICA into the organization for security and development in Asia.

Our approaches must also be fundamentally directed at the protection of civilians — women and children, as well as humanitarian workers, who are increasingly becoming targets. At the same time, we must respect the right of Governments to resolve their own internal crises. The international community must address the problems of inadequate financing, insufficient troops, the lack of adequate civilian personnel and capacity-building to handle the multiple and complex mandates of peacekeeping operations. Conflict prevention also implies measures after a ceasefire, when peace and stability are being brokered as an ongoing process.

Kazakhstan pursues a pragmatic and independent foreign policy on the basis of balancing interests and the protection of national interests. My country stands united with the international community in strengthening the work of the United Nations and the Security Council. It supports Member States in constructively transforming conflict into peace,

security, development, the protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law.

One form of such efforts for conflict prevention could be the promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination and understanding among the various ethnic and religious groups and the development of dialogue among cultures and civilizations. We believe that international entities and initiatives such as the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions and the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures 2013-2022 should play a role in strengthening conflict prevention and resolution.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Mr. Safaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for holding this open debate, preparing the concept paper (S/2014/572, annex) and advancing the deliberations of the Security Council on this important topic. NAM also thanks the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings.

NAM has always favoured the idea of according priority to conflict prevention, and stresses the need to intensify efforts within the United Nations system to move from a culture of reaction to one of prevention, drawing on the lessons learned through a case-by-case and in-depth analysis of the underlying causes of conflict. Each year, billions of dollars are spent on conflicts, while the human costs of war in terms of death and injury, the destruction of civil infrastructure, displacements and their repercussions for families, communities, local and national institutions and economies, as well as those of neighbouring countries, are far more destructive and destabilizing. The message is therefore clear: conflicts are too costly for humankind and must be prevented as far as possible.

Conflict prevention is one of the primary obligations of Member States. Efforts aimed at conflict prevention must be in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. That must begin with national Governments, assisted by the United Nations. The international community at large should support such efforts and assist Governments, upon

request, with national capacity-building. At the same time, the most useful instruments for prevention are to be found in Chapter VI of the Charter, which deals with the peaceful settlement of disputes. In our view, the following measures should be adopted with a view to thwarting the outbreak of conflict.

First, preventive actions should be initiated as early as possible in order to make it less likely that tense situations deteriorate into violent conflict, while, at the same time, the right of national authorities to resolve internal crises should be respected.

Secondly, the preventive approach should be multidimensional and focus on the root causes of tensions.

The members of the Non-Aligned Movement have stressed the need to strengthen the role of the Movement in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, confidence-building and post-conflict peacebuilding and rehabilitation within or between NAM member States.

NAM also acknowledges the interconnectedness of economic development, social development, environmental protection, peace and security, human rights and the rule of law. Efforts should be made to ensure that any effort to transform the United Nations into a more effective instrument for preventing conflict should take into account the need for a balanced, coherent and comprehensive approach, in accordance with the Charter and international law, in order to enhance conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding strategies, with the aim of achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development. In that context, it is critical that all principal organs of the United Nations play an active role in designing and implementing a more effective collective security system, in accordance with their respective functions and powers.

With those principles in mind, NAM is ready to contribute to all efforts to strengthen the conflict-prevention architecture at the international level and make this world a safer place to live for this generation and generations to come.

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

**Mr. Zehnder** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General

and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their statements.

Ending a conflict is much more costly than preventing one. It is therefore crucial to ensure, early on, that we understand the warning signs, take decisions and take action. In order to ensure that the Security Council can fully assume its key role in preventive action and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, it must fully utilize the various tools at its disposal.

Through the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) initiative, a cross-regional group of States coordinated by Switzerland that seeks to reinforce the working methods of the Security Council, Switzerland has repeatedly raised the question of improving the preventive capacities of the Council. First and foremost, the Council needs to be alerted as early as possible to potential crises in order to take appropriate action at an early stage.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly highlight a few issues that Switzerland believes are crucial in conflict prevention.

First, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), as an intergovernmental advisory body of the Council, has a major role to play in preventing the recurrence of conflicts. Roughly half of all countries emerging from conflict suffer a relapse into violence at some point. The recent crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan are painful reminders of that fact. A coordinated and committed approach to post-conflict peacebuilding is key to preventing such relapses. As Chair of the Burundi configuration, Switzerland believes that the Peacebuilding Commission can fill the role of a forum where critical situations are discussed very early, in an inclusive manner and with all the relevant stakeholders. The upcoming 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture will be a valuable opportunity to implement the adaptations necessary to further improve that role of the PBC.

The participation of a wide variety of actors through formal and informal meetings has helped to develop a comprehensive understanding of complex situations and to prevent relapses into conflict. Initiatives such as the recently established Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes provide indispensable support to efforts to better grasp local and regional complexities. Today, the fact that serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights must be seen as early warning signs of violent conflict is uncontested.

It is therefore vital that the entire United Nations system have the necessary means to collect and provide information on populations that are victims of such violations or are at risk of becoming so. In that regard, Switzerland welcomes and fully supports the Rights Up Front initiative.

Secondly, special political missions are crucial instruments for the Security Council's preventive diplomacy work. In order to succeed, they need to assume, among other things, a holistic approach encompassing all stakeholders, enjoy broad political support and have the necessary means and resources. Switzerland welcomes the debate in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on special political missions. Discussing the strengths, challenges and needs of such missions is crucial to improving their effectiveness and efficiency. Switzerland will continue to actively participate in those efforts and in the discussions in the Fifth Committee on how to improve support and funding for such missions. We believe that concrete improvements, such as those recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, would be an important step forward.

Finally, we believe that, in future, developing local capacities and constructive coordination between all the relevant national, regional and global actors will be the key to the success of conflict prevention efforts. Current and past examples of successful cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations such as the African Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) support such an approach. In that regard, we would like to share with the Council some of the experience we gleaned from the Swiss chairmanship of the OSCE.

Last May, the OSCE convened a high-level event in Warsaw to foster cooperation between regional and international organizations in the area of human rights. The participation of key representatives of the United Nations and the Council of Europe made a major contribution to a fruitful, serious dialogue with participating OSCE States and institutions. The recent signing of a cooperation agreement between the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights marks an important stage in our joint efforts to improve respect for human rights and their protection.

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

**Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate, which gives us the opportunity to reflect on the importance of preventive diplomacy. My country commends the statements made by the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. We also thank the presidency for preparing the concept note (S/2014/572, annex), which gives members the foundation we need to participate in this debate and support the adoption of resolution 2171 (2014).

The primary objective of the United Nations is to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security under a system of collective security. To that end, the Charter of the United Nations, which created the Security Council, provided a range of tools designed to prevent the emergence of new conflicts and enable action when they do occur. Historically, however, it appears that the Council's efforts have been confined almost exclusively to reacting to ongoing conflicts rather than to anticipating them.

Clearly, the United Nations in general, and the Security Council in particular, can and should do more to ensure that international peace and security are maintained. Regarding that task, we should note that Article 99 of the Charter empowers the Secretary-General to call the Council's attention to any matter that, in his opinion, represents a threat to international peace and security. We therefore consider it appropriate that the Secretary-General, as he has done in several cases, send his special representatives and personal envoys to collect information on potential early-warning indicators that can enable them to anticipate possible areas of conflict and report on their findings to the Council.

We are currently witnessing a number of international and internal conflicts around the world. They have not arisen spontaneously but for various reasons, many of them deep and structural, that in some cases have been incubating for long periods of time. Economic inequality and social exclusion — along with the lack of an environment that, through the rule of law, ensures that all individuals experience the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms — are common causes of the conflicts that we are unfortunately seeing.

In my delegation's view, we therefore have an unquestionable and urgent need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to security and peacekeeping that incorporates an investigation of the root causes of violence and the social and economic situations on the ground. In that connection, we must also abandon outmoded, compartmentalized approaches and strategies that differentiate between situations of conflict and the absence of such conflict. The United Nations should have a complementary and synergistic approach to the maintenance of peace and international security that includes preventive diplomacy and support for conflict-resolution processes by peaceful means, and that prevents relapses into conflict and enables peacebuilding. Similarly, due consideration should be given to security considerations and early warnings signalling the need for conflict prevention in the strategies and actions of all agencies in the United Nations system.

In such an integrated arrangement, I would like to emphasize the importance of the role of the Peacebuilding Commission — a body in which Peru participates and the body responsible for supporting States that have suffered the consequences of conflict — in implementing the policies developed by national Governments according to their priorities, with a focus on the interdependence of security and development. That will enable us to break the cycle of conflict by attacking its underlying causes directly. We have appealed to States to make a positive contribution to the review process of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture planned for 2015.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the importance that Peru attaches to preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and that, as we succeed in developing and implementing measures that enable us to prevent conflict and reduce the risk that they may recur or reappear, we will be fulfilling the mandate of the Charter of the United Nations.

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

**Mr. Laursen (Denmark):** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark. The Nordic countries welcome this timely initiative to discuss the role of the Security Council in conflict prevention. We strongly support the adoption today of resolution 2171 (2014), which lays out a framework for further strengthening our shared efforts in the field.

We also thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their clear and forceful interventions.

The primary responsibility for addressing the causes of violent conflict lies with Member States. Conflict prevention is inherently a Government responsibility, through the creation of representative, legitimate and inclusive political and economic systems and respect for human rights and the rule of law. But there is no doubt that the Council must play a leading role in preventing and responding to conflict.

We want the Council to make a real difference in preventing the escalation of conflict. We welcome the active role being played by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat in ensuring that emerging issues are brought to the Council's attention. We encourage the use of regular horizon-scanning briefings as a way to keep its members aware of potential crises and to offer an opportunity for early action. The United Nations system as a whole must contribute more to preventing violent conflict. But Member States must make the Organization fit for that purpose.

The Council has mandated many important special political missions that have been essential to conflict prevention. But it is crucial that such missions be provided with adequate and predictable funding. In general, preventive diplomacy deserves more resources within the United Nations system. Despite broad recognition of the fact that conflict prevention saves both lives and money, there is still a striking imbalance between the funding for conflict prevention versus that for peacekeeping. We greatly value the work of the Department of Political Affairs and believe it should be able to strengthen its resources by diversifying its donor base and by looking into the possibility of obtaining more funding through the regular budget.

Early and concerted action can prevent the escalation of conflict. That requires proactive involvement on the part of the Council, the Secretary-General and others. The Council should encourage the Secretary-General to actively use Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations. Preventive diplomacy is also about getting the international community to speak with one voice and send a clear political message to the parties to a conflict. The members of the Security Council have a special responsibility in that regard. But too often we fail to see any action from the Council. We should explore ways to maximize the use of existing tools, as described in the Charter. One such critical tool is mediation. The Nordic

countries welcome the General Assembly's recent adoption of a resolution on strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes and in preventing and resolving conflicts (General Assembly resolution 68/304).

The Security Council must also continue to strengthen its close cooperation and engagement with regional organizations. Lessons may be learned from the African Union's efforts to establish a continental early-warning system. Regional support and ownership are vital to effective conflict prevention. In recent years, we have witnessed many examples of cooperation with regional organizations, particularly in Africa. That includes cooperation with the European Union, which actively supports United Nations conflict-prevention efforts.

The United Nations system has a duty to promote and encourage respect for human rights in all its work. An early and holistic focus on human rights is crucial to detecting potential political conflicts and mobilizing action. The Nordic countries endorse the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative, which puts the crucial issues of protecting people and preventive efforts at the centre of United Nations strategies and operational activities. Ensuring respect for international humanitarian law and human rights on the part of States and non-State armed groups is fundamental to conflict prevention.

Women remain the single most underutilized resource for more effective peacemaking and peacebuilding. Experience shows that empowering women and supporting their full and active participation in peace-related political and economic decision-making can lead to more inclusive and lasting agreements. That must be a central component in any conflict-prevention effort.

Sustained peace is not possible without promoting justice, ensuring accountability and combating a culture of impunity. The primary responsibility for that rests with Member States. But the international community should assist countries, at their request, to develop the necessary capacities and institutions. The International Criminal Court plays a central complementary role in ensuring that those responsible for committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are brought to justice. The continued involvement of the Council in that area is of critical importance to conflict prevention.

The Council must remain engaged in a wide range of factors that can cause armed conflict. A welcome example of that was last year's debate on conflict prevention and natural resources (see S/PV.6982). We would like to see a strengthened focus by the Council on the nexus between climate change and security.

Finally, conflict prevention and peacebuilding are deeply intertwined, as some conflicts tend to be cyclical. The Nordic countries welcome the upcoming review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, including the Peacebuilding Commission. We need to ensure better coordination of all the elements of the wider United Nations conflict prevention and peacebuilding effort, including the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme. Our focus must be on maximizing the United Nations effectiveness and impact at the country level to stabilize fragile States, avoid future conflict and lay the foundation for lasting peace.

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

**Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan):** I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation for the United Kingdom's leadership in convening today's open debate. In order to save time, I will circulate my full text and make only the salient points.

On the issue of conflict prevention, I would like to underscore the necessity for the Security Council, the United Nations system as a whole and Member States to take appropriate measures quickly, before situations require large-scale action. It is also important to promote peacebuilding to prevent relapses into conflict. According to the *World Development Report 2011*, published by the World Bank, 90 per cent of the conflicts that occurred from 2000 to 2009 were in fact relapses.

To tackle those issues, I would like to share with the Council Japan's experiences from two angles.

First, as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) working group on lessons learned, Japan has been leading the discussion on challenges that countries might face after the withdrawal of United Nations peacekeeping missions. The working group heard from the countries on the PBC's agenda facing transitions, namely, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Liberia. Discussions led us to identify two major challenges faced by those countries in transition. The first was how to maintain

financial sustainability, and the second how to ensure the continuity of an inclusive political process.

To overcome those challenges, we need to consider a way to maintain the attention and commitment of the international community, as well as to strengthen a country's ownership of its institutions and its political engagement. I believe the PBC can play a role in addressing the risk of recurrence during the transitional period by monitoring the progress and reporting on the evolution of the political situation, if appropriate, to the Council. I hope the Council will further strengthen its coordination with the PBC to that end.

Secondly, Japan, in its national capacity, has also contributed to assisting in conflict prevention and the consolidation of peace. Let me touch upon four examples.

First, Japan has provided post-conflict countries, such as Afghanistan and Cambodia, *inter alia*, with seamless assistance for in the consolidation of peace. Secondly, Japan is also an active advocate for human security. Since 1999, Japan has contributed \$390 million to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. Thirdly, with respect to our efforts in Africa, Japan has actively supported African countries' own efforts to consolidate peace through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process. Last year, TICAD V was held in Yokohama, Japan. On that occasion, we announced financial assistance in the amount of \$550 million for peacebuilding in Africa. Lastly, Japan promotes the role of women in preventing conflict as well as in consolidating peace. Our efforts range from the training of female mediators to the setting up of vocational training centres in order to empower women affected by conflict.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate Japan's determination to take an active role in conflict prevention. Under the banner of "Proactive Contributor to Peace", Japan will continue to work together with the international community to that end.

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

**Mr. Bame** (Ethiopia): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the United Kingdom for organizing today's open debate on conflict prevention. I also join those who spoke before me in thanking the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their comprehensive briefings on today's important topic.

In line with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has the mandate to anticipate and prevent conflicts pursuant to Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. However, much of the Council's efforts over the past decades have been reactive — addressing crisis situations after they escalate into full-blown conflicts.

Obviously, a failure to act early enough to respond to conflict situations not only costs the lives of innocent civilians and results in forced displacement of people but also wreaks enormous havoc and destruction. That is clearly demonstrated in, for example, the recent conflicts in South Sudan and the Central African Republic, to name just two. Over and above that, however, conflict management and resolution has been a very expensive undertaking, consuming an enormous amount of time, energy and resources.

As has been repeatedly mentioned, prevention is not only better than cure, but it is also less expensive and averts suffering and destruction. In the light of that fact, it is critical that more attention be given to the anticipation and prevention of conflicts. Accordingly, the Security Council should be much more proactive in the area of conflict prevention through the utilization of all the preventive diplomacy tools at its disposal. That includes, *inter alia*, the timely and effective utilization of early warning signals to provide a rapid response to crises and conflict situations. In that regard, ensuring synergy and complementarity among the different prevention and early-warning mechanisms within the United Nations system is critical to providing the Council with thorough analysis of conflict trends in a coherent manner.

In order to enhance its role in the area of conflict prevention, the Council should act with flexibility in providing an early and effective response based on early warning signals in potential crisis and conflict situations. As clearly indicated in the concept note (S/2014/572, annex), that has indeed been a challenge for the Council, which makes obvious the need for Council to reflect on and draw valuable lessons from its past experiences with a view to improving its performance in the future. Moreover, the Council needs to have closer coordination and complementarity of efforts with regional organizations and mechanisms in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Since regional organizations and mechanisms are closer to potential crisis and conflict

situations, they could be instrumental in providing an early and effective response.

Finally, we believe that today's open debate builds upon the series of previous meetings that have taken place on this important topic and contributes to enhancing the role of the Security Council in the area of conflict prevention. In the light of changing conflict dynamics, we believe that is not a matter of choice but one of necessity.

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

**Mr. Khan (Indonesia):** I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's important debate. My delegation hopes that today's meeting will be fruitful, as the subject continues to deserve our serious attention and commitment. We wish to offer thanks to the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their respective briefings.

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Indonesia has always been a strong supporter of the notion of preventing conflict. In our region, South-East Asia, Indonesia, together with other States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), contributes to international peace and security by addressing any potential conflict in a timely fashion in accordance with ASEAN's main principles. We wish to expand our positive contribution and be part of the solution to global security challenges. In that context Indonesia hosted the ASEAN-United Nations Workshop on Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Conflict Prevention and Preventive Diplomacy in Djakarta in April 2013. The workshop enabled frank, candid discussion among actors. They examined various cases of conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy and identified various tangible joint activities in that regard.

We are fully aware that in the current globalized world potential sources of conflict are multilevel and multifaceted. They are therefore dramatically changing the nature of conflict as you, Mr. President, rightly point out in the concept note (S/2014/572, annex). Those sources of conflict of course introduce various key political capacity resources and operational issues that need to be addressed by the United Nations system, in particular the Council in consultation with all Member States. Considering the range and strategic nature of conflict factors and the solution mechanisms,

it is vital that open dialogues like today's continue. Maximum common understanding and ownership and the utilization of different conflict-solving tools should be sought. We are of the view that the Security Council can be more proactive in forestalling conflicts, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Council's related resolutions. We therefore welcome the adoption of the resolution 2171 (2014) on this issue. Indonesia agrees with the emphasis by the Council that conflict prevention is the primary responsibility of States, and actions undertaken within the framework of conflict prevention by the United Nations should support and complement the conflict-prevention roles of national Governments, as appropriate.

We also agree that peacebuilding must be an important component of a comprehensive prevention strategy, along with tackling the root causes of conflict. Indonesia supports such a holistic approach, as well as a greater role by the Peacebuilding Commission to further strengthen the United Nations system's work to prevent conflicts and help forestall their relapse, in accordance with the agreed mandates. It is indeed necessary for the Council to make further use of the advisory, advocacy and resource-mobilization roles of the Commission.

All peaceful conflict-prevention methods, such as mediation, negotiation and conciliation, require trust and confidence. My delegation therefore reiterates that all United Nations conflict-prevention measures should involve consultations to reach consensus among Member States and related parties. Transparency on these approaches should be fully upheld.

While the role of the Security Council and its representatives in addressing areas of potential or existing conflict is appreciated, we would like to stress that the early engagement of the Secretariat in the prevention of the potential conflicts must not interfere in the internal affairs of States.

Finally, Indonesia wishes to reiterate the importance of financing cooperation and of capacity-building support to regional and subregional organizations in support of efforts to peacefully settle local disputes through regional arrangements.

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

**Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan):** At the outset, I should like to thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for

having organized this open debate on the very important and pressing topic of conflict prevention.

The nature of conflict has changed significantly over the years. Of course, the resolution of purely internal matters is a question for the local legal system. But it is abundantly clear that the boundary between intra-State and inter-State conflicts has become increasingly blurred in recent decades. The most complicated instances include attempts by a State to disguise its role in inspiring disorder and fuelling conflict on the territory of another State, including by, but not limited to, setting up and supporting a subordinate separatist regime in areas beyond the control of the legitimate Government. That obviously imposes an additional burden upon the international system and mechanisms, including various regional and subregional organizations dealing with conflict prevention and resolution. It is therefore important to maintain consistency in identifying ways and means of international response to such situations, as well as to develop a comprehensive approach to the problem of violent separatism.

As far as inter-State relations are concerned, the concept of conflict-prevention is inextricably linked to the principle of the peaceful settlement of international disputes enshrined in paragraph 3 of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. The true value of that principle is to commit States to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force, respect each other's territorial integrity and resolve their disputes in conformity with international law.

At the same time, in circumstances where one State has neglected its obligation to settle an international dispute by peaceful means and has resorted to force and occupied the territory of another State, the reference to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes must in no way impair the application of the inherent right of self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter.

International law requires not just an outcome in preventing or resolving conflicts, but that such an outcome be accompanied by a process that is consistent with particular norms of international law. It is important that conflict-settlement frameworks and mechanisms not be used as a tool to consolidate solutions that are a priori illegal and a *fait accompli*. Attempts to impose or encourage such solutions will fail to provide the necessary foundations for enduring peace and long-term stability.

As a matter of priority, special attention should be given to the implementation of resolutions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations, in particular those relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution. It is equally important that Security Council resolutions call things by their names — call a spade a spade — rather than seek a balance in addressing the key issue of responsibility.

It is also important to underline the role of the rule of law in preventing conflict, mitigating the effects of a conflict once it has arisen and in resolving conflicts and thus establishing a stable and durable peace. The imperative of establishing and documenting truth, shedding light on real facts and combating impunity is undeniable. Such efforts must be free of selectivity and politically motivated approaches.

We look forward to further initiatives on this important topic. Azerbaijan will continue to be an active partner in that process.

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

**Mr. Pavlichenko** (Ukraine): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing such an important and timely open debate. We welcome resolution 2171 (2014), adopted today. We also want to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings today.

The delegation of Ukraine aligns itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of the European Union. We fully share the ideas expressed by the European Union on ways to improve the United Nations performance in the prevention of conflicts. At the same time, we would like to reflect on the key issues that are very important from the perspective of our country.

The idea to establish a mechanism for the prevention of conflicts is at the very heart and essence of the United Nations. Severe consequences of the First and Second World Wars and the strong will of States to prevent such conflicts in future led to the creation of the United Nations and the adoption of its Charter. The Charter of the United Nations gives the main bodies of the United Nations, especially the Security Council, the necessary leverage to effectively prevent conflicts. Of course, that mechanism is not perfect. But it can function quite well if there is goodwill on the part of all players.

For many years, the United Nations and its main bodies have been helping to improve the technologies

and techniques of conflict prevention within the authority and power invested in them by the Charter. And many of the ideas that have been expressed today merit serious attention. However, we believe it is impossible to succeed if the Organization cannot adequately respond to the main challenges and gaps that prevent it from being an effective global actor in the field of security.

Respect for the rule of law at the international level is the basis for international peace and stability, a key precondition for the prevention and settlement of conflicts and a guarantee of predictability in and the legitimacy of international relations. It begins with strict adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and other international treaties in force by States parties.

A lack of responsibility and impunity for the violation of the Charter and international treaties, which Ukraine considers as a guarantee of peace and stability in relations with its neighbours, have been among the main causes of aggression against my country and the occupation of Crimea. The Security Council had all the necessary levers available and should have taken actions to prevent that conflict in order to secure peace and stability in the region. Unfortunately, despite support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine by almost all Member States of the Security Council, the abuse of the veto power by one of the permanent members actually blocked any practical measures by the Security Council. The problem is that by taking advantage of its veto power, the Member State has committed aggression against Ukraine, even though, before that, that State had always recognized the territorial integrity and State borders of my country in accordance with the relevant bilateral treaties.

In that context, I should like to emphasize that permanent membership in the Security Council and the veto power are not just a privilege or matter of good luck. They entail the obligation and duty to responsibly take care of the peace and security of our world. Abuse of that status seriously undermines the authority and credibility of the Organization and erodes the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Within the framework of the Organization, we have already started discussions on non-use of the veto in the case of mass atrocities. My delegation welcomes that initiative. We hope that, very soon, we will be able to engage in a substantive discussion on the prevention of the use of veto power in cases of aggression.

In conclusion, I would like to note that we can and should propose and discuss ideas aimed at improving United Nations mechanisms of conflict prevention. There is no doubt that this is very important work. That is why the topic was a main feature of Ukraine's Security Council membership in 2000 and 2001, as well as its membership in the Peacebuilding Commission in 2011 and 2012.

However, without solving the problem of abuse of the veto power and without a proper mechanism ensuring compliance with international treaties, all our efforts to prevent conflicts may fail any time, and any State Member of the Organization could become a victim of that failure.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative from Slovakia.

**Mr. Ružička (Slovakia):** We are definitely not living in an easy time. Even the summers are not as they used to be.

Allow me to express our appreciation to you, Sir, for organizing this important open debate on conflict prevention. Its importance is reflected in the Council's adoption of resolution 2171 (2014), on the topic under discussion. We would like also to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings and the work that they do.

Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union and its member States. In addition, I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Efforts aimed at preventing conflicts right from their inception have long been an integral part of the Organization's efforts in securing peace and stability. Nevertheless, the need for effective prevention of violent conflicts has been steadily gaining in relevance, especially since the end of the Cold War. Cases such as the genocides in Rwanda, the ethnic wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the State failure in Somalia point to the need to find the means to prevent conflicts from escalating into war, human disasters and regional instability. Slovakia attaches great importance to conflict prevention processes within and outside the United Nations framework.

The causes of conflict and the processes of peace are complex — political, economic, social, territorial, historical, ethnic and religious. There are also new

causes of conflict, such as terrorism and organized crime, both of which have conflict in their nature and are difficult or even impossible to mediate or negotiate beforehand. But certain signs are almost always there. It is up to the parties, countries, nations and people at risk to utilize all possibilities and to mobilize the international community to take preventive action.

Today we have various useful tools that can assist in the effective prevention of conflict. Among them, I will mention two — the 2011 report on the theme “Preventive diplomacy: delivering results” (S/2011/552) and General Assembly resolution 65/283, entitled “Strengthening the role of mediation in peace settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution”.

The United Nations is not alone in advancing preventive action. Regional bodies have also increasingly taken up their own initiatives for preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. There may possibly be no regional body that has no programme for conflict prevention. What we have to do and what we need is closer cooperation and interaction on this issue between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Prevention cannot be entirely successful without addressing the root causes of conflict as well as its enabling and facilitating factors. Credible and in-depth security sector reform (SSR) has been proven to play a crucial and decisive role in reducing or even eliminating conditions facilitating conflict outbreak. SSR contributes to conflict prevention in a direct and indirect way. Transparent oversight and uniform control over all forces and factions directly prevent the renewal of national as well as inter-State conflicts through spreading trust and predictability. Security sector reform may not be a primary preventive instrument, but it definitely is a preventive tool to create conditions to avoid a relapse of the conflict, especially if duly executed in its complexity, starting with security, democratic governance and the rule of law and followed by development activities.

Since poverty, unemployment and poor living standards are among the main causes of conflict, timely and appropriate investment in sustainable development — inter alia, but not exclusively, to the eradication of poverty, programmes for inclusive education and activities for employment, especially for young people — are crucial for long-term investment in sustainable peace in the conflict area.

We also have other tools. The concept of the responsibility to protect, especially its first preventive pillar, is another tool for preventing mass atrocities. I would also like to highlight the important role of the International Criminal Court. It serves not only as an independent and impartial judicial body, prosecuting in those situations where a national jurisdiction is unable or unwilling to address the issue of accountability, but its authority also has a preventive impact.

In conclusion, some studies consider following principles to increase the understanding of conflict dynamics aligned with local specifics to serve conflict prevention efforts. We may wish to look at these.

First, share, but do not align conflict analyses.

Secondly, align conflict analyses with local understandings and terminology.

Thirdly, research drivers of peace separately from drivers of violence.

Fourthly, study the micro-determinants of success in preventive action.

Fifthly, begin a dialogue on the coordination of preventive actions on the regional level and on an internal level with the non-governmental organizations.

Lastly, ensure sufficient and flexible financing for preventive action. The ratio is 1:60 — \$1 for peace protection, \$60 for peace restoration.

In conclusion, let me assure the Council that Slovakia will fully contribute to the implementation of the commitments set out in the resolution adopted today.

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

**Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia):** I thank you, Mr. President, for the initiative to focus on conflict prevention in the present open debate. We would certainly expect this debate to be a new stepping stone in the evolution of the concept and practice of conflict prevention.

We commend and support the efforts of the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and the Department of Political Affairs, in particular. Over the years they have made significant contributions to strengthening capacities, tools and mechanisms for tangible prevention, as well as by leading high-quality debate on its conceptual elaboration. The presence here

today of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights demonstrates the urgency of addressing prevention in a comprehensive and all-embracing manner. In that regard, we underline the importance and value of structural prevention as a long-term goal and of sustainable prevention efforts that address both the current and the potential root causes of conflicts.

Armenia recognizes the remarkable potential of the non-governmental sector and civil society as a whole in identifying and promoting confidence-building measures as an effective instrument of prevention. Often, such efforts face considerable constraints, especially in conditions where a Member State evinces serious failures to uphold basic human rights and stifles fundamental freedoms. That problem deserves to be more prominently recognized and addressed.

Armenia has a significant interest in advancing international efforts, at both the global and the regional levels, to achieve and maintain effective prevention. In that respect, we recognize prevention that aims beyond simply pre-empting an actual outbreak of conflict. We stress the equally important priority of preventing the resumption of conflict in situations where a final resolution remains pending.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a case in point. That conflict is the result of the use of force on the part of Azerbaijan, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, against the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which had exercised its right of self-determination. For the past few weeks, the international community has witnessed an alarming escalation of tensions, along with a considerable increase in the number of ceasefire violations across the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and attempted incursions and subversive operations by units of the Azerbaijani army along the border between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan. Numerous lives have been lost, including those of civilians. Prompt action by the co-chair countries of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and, in particular, the initiative of the President of the Russian Federation to host a trilateral meeting with the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Sochi on 8 August, averted further escalation. Yet again, there are lessons to draw from those latest developments.

Earlier this year, the Armenian delegation raised the issue of religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East that have been targeted by terrorist groups and called the attention of the United Nations to the plight of the Armenian population of the town

of Kassab in Syria. Unfortunately, the situation in the region continues to deteriorate. In the past few weeks, the international community has witnessed highly disturbing developments caused by the actions of Islamic State fighters in north-west Iraq. Minority populations, most specifically the Yazidis, who are among the ancient peoples of Iraq, have been subjected to mass killings. Hundreds of thousands of people, including Yazidis, Assyrians, Armenians and other minorities, have been forced to flee. They are in a state of critical deprivation of the basic necessities of life. The Government of Armenia has decided to provide humanitarian assistance to the Yazidi community through appropriate United Nations channels.

The international community is witnessing shocking horrors that should in fact be addressed as part of our commitment to the prevention of mass atrocities. The time for the international community to act is now. The need to mobilize efforts throughout the United Nations system is a matter of the utmost urgency. We call upon all the relevant bodies and mechanisms of the United Nations to act without delay. The role of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide is vital on this matter. Armenia calls upon the Security Council to treat the tragic situation of the Yazidi population as a matter of the utmost urgency.

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

**Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on a topic of the greatest importance for the international community. This provides an opportunity for us to seek support as we attempt to understand how the Security Council and the United Nations system can make a meaningful contribution to conflict prevention, a topic of special relevance to my country.

Through its experience over more than five decades, Colombia knows all too well the ravages that conflict can cause. For that reason, I personally welcome the words of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Pillay and her reference to her Office's efforts to establish a climate of respectful dialogue. We know how important dialogue is. We also know that, unfortunately, when the necessary measures are not taken in a timely manner to prevent crises, the ensuing crises can go on indefinitely, exacerbating the institutional instability and economic and social vulnerability of many of our States. Such conflict scenarios grow even more pronounced over time and

become ever more complex, making an appropriate response that much more difficult. It is clear that, when a war becomes prolonged, it also deteriorates, so that its cause and origin are lost, and people forget that, even in times of war, there are established norms under international humanitarian law that require the protection of civilians — a principle unfortunately overlooked.

For a number of decades, Colombia has undertaken a variety of efforts to establish dialogues that would allow for a rapprochement with armed outlaw actors in order to bring about, in a constructive manner, an innovative solution to the ongoing crisis. Now, for the first time, we are seeing a real possibility of achieving a negotiated peace in the near term by applying an innovative process, using our own methodologies, that includes measures for preventing the relapse into violent action in the post-conflict period. We know that the nature of contemporary conflict is ever more complex and that there is a high likelihood of relapse if, as a number of today's speakers have pointed out, timely preventive measures are not taken that allow for greater equity and equal opportunities. I take this opportunity to thank the international community for its support and contribution to this peace that Colombia has yearned for over such a long time.

My country has already begun to prepare the necessary conditions for lasting peace. For that reason, the post-conflict period has emerged as a pre-eminent stage in securing stability and must be accompanied by the economic and social development that will allow for an inclusive society as well as by the promotion and defence of human rights to ensure that peace will be sustainable in the medium and, we all hope, the long term.

For that reason I reiterate our support for the invocation by the Security Council of the mechanisms and tools established by Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations in order to promote a culture of prevention. The United Nations has the duty to make them available, the States to use them and societies to make them their own.

At the same time, Sir, I congratulate you for including women as fundamental agents for conflict prevention in your concept note for this debate (S/2014/572, annex). We should not forget that women and their families, their children and their societies are those most affected by conflict. Great importance should therefore be attached to their active participation

in all decision-making processes with respect to peace and its post-conflict sustainability. Women's networks in my country have been vital channels for protecting agreements and limiting the return to scenarios of violence. That is why I call for their full inclusion in the process of decision-making and their active participation in the search for peace.

Finally, Sir, as you yourself have mentioned, along with several others, regional organizations can play a significant role thanks to their cumulative experience, which includes creative practices that have on numerous occasions shown themselves to be effective in both conflict prevention and conflict resolution. In Latin America, a region with a traditionally pacifist calling, we have acquired extremely valuable experience in that sphere through the establishment of regional organizations such as the Union of South American Nations, which has enabled us to contribute through a number of initiatives to the pacific resolution of conflicts.

I would like to assure you, Mr. President, and the Security Council of our firm support.

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

**Mr. Grant (Canada) (*spoke in French*):** For more than a century, Canada has struggled to defend the values that it holds dear, namely, justice and freedom — including the freedom of religion — democracy, respect for the rule of law, respect for the rights of persons and human dignity. Those values are the foundation of Canadian society and we hold them dear, as The Right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, recalled on 4 August during the commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War. The outbreak of armed conflict undermines the progress made in the areas of economic development and prosperity. The most vulnerable people, those who depend on the stability and development of a community, are too often the main victims of conflicts.

It has also been consistently noted that lasting peace and stability are achieved only when women are fully involved at all levels of decision-making, including the economic and political levels and during peace processes. In the context of the post-2015 development agenda, it is therefore important to take into account obstacles to peace, development and prosperity, such as the subjugation of women and girls through policies of exclusion, violence and female genital mutilation,

as well as child, early and forced marriages. The best way to put an end to such crimes and terrible practices is to ensure that women can fully exercise their rights and contribute completely to their communities and country. Peace cannot be maintained if half of the society is excluded from the political, economic and social life of a community and a country.

*(spoke in English)*

Canada is committed to promoting respect for the human rights, dignity and well-being of women and girls worldwide. As Foreign Minister John Baird said at the London Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in June, where he chaired a high-level dialogue, women must have full and equal representation at peace tables and throughout society. It is essential that they be not just in the room but at the head table.

Canada urges the Security Council to underscore the importance of the empowerment and well-being of women and girls as a precondition for conflict prevention. While we cannot predict what will trigger an outbreak of violence, we can identify persistent and escalating drivers of conflict and fragility.

Today, it is impossible to discuss the issue of conflict prevention without calling to mind the bloody clashes that are occurring at this very moment in so many places on the planet. Indeed, it is difficult to address the topic of prevention without feeling a sense of failure as major conflicts rage on in Syria, the Middle East, Iraq, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, to name but a few.

Recently, Canada has used this forum to stress the importance of recognizing collective human dignity above all else. Doing so requires a commitment to conflict prevention, which is as important as an effective response. The political, humanitarian, security and development resources and tools at our disposal must be brought to bear more effectively in order to strengthen national capacities for conflict prevention. It is now widely accepted that a successful preventive strategy not only depends on the cooperation of the United Nations actors, including the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the General Assembly, but also requires sustained political will on the part of Member States.

First and foremost, that includes the readiness of the membership as whole to provide the United Nations with the necessary political support to undertake effective preventive action in specific situations. If

neighbouring countries, regional allies and other Member States that would be well placed to support United Nations efforts lack the political will to provide their support, preventive action is not likely to succeed.

While the success of our efforts in conflict prevention cannot always be quantified, we have learned certain truths from history. The appeasement of aggressors, tyrants and terrorists is clearly not an option. We must remain resolute in the face of such regimes and organizations. Above all, we must not forget that the responsibility for the crimes committed falls first and foremost on those who commit them.

Conflict prevention matters, because without it vulnerable people in societies, including religious minorities, women and children, are disproportionately victimized. We need the United Nations to use all the tools at its disposal to prevent conflict before it occurs. The Security Council has a major role to play in that regard. We need the Member States to give their full support at all times to United Nations efforts aimed at preventive action. The resistance and political division among Member States have already cost too many lives.

We appreciate the efforts to strengthen the Secretariat with regard to conflict prevention, including the increasing focus of the Department of Political Affairs on deploying special political missions and envoys. Moreover, the United Nations is one actor among many. Cooperation with other key actors is critical to success and to ensuring that international organizations play to their strengths and support the strengths of others.

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

**Mr. Bamrungphong** (Thailand): Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the United Kingdom and its presidency of the Security Council for the month of August for having convened this important debate and for the comprehensive concept note (S/2014/572, annex). I also thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their substantive briefings.

Thailand wishes to align itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

It is quite ironic to discuss the prevention of conflict while we are witnessing violence in many parts of the world, claiming the lives of too many innocent civilians,

including women, children and humanitarian workers. However, it is indisputable that prevention is the most desirable and cost-effective approach, both in terms of human lives and financial costs.

Thailand has placed particular emphasis on preventive diplomacy, as well as on early warning and the peaceful resolution of disputes at an early stage. Dialogue and constructive engagement among and with parties to a dispute need to be promoted in order to achieve a peaceful and mutually agreeable settlement.

As mentioned in the concept note, the Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 1 and Chapter VI of the Charter provide the Council with a variety of tools to enhance its preventive role. The question is whether the Council can use the right tools at the right time.

Conflicts, whether inter- or intra-State, often derive from historical rivalries, territorial disputes, intolerance among different faiths and beliefs, social and economic inequality, the unfair allocation of resources, systematic and widespread violations of human rights, a lack of good governance and injustice, to name but a few. Conflict is often not a sudden or isolated event but a consequence of unresolved issues. There are usually warning signs when conflicts or violence are imminent. The Council needs to fully heed those signs and to take action decisively before the conflict breaks out.

In order to enable the Council to apply the right tools at the right time, an accurate and unbiased assessment by reliable sources of the situation showing signs of potential conflict is necessary. The United Nations country team on the ground, special representatives of the Secretary-General, special envoys and other United Nations bodies, as well as regional organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, can provide useful information and assessments for the Council's better understanding. Regular briefings and reports by the relevant United Nations bodies and countries concerned can provide the Council with updates and insights. Thailand fully supports that practice.

Thailand believes that, in many cases, the Council is well aware of such early warning signs. However, what impairs swift action by the Council is a lack of unity, and diverse national and political interests, among its members. The indecisiveness of the Council could affect its own credibility and shatter the hopes of people trapped in conflicts. Above all, it could

cost unnecessary lives and allow massive damage to occur that could have been prevented. Therefore, the Council, as the body with the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security, needs to live up to its responsibility by putting aside politics and working together, because we cannot afford the recurrence of tragedies and atrocities.

Thailand also believes in the constructive role of women as agents of peace. Women can significantly contribute to peace — from conflict prevention to conflict resolution, from peacekeeping to peacemaking and peacebuilding, from relief to development and from recovery to the prevention of relapse into conflict. The landmark resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions have repeatedly called for increased participation by women. Thailand therefore urges further implementation of those resolutions and is ready to work closely with the United Nations and other countries to increase women's role in conflict prevention. Women have always been included in Thailand's past contributions of military and police personnel for missions, and the trend is for increased participation by women.

Thailand joins others in welcoming the adoption of today's resolution 2171 (2014) and reaffirms its commitment to implement the provisions set out therein.

Let me conclude by reiterating that the best and most effective approach to preventing and resolving conflict is to tackle the root causes by peaceful means, which may require structural change and a change in attitudes. The parties to conflict must show genuine political will to make a change. Without political will, such change is not possible. The use of force is not an option. It will not resolve existing conflicts but only create subsequent ones.

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

**Mr. Mawe** (Ireland): Ireland commends the United Kingdom for its initiative in scheduling today's discussion, and the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their insightful briefings on this topic.

Ireland associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

Every day in this Chamber, we bear witness to the costs of the failure to prevent conflict. Too often, the United Nations finds itself scrambling to respond

to crises, including some that could have and should have been forestalled. The scale of the crises and their duration mean that we cannot continue with business as usual. A paradigm shift is needed to rebalance the current trend. We have to get ahead of the curve.

As the concept note (S/2014/572, annex) points out, the Security Council has a range of preventive tools under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations that can prevent the escalation of disputes into full-blown crises. We need to think now about how to enhance the Council's ability to make better use of those tools. Otherwise, we will continue to measure the results in the form of the increased loss of life, growing insecurity and greater human misery. In addition, almost by default, we will continue to saddle costly peacekeeping missions with more and more responsibilities. Let me touch upon some of the preventive measures at the disposal of the Council.

First, central to an effective system of conflict prevention is awareness of the situation, the ability to analyse the relevant information and the political will to take action when needed. In this day and age, there is generally no shortage of information — sometimes quite the opposite. However, we need to analyse it better, draw conclusions sooner and then take the right decisions.

Early warning, as the Secretary-General said, is effective only when acted upon, and that is the collective challenge before us all here today. There are too many unfolding tragedies where we can no longer say “but we didn't know”.

Secondly, we need vigorous, sustained diplomacy where conflict is brewing. Intensive diplomatic efforts using the good offices of the Secretary-General, his senior envoys and United Nations staff in the field have been and can continue to be effective in bringing parties back from the brink of conflict. That is most effective when backed by the wider international community.

Thirdly, there has been a concerted effort by the United Nations to optimize the use of mediation as a tool to prevent conflict, which we strongly welcome. The recent adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/303 paved the way for closer partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations. We have long seen merit in the active role that regional organizations, with their proximate understanding of conflict in their own geographical area, can play in mediating or facilitating dialogue between parties.

Fourthly, special political missions, while often deployed after a conflict has erupted, play a key role in advancing political dialogue and other peacebuilding tasks. A Council that can act more quickly might deploy special political missions much earlier.

Fifthly, parties who refuse to comply with their international commitments need to be made fully aware of the consequences. Where that is not evident or understood, entrenchment and stalemate can ensue, leading to the types of frustration that Council members expressed during their visit to South Sudan last week.

At the institutional level, the successful operation of the International Criminal Court offers a vital tool for accountability that bolsters conflict prevention because of its deterrent effect. The Court was set up to ensure accountability, but, while the Council has an inescapable responsibility in that regard, too often we find it unable or unwilling to act. A sense of impunity can lead to prolonged conflicts and result in the loss of more innocent lives.

Looking more locally, I would like to briefly mention aspects of the Council's working methods. There is a need for more efficiency and effectiveness in how the Council operates. The resolution adopted last week (resolution 2170 (2014)) on the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and the Al-Nusra Front shows that measures can be taken more quickly, but it should not take a crisis of that nature to provoke rapid action.

In some ways, when issues reach the Council agenda, it is already too late. We therefore need to get out in front of emerging issues. To that end, we encourage more informal exchanges among Council members on emerging threats and more horizon-scanning. More fundamentally, the unfettered use of veto rights by permanent Council members also inhibits the effectiveness of the Council and needs to be reconsidered.

On the positive side, as underlined by High Commissioner Pillay this morning, we welcome the increasing recognition of the correlation between severe human rights violations and threats to international peace and security. In that regard, the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front Action Plan, which puts the focus on human rights, is particularly welcome.

If we look ahead, 2015 will be an important year for the United Nations system. It marks the tenth anniversary of the 2005 World Summit, when the international community renewed its commitment

to promote a culture of conflict prevention. The year 2015 will also be a watershed, with the negotiation of a successor framework for the Millennium Development Goals and a stronger linkage between good governance, the rule of law and sustainable development. Those milestones present opportunities for the United Nations system to get its act more together and strengthen its resolve to prevent conflict. Ireland looks forward to actively contributing to those processes.

There is broad consensus on the merits and utility of a culture of prevention that allows us to identify crises before they transform into armed conflict, with the resulting human and material costs. The challenge before us is to translate that consensus into effective actions. At a minimum, what the world needs is strong leadership from a united Council behind the preventive instruments at its disposal. That requires a common resolve on the part of those seated around this table and the full support of all United Nations Members.

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

**Mr. Ntwaagae** (Botswana): Allow me to join other delegations in expressing our congratulations to the United Kingdom on its assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of August. I also wish to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to convene this important debate on the maintenance of international peace and security. We also welcome the resolution that has been adopted unanimously by the Council on this subject (resolution 2171 (2014)).

My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Similarly, my delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Republic of Zimbabwe on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

This debate could not have come at a better time, as it takes place against the backdrop of violent conflict and bloodshed in many parts of the world, from the Middle East to Eastern Europe and Africa. We are witnessing increasing trends of regional instability and insecurity, which are posing serious threats to international peace and security. The hard reality of such circumstances is that no one country is ever truly immune from the direct or spillover effects of conflict. It is therefore an absolute imperative that the international community act in

unison and make concerted efforts to comprehensively address those threats in order to create a world that is safer, secure and prosperous for the benefit of both present and future generations of humankind.

It is a fact that the Security Council has a vital role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security, as part of its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations, specifically under Article 24. However, it is also a fact that the effectiveness of that role can be legitimately questioned at times when the Council fails to act swiftly or decisively. Thousands of innocent lives continue to be lost and humanitarian crises reach catastrophic proportions, and the fundamental United Nations objective of safeguarding humankind is compromised by the selfish national interests of some Member States. We therefore urge the Council to definitively take on its responsibilities and intensify its efforts to fight the just battle. It should also ensure that commitments undertaken to respond to international security crises are met without conditions, in order to lessen the human cost.

Despite the Security Council's mandated responsibilities, the burden of responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security does not lie solely with it. Each region and each nation State and its citizens has an important role to play in that regard. It is our duty to shield our citizenry from all forms of conflict that deprive them of their basic human rights and livelihoods. It is also our responsibility to protect them from crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes and crimes of aggression. In that connection, Botswana remains steadfast in its commitment to the principles of democracy, accountable and inclusive governance, the rule of law and the promotion and protection of human rights for all. We continue to strongly support action against impunity as well as the strengthening of institutions of accountability at the national and international levels.

The uncontrolled movement of small arms and light weapons within and across borders also remains a cause for our collective concern. Their presence, illegal transfer and continued use create tensions in communities, often resulting in the eruption of conflict in one form or another. The highly destabilizing effect of such weapons therefore impels us, as responsible members of the international community, to exercise great vigilance in controlling their stockpiles and committing ourselves to ending their illegal trade.

One of the greatest threats to international peace and security is the continued use and indiscriminate testing by some countries of nuclear weapons. Until such time as those weapons have been completely destroyed, humankind's very existence remains in peril. Needless to say, guaranteeing the preservation of our planet and the human race compels responsible action not only on the part of those who possess nuclear weapons but by all who desire a stable, peaceful and secure world.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Botswana's commitment to playing its part and to giving unwavering support to the international community's efforts to promote and protect international peace and security.

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

**Mr. Marn (Slovenia):** I would like to thank the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing this important debate. The current ongoing conflicts, from Gaza, Syria, Iraq and Ukraine to the Central African Republic and South Sudan, and in particular the suffering of their civilian populations, including women and children, more than merit such a debate at this time. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their insightful briefings. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank High Commissioner Pillay for her tireless efforts in advocating for human rights over the past six years, and to wish her the best in her future endeavours.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union.

The images we see from the conflicts raging around the world are heartbreaking and saddening. What makes them even more unacceptable is the fact that they occur in spite of our consistent work over the past decade on issues relating to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes. We have been persistently building a broad framework that has led us to the point where that framework must be implemented and the words of the Charter of the United Nations on prevention put into practice.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of the international peace and security. In order to be able to uphold that responsibility, the Council should strengthen its early-warning mechanism. In that regard, we see merit in organizing regular horizon-scanning meetings with United Nations officials, including the Special Advisers

on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect, and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We would also encourage the Secretary-General, in accordance with Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, to make greater use of his power to bring the Council's attention to any matter that he believes might threaten international peace and security. Against such a background, the Council should take preventive measures.

However — and this is still most often the case — the international community, including the United Nations, tends to deal with crises when it is already too late and when a violent conflict has developed a dynamic that is difficult to derail. That leads to costly interventions. What are seen as political considerations often override concerns about violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. All violent conflicts today show the vital importance of the early-warning and prevention parts of the conflict cycle, parts that we have learned to understand so much better in recent years. The progress that has been made to date could not have been achieved without the education and expertise of the Secretary-General's Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect, whose functions include acting as an early-warning mechanism for preventing potential situations that could result in mass atrocities, as well as the important role of the Special Representatives on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children and Armed Conflict. The Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative addresses those lacunae, and we welcome the establishment of an internal coordination system within the United Nations, which we hope will soon be put into meaningful practice, including within the United Nations country teams.

When conflicts cannot be prevented, the Security Council must act promptly to end them. Furthermore, if genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity are threatening or ongoing, it is imperative that the permanent members of the Council not exercise the right of veto to thwart efforts to take the measures necessary to prevent or address such situations. In cases where such atrocities are committed, accountability for those crimes is crucial, not only in order to prevent future atrocities but also to build confidence in society. Slovenia is a strong supporter of the use of the International Criminal Court to ensure accountability where necessary.

In conclusion, Slovenia welcomes the resolution adopted today (resolution 2171 (2014)). Conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes are at the core of our foreign-policy priorities. In that regard, we pay particular attention to the use of mediation as part of the larger toolkit for preventing and resolving conflicts and achieving sustainable peace, and for enhancing United Nations mediation efforts and promoting the use of mediation in capacity-building at all levels. Given the vital importance of preventing and resolving conflicts and ensuring that they do not recur, we must continue to advance mediation mechanisms, build mediation capacities, support the inclusion of women and strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional actors in those areas. We should also pay attention to education aimed at fostering a culture of peace, tolerance and prosperity.

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

**Mr. van der Vliet** (Netherlands): The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

I would like to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this important debate. We also appreciate the briefings by the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and we welcome and support the resolution adopted today (resolution 2171 (2014)).

The primary responsibility for the prevention of conflicts and the protection of civilian lives lies with each State. At the same time, the responsibility for the prevention of conflicts is ultimately shared by the international community. The United Nations was founded for that purpose and is well placed to play a leading role in that regard. A system-wide United Nations approach to conflict prevention is essential. Peace, the protection of human rights, justice and development must be pursued in a comprehensive way.

I would like to focus briefly on three elements — the preventive toolkit of the Security Council, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the protection of human rights.

In various past efforts, the United Nations has, through a combination of analysis, early warning, rapid response and partnerships, been able to help defuse tensions and crises and assist parties in resolving disputes peacefully. We commend the work of the Department of Political Affairs in that regard and would

like to take this opportunity to reiterate our continued support for its work.

In order to be successful in preventive action, there is also a need for the Security Council to respond more quickly and decisively to emerging threats to peace. In that regard, we would welcome the so-called horizon-scannings, or general briefings, by the Secretary-General on emerging conflicts and possible volatile situations as a more regular and permanent feature on the Council's agenda.

Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations provides a clear mandate to investigate any situation that might endanger the maintenance of international peace and security and offers a range of tools to settle disputes peacefully before they escalate. It is important that the Council make full use of those tools, including the serious consideration of the idea of preventive missions.

Peacekeeping missions also have an important peacebuilding component that focuses on stabilization and preventing the emergence of new conflicts. The Netherlands commends the rule-of-law aspects of such missions, including capacity-building efforts and human rights protection, mass atrocities prevention, accountability mechanisms and the principle of the responsibility to protect. All of that helps to prevent further escalation of conflicts. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to a review of United Nations peacekeeping and recommend that that aspect receive ample attention.

The Netherlands reiterates the crucial role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In that regard, we would like to commend the efforts of the United Kingdom to increase the participation of women in United Nations peacekeeping missions through the creation and support of a senior women's talent pipeline.

On the peaceful settlement of disputes, the Kingdom of the Netherlands is deeply committed to their peaceful settlement and is proud to be the host country for, inter alia, the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. We strongly encourage the Council to take measures to expand the use of the peaceful settlement of disputes, in relation to both State and non-State actors.

Under Articles 34 and 36 of the Charter, the Council can recommend that parties settle their disputes peacefully through various means of dispute resolution.

The Council can also suggest the specific form it deems most suitable for the occasion and request to be briefed about the results. Where the jurisdiction of the Court has been established, the Council can also strongly urge the parties to take their dispute to the International Court of Justice. Furthermore, the Council could encourage parties to come to an agreement to accept the Court's jurisdiction for their particular dispute even when that jurisdiction has not yet been established.

In that context, we particularly welcome the recent visit of the Security Council to The Hague and its historic meeting with the International Court of Justice. We are confident that that visit contributed to increased mutual understanding and future cooperation between those two principal organs of the United Nations.

Finally, on human rights, one of the most essential factors in preventing conflict and avoiding tensions within societies is ensuring and protecting the basic human rights of all parts of the population, providing redress for grievances and ensuring accountability for mass atrocities. In that regard, the Netherlands would like to take this opportunity to commend the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. We especially want to honour the High Commissioner, Ms. Navi Pillay, for the way in which she has fulfilled her important mandate over the past years. Ms. Pillay has been a cornerstone of the efforts that the United Nations has made to address human rights issues worldwide. Her tireless dedication, clear and insightful viewpoints, and especially her courage to say what is needed when it is needed, have been an example to us all.

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

**Mr. Šćepanović** (Montenegro): We thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's important open debate and congratulate you on your country's presidency of the Security Council in the month of August. We also thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their valuable briefings. We also welcome the adoption of resolution 2171 (2014) today. We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the High Commissioner for her outstanding work during her tenure in office.

Montenegro aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

I would like, however, to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Conflicts have a devastating impact on the world. At least one fifth of the world's population continues to live in violent or conflict-affected countries. It is striking that conflict hits the most vulnerable the hardest. It is our duty to help resolve conflicts, and we must share the burden and provide new generations with a safer environment. Conflict resolution and the building and maintenance of sustainable societies are the greatest challenges of our time.

With the many real challenges that remain to be addressed in the current, ever more fragile international peace and security context, we must recognize that we have a long way to go before we truly have an effective system. Turning understanding into action and moving from a culture of reaction to one of prevention is a demanding task. We all know, from many examples across the world, that prevention and early intervention can and do work and is cost-effective. That is why I would like to underline the importance of United Nations early-detection and early-warning mechanisms. Our focus should definitely be directed towards preventive measures in order to prevent crises from developing and escalating and to mitigate the possible repercussions thereof. To that end, Montenegro, as a member of the Group of Friends of Mediation, advocates that mediation be truly established as a core function of the United Nations, as prescribed in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The responsibility to protect and its further operationalization must also remain a priority. In this era of accountability, perpetrators of crimes against humanity should not go unpunished.

Regional and subregional organizations could play a positive and valuable role in facilitating the beginning of dialogue and the establishment of a conciliatory tone when approaching conflict resolution, as we have seen in many instances in Africa. When the regional or subregional approach does not bear fruit, it is for the United Nations and the Security Council to step in and assert ownership. In order to make sure that the United Nations maintains its rightful place as the central mechanism for global governance, the Organization has to assume a modern, reformed profile that recognizes new geopolitical realities and the world's evolving and multifaceted conditions and environments.

Let me point out that threats today must be tackled through joint efforts and in an integrated manner across the entire nexus of development, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, the rule of law and human rights. Proceeding in that manner, we can achieve societies that live in enduring peace. Given its vast accumulated expertise and knowledge, the United Nations is well positioned to provide such holistic and tailored support to nationally led undertakings by Member States.

In order to have peaceful and conflict-free societies, there has to be an enabling environment for inclusive institution-building, which assumes the active engagement of national and local authorities, parliaments, communities, civil society, academia and women's groups. Only in that way will political reforms be able to take root and open space for the development of national dialogues, reconciliation efforts and other initiatives.

Equal focus also needs to be placed on transparency, accountability and effective management and oversight, with a view to strengthening the legitimacy and integrity of security institutions. In combination, all of those aspects will contribute to our common objective of maintaining international peace and security.

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

**Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): It is not enough to try to eliminate existing conflicts in the world or to create mechanisms designed to prevent them; it is necessary that the root causes that induce them and nurture them be eradicated. Many conflicts result from the interests of hegemonic and imperialist domination, acts of aggression, the struggle to control natural resources, persistent colonialist and neocolonialist strategies and practices, today's unfair and exclusionary international order, unequal exchange, discrimination, xenophobia, interventionism and violations of the right to self-determination of peoples. What is required to prevent conflicts is solidarity, international cooperation and assistance, and joint action to eliminate poverty, unemployment, hunger, inequality and their root causes.

The Security Council certainly has an important role to play with regard to conflict prevention, but it must perform those functions in accordance with the powers granted to it under the Charter of the United Nations. The members of the Security Council should advocate peaceful solutions and show a strong,

effective and clear resistance to the recourse to war. They should take every opportunity to adopt courses of action that safeguard the lives of people involved or affected by conflict. They should never promote armed confrontation, much less be champions of the philosophy of regime change, which in practice contradicts the pacifist essence of the Organization.

However, we do condemn Council inaction before prolonged conflicts, such as that between Israel and Palestine. How are we to understand the Council's passivity and ineffectiveness faced with the killing of innocent Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip, who are victims of an excessive and indiscriminate use of force? It is undoubtedly a question that has no answer, given how much remains to be done by the Security Council and the international community on conflict prevention.

Cuba reiterates its call for an end to all acts undermining the sovereignty and the right to self-determination of any State. We therefore reiterate here our resounding rejection of the recent plan funded by the United States Agency for International Development, which runs contrary to the Cuban people's exercise of their right to self-determination. The plan seeks to make young Cubans into agents of destabilization, promotes measures contrary to the constitutional order endorsed by the Cuban people and has used, beginning in 2009, young Latin Americans recruited to that end. American officials, who have condoned the authorship and implementation of the plan, are showing the hostile and intrusive nature of their policy towards Cuba, the goal of which is to destabilize the country in order to overthrow the political, economic and social order established by the Cuban people. Cuba demands the cessation of all subversive, interventionist, illegal and covert actions by the United States.

In conclusion, I would like clarify for the representative of Israel that the over 1,000 Jewish people living in Cuba enjoy every right and privilege, including the right to emigrate to Israel, which is a right that they exercise freely. What does not exist in Cuba today is the concept of Judaism as a bellicose cause or a pretext for indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilians. In Cuba, the Jewish people are Communist while at the same time practicing their Judaism, as their own religion, and enjoying the exercise of their full rights. In Cuba, the Jewish people do not participate in indiscriminate bombings against innocent civilians.

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

**Mr. Do Hung Viet** (Viet Nam): Viet Nam commends the United Kingdom presidency for the initiative to hold today's open debate on conflict prevention. We appreciate the informative and insightful briefings by the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Our topic today is all the more pertinent in the wake of a number of crises that the world is watching with profound sorrow across the continents. Talk about conflict prevention, to some, could be seen as *déjà vu* all over again. Nevertheless, time and again, the international community has to bear witness to numerous conflicts that, in hindsight, could have been averted or at least moderated. Many lessons were elaborated at the open debate in this very Chamber on war, its lessons and the search for permanent peace last January (see S/PV.7105), yet the fact is that only more simmering tensions and conflicts have broken out during the intervening months. It is therefore imperative to revisit the lessons learned and the measures for conflict prevention, and our delegation would like to touch upon the following.

First, conflicts stem from the wishful thinking that the imposition of force from a position of strength will work, and from an ungrounded belief in power politics and its accompanying aggressive behaviour. History has, however, provided us with ample evidence that the use of force will only result in massive loss of lives and material destruction. The use of force should no longer have any standing in the twenty-first century.

Secondly, human progress since the end of the Second World War has provided us with strong institutions of peace, which we must hold dear and strongly promote. Faced with warning signs of inter-State and intra-State conflicts, including those related to territorial disputes, international law and its fundamental principles must be upheld, especially the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity. It should be stressed that, in the wake of discord and disagreement, the most important principle that the parties concerned must uphold is the need to accede to common international and regional rules and

normative frameworks. In that connection, we welcome the related elements set out in the resolution adopted by the Council earlier today (resolution 2171 (2014)).

Thirdly, basic principles must be translated into concrete actions. Parties related to inter-State and intra-State conflicts, bearing in mind the potential severe consequences of violence and coercion, should be supported to engage in sincere dialogue and other means of peaceful settlement. International and regional organizations should promote such efforts and facilitate efforts addressing the root causes of conflicts. Such crucial engagement, if conducted in the appropriate manner, could be conducive to more creative solutions to outstanding issues.

In that respect, over the past decades, the United Nations, including the Security Council, has played a critical role thanks to the creative and timely employment of the various mechanisms and tools available to it. Those include the important role of the Secretary-General and his special envoys, good offices missions, fact-finding missions, mediation, reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts, the employment of which in other parts of the world could be further studied.

As a result, the growing workload at the United Nations related to conflict prevention can be interpreted as commensurate with the growing role accorded to the Organization. That can also be seen as an indication that more needs to be done by the United Nations, in which the primary responsibility is given to the Security Council, especially its permanent members. In doing so, coordination among the Council, the Secretary-General, the General Assembly and regional organizations should be further promoted for better information sharing and early warning for effective conflict prevention.

The international community today is equipped with not a few tools, lessons and measures for effective conflict prevention. But the ultimate reason for a number of failures has been the lack of strategic trust among the parties concerned and the failure to understand that what the parties could have achieved by preventing and avoiding conflicts would far outweigh what they did after giving up chances for peace.

The Security Council, together with other international and regional partners, could engage in promoting a culture of peace and proactive prevention, including by adhering to international law and common rules and norms and by taking concrete action under

frameworks of dialogue and consultation. Only by doing so will we be able to live up to our task of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

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

**Mr. Laram** (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and thank you for holding this open debate.

This topic has particular importance for my country on the basis of our foreign policy, which has contributed to international efforts to prevent conflict, to deal with its root causes and to work with the parties concerned towards a peaceful settlement at a time when the international community is responsible for saving future generations from the scourge of war, as provided for by the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations. Nevertheless, since the establishment of the United Nations, the world has witnessed the outbreak of many conflicts, even though their root causes have been addressed. Such disputes have become non-State armed conflicts, giving rise to many material and human losses that exceed those of international armed conflicts, as well as the exacerbation of international terrorism, poverty, the lack of development and ethnic and religious persecution.

The facts on the ground around the world lead us to conclude that there is a need to operationalize the tools adopted by the United Nations and to enable international and regional organizations to assume their roles in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter so as to prevent disputes from reaching the stage of armed conflict. The mechanisms outlined in the concept note (S/2014/572, annex) that you, Mr. President, kindly provided, such as early warning and the role of the Secretary-General and his special representatives and special envoys, as well as preventive missions, must also be put into practice, since we believe that such measures will help to prevent conflict and to maintain international peace and security. Since conflict prevention is a proactive step, the effectiveness of such measures requires, in our view, short-, medium- and long-term strategies to assist implementation by all the parties concerned so as to establish an international environment of stability.

As we discuss this important issue, perhaps we should recall today the fact that, in its presidential statement of 31 January 1992 (S/23500), issued at the

end of a meeting held at the level of Heads of State and Government, the Security Council stressed the importance of peacemaking and peacekeeping, as well as preventive diplomacy, to prevent conflict. If preventive diplomacy seeks to resolve disputes before they arise, the promotion and strengthening of institutions that support peace will ensure non-recurrence.

Experience has frequently proved that mediation, in particular diplomatic mediation, is one of the fundamental ways to prevent and to resolve disputes, as provided for by the Charter of the United Nations. In the context of international conflict prevention efforts, the State of Qatar has therefore participated in mediation between many conflicting parties. That has been welcomed and supported by the Security Council, and peaceful settlements that led to the prevention of many conflicts in the Middle East and Africa and their human, economic and financial costs have been found.

We welcome resolution 2171 (2014), adopted by the Security Council today. We believe that it contains many important elements that will contribute to international conflict prevention efforts. Allow me to underscore the following.

The first aspect is the need to act early in order to identify those cases that may lead to conflict and to use special means, such as early warning, mediation and the efforts of the Security Council and the Secretary-General, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international resolutions.

The second element is the need to address the root causes of conflicts, in particular the lack of development, social justice and non-respect for human rights.

Thirdly, if a conflict occurs, peacemaking must be undertaken.

Fourthly, the protection of civilians must be a priority in conflict, while underscoring the responsibility of States to protect civilians.

Finally, there is a need for international assistance to promote peace measures and the implementation of agreements between the parties. Peace institutions must also be supported.

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

**Mrs. Sucuoğlu** (Turkey): At the outset, allow me to express our appreciation to the United Kingdom

presidency for scheduling this important debate. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their insightful briefings.

Today's debate is not only timely but also has symbolic value. As we commemorate the centenary of the start of the First World War this year, the eruption of episodes of violence around the globe, the surge in terrorism and violent extremism and the increase in atrocity crimes, coupled with the growing number of displacements and humanitarian emergencies, are becoming increasingly widespread. Those worrisome developments hamper the capabilities of the international community, the United Nations and the Security Council to ensure timely and effective responses. I would like to take this opportunity to touch upon a number of key points that Turkey sees as crucial to consider in the framework of this debate.

The first issue that I want to stress is mediation. It is an effective cross-cutting tool that is consent-based and applies to all stages of the conflict cycle. It is the most cost-effective and efficient way to prevent and resolve conflicts. The United Nations has successfully supported a wide range of mediation efforts since its inception and has taken important steps to enhance its mediation capabilities in recent years. It is necessary to continue to develop such United Nations capabilities with political, technical and financial support.

The Group of Friends of Mediation, founded in 2010 and co-chaired by Turkey and Finland, has expedited its efforts to contribute to the United Nations in that respect. I would also like to underline that promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue is one of the most effective ways to prevent conflicts. With that understanding, Turkey, together with Spain, launched the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative in 2005.

Our second point is related to regional organizations. Although the primary responsibility remains with the Security Council, regional and subregional organizations play an important role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in their respective regions. Regional organizations have unique perspectives and a local understanding of the conflicts, cultural norms and security challenges within their regions, which gives them a comparative advantage. The most recent General Assembly resolution 68/303, initiated by the Group of Friends of Mediation and adopted only a few weeks ago, is the first resolution

on mediation that recognizes the key role that regional and subregional organizations play in that field. In addition, Turkey welcomes the cooperation between the Secretariat and regional organizations on mediation, specifically capacity-building.

Turkey also attaches great importance to the United Nations regional offices. They are crucial tools for early warning, prevention and mediation. At the same time, they are essential mechanisms that provide the United Nations with direct access to information from the field. In addition, the idea of preventive missions mentioned in Security Council presidential statement S/PRST/1999/34 could be further explored as an innovative conflict prevention mechanism.

Our third point is on the importance of national ownership. The peaceful resolution of disputes is a sovereign responsibility embedded in the Charter of the United Nations. Yet, especially in the present climate, where the growing number of conflicts and the increase in violent extremism and terrorism, which take their toll on innocent civilian populations, the international system also needs to provide appropriate responses for the protection of civilians. The best way forward is to prioritize support for the building of local and national capacity. Such endeavours must be supported by the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and other actors when the need arises. The Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund are two very important tools that can be used to support national capacities in that respect.

Finally, security is a precondition for development and development generates more security. Conflict prevention should therefore be seen as a comprehensive approach that integrates security, development and human rights. In that regard, we would also like to touch upon the interface between security and development and the role that women can play in that respect. As we embark upon a process to develop a set of sustainable development goals for post-2015, we believe that gender equality and the empowerment of women should be at the centre of all our solutions and commitments. That will also further our agenda on women, peace and security.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the best way to combat threats to global peace and security and to prevent conflicts is through a unified display of determination and the cooperation of the international community. Political divisions within the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council, deprive

the world of its most important guarantee for global peace.

Finally, this body is a serious platform, which compels us not to respond to the voice of one delegation.

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

**Ms. Lingenfelder** (South Africa): South Africa would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to this important debate on conflict prevention and the maintenance of international peace and security. We thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his insightful briefing, and we would also like to pay tribute to Ms. Navi Pillay, outgoing United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, for her hard work and commitment in working to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights for all humankind. In the same breath, we welcome Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan's appointment as the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, and we look forward to working with him.

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and with that to be delivered by the representative of the Republic of Zimbabwe on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

South Africa has long recognized the importance of conflict prevention in averting such outbreaks. Besides the humanitarian consequences of conflict, the escalation of peacekeeping costs over the years has also required that the international community focus more on preventing conflicts rather than merely managing them once they have started. Conflict prevention is anchored in the text of the Charter of the United Nations, specifically in Chapter VI, which gives the Security Council a substantive toolkit for the pacific settlement of disputes and the maintenance of international peace and security, including negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means of the parties' choice.

We welcome the progress the United Nations has already made through a plethora of initiatives such as the good offices of the Secretary-General, the creation of special envoys, the establishment of an early-warning system and the Mediation Support Unit, and the deployment of special political missions, country teams and regional offices, as well as other diplomatic

initiatives aimed at preventing conflicts. Security Council action should support such efforts rather than be at odds with them. We have seen occasions where the Council's actions have undermined United Nations and regional efforts to mediate conflicts peacefully.

As a member of the Friends of Mediation, South Africa is part of an effort by Member States of the General Assembly to reset the focus on preventive measures for conflict management, and we urge all Member States, including Council members, to heed the Assembly's call for the provision of sustained political support, expertise and timely and adequate resources both for mediation efforts and for implementing agreed-on outcomes of mediation processes. It is critical that we ensure predictable resources for mediation efforts and for support to United Nations mediation capacity-building activities and those of regional and subregional organizations.

Africa continues to bear the brunt of violent conflicts. For that reason, the African Union has worked tirelessly since its inception to establish a comprehensive Peace and Security Architecture founded on the recognition that both preventive diplomacy and post-conflict reconstruction and development are key to eradicating conflicts on the continent. In our subregion, the Southern African Development Community continues to play a critical role in ensuring subregional stability. In that context, the region's Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, which South Africa is soon to chair, has undertaken mediation efforts to quell potential conflicts. The efforts of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to end conflict in that region are a welcome step. In that regard, we would like to urge that the Nairobi declaration signed in December 2013 be fully implemented as soon as possible. South Africa looks forward to participating in the Great Lakes Private Sector Investment Conference, to be organized in December by the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa in collaboration with the ICGLR.

The mechanisms that the African Union has put in place in this area testify to the continent's commitment to addressing peace and security challenges in a comprehensive manner. With that in mind, the African Union has always striven to deepen its partnership with the United Nations on matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, while at the same time recognizing that the peaceful resolution of disputes remains a sovereign responsibility. The

strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union for maintaining peace and security is informed by the reality that regional organizations have a comparative advantage in confronting such challenges within their regions. All of these efforts are anchored in the United Nations Charter, particularly Article 33, which establishes mediation as one of the diplomatic methods for the pacific settlement of disputes. As the nature of conflicts has tended to change, becoming intra- rather than inter-State, preventive diplomacy has become an indispensable tool for both the United Nations and regional organizations.

In the last few years, we have witnessed a reduction in the number of violent conflicts as a result of the collective efforts of the United Nations, the international community and regional organizations. However, many countries' recent relapses into conflict are disconcerting, and we need to work together to prevent the loss of hard-earned gains.

In conclusion, South Africa strongly believes that dialogue is critical. We therefore hold the view that in preventing lapses and relapses into conflict, we must always underscore the importance of creating and maintaining peace through inclusive dialogue, reconciliation and reintegration. In developing mechanisms for early warning and conflict prevention, our efforts should always be made in the context of the rule of law, with respect for national sovereignty and in line with the Charter of the United Nations. Finding a global strategy for conflict prevention, including traditional means of mediation as well as the peacekeeping and peacebuilding methods deployed under the Charter, is essential. We firmly believe that socioeconomic development, lying at the heart of conflict prevention, is a critical component for realizing sustainable peace and can help develop economic opportunities in countries affected by conflict.

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

**Mrs. Chikava (Zimbabwe):** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 15 members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). SADC aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate on conflict prevention. I would also like to thank

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their comprehensive briefings.

Today's debate enables us to exchange views on how to prevent conflicts against a backdrop of the growing numbers of simultaneous crises that are facing the world today. The nature of such conflicts has changed dramatically in recent years and poses a correspondingly greater challenge to the maintenance of international peace and security. The causes and dynamics of these threats to peace and security demand innovative and robust approaches to conflict prevention and resolution.

SADC believes that the top priority for the maintenance of peace and security is enhancing our ability to manage and contain disputes before they break out into violent conflicts. Our greatest challenge is to accurately predict and be proactive in forestalling armed conflict. The currently overstretched United Nations peacekeeping missions, and their high financial cost, as well as the human toll that war takes, attest to the importance of conflict prevention. Given that the overwhelming majority of contemporary conflicts are intra-State, and that the dynamics of such internal conflicts are often the result of poverty, underdevelopment, economic deprivation and exclusion, prevention should be underpinned by sustainable development. SADC believes that there is an inexorable link between peace and development. There can be no peace without development and, conversely, there can be no development without peace.

The billions of dollars spent on conflict every year could be put to better use by humankind through the prevention of conflicts before they occur. The human costs of war, including death, injury, the destruction of infrastructure, displacement and their repercussions, cannot be allowed to continue and must be prevented. It is our collective responsibility to stop this cult of violence.

Under the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and has been accorded specific tools for preventing conflicts. Its preventive role is set out in paragraph 1, Article 33, in Chapter VI of the Charter, which lists a variety of the tools at the Council's disposal, including negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, preventive diplomacy and the involvement of regional organizations. Effective prevention requires a

comprehensive and coherent strategy. The comparative advantage of regional and subregional organizations often makes the difference needed to prevent tense situations from deteriorating into violent conflict. They are well placed to understand the root causes of a conflict because of their proximity to the crisis and are well positioned to influence their prevention and resolution.

The African Union, through its Peace and Security Architecture, has managed to identify various factors and root causes of conflict on the continent and has established institutions and mechanisms to address them. The establishment of a continental early-warning system under Article 12 of the Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council facilitates the anticipation and prevention of conflicts in Africa. The Panel of the Wise also plays a significant role in mediation and conflict resolution. In addition, regional and subregional mechanisms have taken steps to develop early-warning systems, although they are at different stages in their efforts.

SADC launched the Regional Early Warning Centre in July 2010, whose overall objective is to strengthen the regional mechanism for conflict prevention management and resolution in line with the provision of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation in the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ. The SADC system is based on the presence of a national early-warning centre in each State, which feeds into the regional early-warning centre based in Gaborone.

SADC has also established a stand-by brigade, whose mandate includes, inter alia, undertaking intervention for peace and security restoration at the request of a Member State. Such a request was made with regard to the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is essential for the United Nations to cooperate with regional and subregional organizations and harness their comparative advantage in order to develop effective preventive mechanisms. SADC wishes to reiterate that conflict prevention is more cost-effective than peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We call on the United Nations to continue its efforts to assist the Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union and subregional organizations in building capacity to address the security challenges the continent is facing.

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

**Ms. Schwalger** (New Zealand): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate and for initiating work on a resolution on conflict prevention (resolution 2171 (2014)).

New Zealand is concerned that the Security Council has been debating conflict prevention as a thematic issue for over a decade. But, too often, conflict prevention has been little more than a thematic vision. The Council has been much less successful in implementing practical conflict prevention outcomes in specific cases.

We should recall Kofi Annan's 2006 warning that "[a]n unacceptable gap remains between rhetoric and reality in the area of conflict prevention" (*A/60/891, para. 4*). That unacceptable gap still exists. New Zealand had hoped that today's debate might be an opportunity to shift the focus to making prevention of conflict a practical reality. Resolution 2171 (2014) is a useful reiteration of some important concepts, and we welcome the language concerning human rights, conflict and insecurity. New Zealand welcomes attempts to move from abstract discussion and start considering how it can respond differently and respond better in specific cases.

In 2002, the Council established the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, which was initially quite successful in developing practical conflict prevention methodologies. In 2003 and 2004, under Angola's chairmanship, the Working Group exercised important leadership on conflict prevention in Guinea-Bissau and Burundi. It applied methodologies similar to those now used in the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configurations.

There is, however, no clear record of why that innovative leadership lapsed after Angola left the Council. But the precedent remains. The question at hand is how to recover that will and those practical mechanisms. In recent years, changes to the Council's working methods have made it more difficult to play the preventive role. Relevant tasks have become more pre-programmed, more formal and more concentrated in a few penholders' hands. Innovations, such as horizon-scanning, have been controversial, but we welcome continuing attempts to improve the concept.

The prevention gap can be a serious problem in post-conflict situations, even where there is a large-scale United Nations presence. That was demonstrated in 2006 in Timor-Leste, and again more recently in South Sudan and the Central African Republic. We must learn from those experiences of how the Council exercises its big picture oversight and acknowledge that a prevention culture must be more a part of its day-to-day work. With the right consultation mechanisms and sufficient resourcing, regional or subregional organizations can play a very significant prevention role. There is now significant experience in effective cooperation in Africa, the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere.

We must also be alert to the political reality that prevention will often give rise to concerns about intervention and sovereignty. Discussing prevention in the abstract can exacerbate such concerns, but in specific cases the parties are often interested in meaningful steps. Yet considerable political sensitivity will remain on the part of Governments and other parties and must be handled with discretion, neutrality and flexibility. Traditional Council working methods are not well adapted to such tasks. In particular, permanent members often dominate the discussion on relevant issues, which can lead to push back and ultimately to inaction. We must also be mindful of the Council's traditional tendency to delegate conflict-prevention to the Secretariat and that the stigma of appearing on the Council's formal agenda keeps some countries from seeking early assistance.

The political risks and opportunities associated with prevention will of course differ from case to case, so the prevention tools that might be applied in any situation will often differ as well. But we must clearly and unequivocally acknowledge that discussion is not enough. The Council must also demonstrate a sustained commitment to specific situations. Only then will we close the gap between rhetoric and reality.

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

**Mr. Naanda** (Namibia): I wish to express my sincere congratulations to the United Kingdom on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of August. I also wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate, which my delegation hopes will highlight the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the

United Nations, in support of conflict-prevention and peacebuilding activities and forging greater regional and national ownership.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Republic of Zimbabwe on behalf of the Southern African Development Community and with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

While it remains the primary responsibility of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the Chapter I of the Charter of the United Nations, conflicts continue to have a negative impact on social, economic and political development, particularly in Africa. There is therefore an urgent need to create an environment conducive to peace and development. We believe that such an environment can be created through the promotion of the rule of law, which is essential for peace, the prevention of armed conflicts and the enhancement of cooperation among States.

It is worth noting that Chapter VIII of the Charter encourages cooperation with regional bodies in efforts to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. Furthermore, it is important to note and to recognize that regional and subregional organizations are closer to erupting situations and are not only familiar with the issues, but also understand the dynamics of the conflict in any given region. Neighbouring countries also often bear the burden and consequences of conflicts in their surroundings. It is for that reason that my delegation supports the principle of complementarity between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations in preventing conflict and thereby maintaining peace and security.

In that context, Namibia commends the cooperation agreement between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council, which is aimed at enhancing and strengthening closer cooperation between the AU and the United Nations in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa. That kind of cooperation will enhance Africa's institutional capacity for conflict prevention and resolution and ensure sustainable peace on the continent.

International peace and security is critical for the promotion of the rule of law. The Security Council is at the heart of that endeavour. As a member of the committee of 10, we would like to underline the fact that, in order

to become more effective, the comprehensive reform of the Security Council to make it more democratic and transparent and enable it to better serve humankind has become more relevant. We note that, faced with some of the current international conflicts, the choice of action or inaction by the Security Council is based only on self-serving political considerations, which may hinder the effective implementation of its mandate. Calls for the reform of the Council in order to create harmony can never be overstated.

There is no doubt that the successful prevention of conflicts depends on the skilful identification of early warning signs and preventive diplomacy, mediation, reconciliation and confidence-building measures.

Protecting humankind from the scourge of war is the principle foundation of the United Nations. Namibia believes that this noble goal can be achieved only when all Member States refrain from the use or threat of the use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purpose and principles of justice and international law. The right to self-determination, non-interference in the domestic affairs of other States, respect for human rights and respect for equal rights for all without distinction on the basis of race, language, religion or cultural or social character are obligations under the Charter that should guide State conduct at the international level.

In conclusion, while this debate is devoted to conflict prevention, it should be highlighted that the international community, working in concert and motivated by the common objective of achieving international peace, should identify the root causes of conflicts in the world with the aim of finding lasting solutions. Namibia welcomes forums like this, where we can collectively take stock and exchange views on the state of conflict prevention in the world.

**The President:** The representative of Azerbaijan has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

**Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan):** I would like to make a further statement.

The statement made by the Armenian representative earlier today was nothing but the standard Armenian effort to mislead and to substitute notions, comparing apples and oranges. That is especially true in the case of conflict prevention and conflict resolution: although they may be the same fruits, they are not the same things. That is preposterous when one is speaking

about an unresolved conflict that started more than 20 years ago.

The Security Council witnessed today once again another effort by the Armenian representative to distract the general membership from the annexationist policy of his country towards Azerbaijan and from the fact that Armenia has occupied a large portion of Azerbaijani territory and ethnically cleansed a large portion of the Azerbaijani population. Armenians' unconstructive approach to the negotiations, its interest in maintaining the status quo, its evasion of the Madrid peace plan, its refusal to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, its policy of ruthless ethnic cleansing and the latest provocative actions on the front line, which are aimed at undermining the peace process, all provide the strongest grounds for the international community to impose substantial sanctions against Armenia.

The continued presence of Armenia's armed forces in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan remains the biggest threat to the peace process. Therefore, first and foremost, the armed forces of Armenia must withdraw from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The earlier Armenia realizes this, the sooner peace, stability and predictability can be restored in the region.

**The President:** The representative of Armenia has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

**Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia):** I asked for the floor to make a further statement in response to the comments made by the representative of Azerbaijan, and I refer to my earlier statement, in which I spoke about the risks of a resumption of conflict and the prevention of a resumption as an equally important priority that is of concern to us. I referred to the most recent escalation and the most recent developments, which have been a matter of serious concern. I also referred to the lessons to be drawn from the most recent developments. Those lessons are many.

First, the alternative to a peaceful settlement of the conflict is sheer catastrophe: a return to the war, destruction and deprivation of the 1990s. Armenia has no interest in war, but is capable of defending peace and determined to do so.

Secondly, genuine and lasting peace will be based on a compromise. The proposals by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group's

co-Chairs in Kazan, Russian Federation, in 2011, which stem from the Madrid principles and are based on the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, particularly those pertaining to the non-use or threat of use of force, territorial integrity, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and the elements outlined in the statements by the Presidents of the co-Chair countries between 2009 and 2013, represent in their integrity a reasonable compromise for the peaceful settlement of the conflict. They enjoy Armenia's full support.

Thirdly, the road to peace is paved with good will, genuine political commitment and leadership. Confidence-building measures are essential requisites of a peace process at all stages. In our specific situation, strict adherence to the terms of the 1994 ceasefire agreement and the 1995 ceasefire strengthening agreement, which was concluded on a trilateral basis, the withdrawal of snipers and the implementation of a mechanism for the investigation of incidents of ceasefire violations along the front lines represent

credible and tangible verification measures and must be implemented without delay.

Finally, the rhetoric of war and hatred has no place in a genuine peace process. Public figures should refrain from resorting to hate speech and glorifying the perpetrators of hate crimes. Silencing the voices of peace and reconciliation and stifling efforts to promote trust and confidence among peoples are the exact opposite of preventing conflicts. Such deplorable measures underscore the significance of the need to recognize the function of protecting human rights and freedoms as a fundamental component in a comprehensive, structured approach to conflict prevention. Consistent failures in human rights protection in Azerbaijan are the underlying reasons behind the recent escalation of tensions.

**The President:** There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.*