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Seventieth session

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51st plenary meeting
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New York

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

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

Agenda item 111

Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/70/300)

The President: As members are aware, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of matters with which the Council has ceased to deal. In that connection, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General issued as document A/70/300.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of that document?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 111?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 30

Report of the Security Council

Report of the Security Council (A/70/2)

The President: It is a pleasure to preside over this important meeting of the General Assembly as it considers the annual report of the Security Council (A/70/2). The introduction to the report was prepared by New Zealand, as President of the Council in July, and is presented today by the current President for the month of November, Ambassador Rycroft of the United Kingdom. According to the Charter of the United Nations, the annual report of the Security Council shall include an account of the measures that the Council has decided upon, or taken, to maintain international peace and security. As we look around the world today, it is clear that the Security Council plays a fundamental role in the Organization as it seeks to prevent and end conflicts and tackle other threats to peace and security, including violent extremism.

The Council carries out its mandates on behalf of all Member States. Therefore, the Assembly's consideration of this report of the Council is an important aspect of the transparency and accountability that the wider membership expects with regard to the Security Council. The annual report was among the many issues discussed when I addressed the Security Council open debate on working methods last month (see S/PV.7539). While the report has improved in recent years, Member States have also called for further improvements in its analytical quality.

However, the report is only one of the many interactions between the Assembly and the Council, and such interaction will be particularly vital during this year of joint activity. As Member States know, the Presidents of the Security Council and General Assembly are tasked with bringing forward the process to select and appoint the next Secretary-General,

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and I hope that we will be able to circulate a joint letter clarifying that overall process very soon. The President of the Security Council and I have also been working together on a peacebuilding review and the reappointment of co-facilitators in September to work toward concurrent and identical General Assembly and Security Council resolutions as the formal outcomes of that process.

I look forward to hearing Member States' views on this year's annual report of the Council, as well as proposals on how best to make it a more useful tool for the General Assembly's consideration, as we look to continually improve the interaction between the different organs of the United Nations.

I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, to introduce the report of the Council.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on behalf of all the members of the Security Council, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, and I thank you for arranging today's meeting.

As the President of the Security Council for the month of November, it is my honour to introduce the annual report of the Council (A/70/2), which covers the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015.

The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Over the past year, with the support of the United Nations membership, the Security Council has sought to discharge its responsibilities actively, urging the peaceful resolution of conflicts and undertaking a series of peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities all over the world.

In keeping with recent trends, the activity of the Security Council increased during the reporting period. During the period under review, the Council held 267 formal meetings, of which 248 were public. The Council adopted 65 resolutions and 27 presidential statements and issued 148 statements to the press. The Council also conducted three missions, one to Europe and Africa, which included Belgium, the Netherlands, South Sudan, Somalia and Kenya, in August 2014; one to Haiti in January 2015, and one to Africa in March 2015, which included the Central African Republic, Burundi and Ethiopia.

The situation in the Middle East featured prominently on the Council's agenda. The Council followed the security situations in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and adopted a number of resolutions. On Syria, the Security Council adopted resolution 2191 (2014), in which the Council renewed decisions regarding the authorization of United Nations agencies to deliver humanitarian aid across borders and the implementation of related monitoring mechanisms, and demanded that all parties to the Syrian domestic conflict comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. That resolution was followed by resolution 2209 (2015) concerning the use of toxic chemicals, such as chlorine, as a weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic.

On Yemen, the Council adopted resolution 2201 (2015), which demanded that the Houthis withdraw their forces from Government institutions and engage in United Nations-brokered negotiations; resolution 2204 (2015), which renewed the sanctions measures introduced by resolution 2140 (2014), after the first three individuals were listed in November; and resolution 2216 (2015), which listed an additional two individuals, Abdel-Malik al-Houthi and former President Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, and introduced an arms embargo on the individuals designated under the sanctions regime and those acting on their behalf or at their direction in Yemen.

Other developments in the Middle East figured prominently on the Council's agenda, including the Palestinian question and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and Lebanon. The Council also adopted resolution 2231 (2015), endorsing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran, following the diplomatic efforts by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Council also regularly considered the situation in Ukraine and adopted resolution 2202 (2015).

Much of the Council's activity focused on Africa, including meetings on Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan, South Sudan and Western Sahara. The Council also responded to the Ebola outbreak with the adoption of resolution 2177 (2014).

Concerning South Sudan, the Council also established a new subsidiary body, a Committee to oversee a travel ban and asset freeze, pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015). The Committee subsequently imposed sanctions on six individuals.

Thematic, general and cross-cutting issues remained a priority for the Council, including non-proliferation and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004); threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts; small arms and light weapons; the protection of civilians in armed conflict; children and armed conflict; women and peace and security; peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding; security-sector reform; sanctions; cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations; peace and security in Africa; and the rule of law.

The Council met regularly to address the threat posed by Al-Qaida, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Al-Nusra Front, foreign terrorist fighters and the spread of violent extremism. The Council adopted resolution 2170 (2014) to cut off funding for ISIL, the Al-Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida, and resolution 2199 (2015) to further constrain their financing, including new measures on the trade in oil and oil products for their benefit, as well as the looting and smuggling of antiquities from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, the Council added 32 individuals and five entities to the sanctions list of the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011).

The Council also adopted resolution 2178 (2014), addressing the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and requiring States to establish criminal offences sufficient to enable the prosecution of specified offences and calling for States to enhance international cooperation in that regard; resolution 2178 (2014) also addressed the need to combat violent extremism as an essential element of combating the threat of foreign terrorist fighters. In addition, the Council strongly condemned the escalation of attacks by Boko Haram, and expressed concern at the continuing threat posed by the group.

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The Council held an open debate on maintaining international peace and security in February 2015 (S/PV.7389), reiterating its responsibility to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council held two open debates on women and peace and security, one in October 2014 (see S/PV.7289) and the other in April 2015 (see S/PV.7428), and, at a debate in May on the protection of journalists (see S/PV.7450), the Council adopted the second-ever resolution on the subject in 10 years, resolution 2222 (2015).

In November 2014, in another innovation for the Council, the Council was briefed, for the first time, on the role of policing in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, and adopted the Council's first resolution dedicated to policing issues (resolution 2185 (2014)) to respond to the contemporary challenges of peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, consistent with usual practice, the introduction to the report was prepared by New Zealand, which held the presidency of the Security Council in July 2015. Members of the Council also contributed to the preparation of the report. I extend thanks to the Secretariat for compiling the report and to all those involved in producing it. I look forward to this morning's discussion of the report by Member States and will convey the views of members of the General Assembly to my colleagues in the Security Council.

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), allow me, at the outset, to express NAM's appreciation to you, Mr. President, for holding this debate, which will provide the General Assembly with an opportunity to examine, scrutinize and evaluate the report on the activities of the Security Council (A/70/2).

The provision in the Charter of the United Nations requiring the Council to report to the General Assembly was designed to help the Assembly, as the chief deliberative and representative organ of the United Nations, to exercise its mandate with regard to issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Member States have conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations. In that context, the Council acts on behalf of Member States. That is why NAM stresses that the Council should report and be accountable to the General Assembly, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter.

NAM underscores the need for States Members of the United Nations to fully respect the functions and powers of each principal organ of the United Nations, in particular the General Assembly, and to maintain the balance among those organs within their respective Charter-based functions and powers. NAM also stresses that the Security Council must fully observe all provisions in the Charter, as well as all of the General Assembly resolutions that clarify the Council's relationship with the Assembly and other principal organs. In that context, we affirm that Article 24 of the Charter does not necessarily provide the Security Council with the competence to address issues that fall within the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, including in the areas of norm-setting, legislation, administrative and budgetary matters, and establishing definitions, bearing in mind that the Assembly is the body primarily tasked with the progressive development of international law and its codification.

NAM reiterates its concern about the continuing encroachment by the Security Council on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which it does by addressing issues that traditionally fall within the competence of those organs. NAM is also concerned over the attempts by the Security Council to use thematic issues to expand its mandate into areas that do not pose a threat to international peace and security. NAM therefore urges the Council to confine itself to its mandate, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. All organs and bodies of the United Nations should carry out only those tasks that are established in their respective mandates.

NAM urges all States to uphold the primacy of and full respect for the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations pertaining to the functions and powers of the Assembly, and calls on the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council to conduct regular discussions and coordination among themselves regarding the agenda and programme of work of the respective principal organs that they represent. In doing so, they need to establish increased coherence and complementarities among those organs in a mutually reinforcing manner and be respectful of each other's mandates.

NAM also welcomes, as a step forward, the informal meetings held between the President of the Council for July and States Members of the United Nations on the preparation of the annual report of the Security Council, and calls for more regular interactions, each year, between the President of the Security Council for July, when the report is prepared, and the wider membership of the United Nations, which can help enhance the quality of such reports.

For years, the Non-Aligned Movement has noted that the annual reports of the Security Council continue to be a procedural overview of the meetings, activities and decisions of the Council. We call on the Security Council to submit a more explanatory, comprehensive and analytical annual report to the General Assembly, assessing the work of the Council, including cases when the Council has failed to act, and the views expressed by its members during the consideration of the agenda items under its consideration. Furthermore, NAM calls on the Security Council to elaborate on the circumstances under which it adopted particular outcomes, ranging from resolutions to presidential statements, press statements and others.

Finally, we call on the Security Council to submit special reports, when necessary, for the consideration of the General Assembly, pursuant to Article 15, paragraph 1, and Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council should ensure that its monthly assessments are comprehensive and analytical and issued in a timely fashion. The General Assembly may consider proposing parameters for the elaboration of such assessments.

Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, a cross-regional group comprised of the following 25 small and mid-sized countries working together to improve the working methods of the Security Council: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay. Currently, three ACT members are serving in the Council and in 2016 the number will remain the same.

Let me start by thanking the President of the General Assembly for holding this debate and for his dedication to the issue, most notably seen in his strong call for a more analytical report voiced in the open debate on working methods (see S/PV. 7539) held in the Council this October.

The ACT group expresses its appreciation to New Zealand for its efforts and commitment in preparing the introduction to the report (A/70/2), and to the United Kingdom for its presentation. The report summarizes past activities conducted by the Council and signals its priority areas. In that regard, it is a clear and well-organized document. However, while recognizing the challenge of keeping the document inclusive and yet concise, we would have welcomed — as previously emphasized — a stronger focus on analysis. Adding additional insights into the Council's decision-making processes would help the General Assembly to better capture the content of the report and the work of the Security Council.

ACT commends the efforts of the Security Council to enhance its transparency and effectiveness. In recent years, the Council has interacted with a great number of outside actors — civil society, non-governmental organizations, academics and others — through various types of innovative meetings, including Arria-Formula meetings and other informal interactive dialogues. The overall number of open debates, public briefings, wrap-up sessions and reports to the General Assembly has also increased. More flexible use of the range of Council products, particularly press and presidential statements, has been made in reaction to unfolding events.

The ACT group fully appreciates the introductory part of the report, the five-page section on thematic issues and the fact that part II of the report includes an overview of 43 items and situations. However, in our view, there is still room for improvement by making it more analytical. In doing so, both the Security Council and the General Assembly could make better use of the report, while fully respecting the tasks, mandates and competencies of the two bodies. To help with the aforementioned, last year at the Assembly meeting on the same issue, the ACT group offered six concrete suggestions on how the annual report could be drafted, the nature of its content and how to improve the discussion on it (see A/69/PV.58). As those proposals still retain their relevance, please allow me to point them out again.

First, how relevant is the number of open debates held, if the exchange of views and specific proposals are not included in the report? When assessing the impact of consultations, the Council should explicitly include in the report a representative selection of the views expressed by non-members. In doing so, preference should be given to group statements that feature concrete suggestions.

Secondly, the adoption of the annual report by the Council could be an occasion for a public debate with Council members. Issues addressed in that open debate could include the decisions made by the Council and the positions of the various member States; challenges that the Council faces in the execution of its mandate and how it proposes to solve them; references to discussions on which the Council did not find agreement; and the reasons that led the Security Council not to take firm positions on important issues related to peace and international security. ACT recommends that both a retrospective and a prospective focus be taken into account during such an analytical discussion of the Council's work.

Thirdly, annual assessments of the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies and monthly assessments by Council presidencies that provide more analytical material than the current annual report should be compiled and form an integral part of the annual report. These assessments could play an important role in guiding the priorities of the Council month by month. Any disclaimers related to the positions of other Council members could be included.

Fourthly, thematic issues are not stand-alone topics; on the contrary, they are an integral part of the consideration of country situations. Both general underlying themes and cross-cutting issues that are relevant through the work of the Security Council should therefore, despite not being formally part of the agenda, be linked through relevant cross-references to country situation analyses. In this vein, we especially encourage more efforts by the Council to honour and engage other relevant United Nations stakeholders in all its thematic engagements.

Fifthly, the annual report could also be a useful tool for accountability in the area of the working methods of the Council. Elements of evaluation in relation to key areas of the Council's work should be introduced. A section of the report, therefore, should be dedicated to this topic and include a record of the progress made in the implementation of the presidential notes and other working methods as recommended by other Member States and ACT.

Lastly, the adoption of the annual report should be an excellent occasion not only to review and evaluate the past, but also for all parties to take in lessons

learned and to discuss options and strategies for the future. Any discussion of the annual report should not be mainly a retrospective formal exercise, but a prospective, reform-minded one. ACT suggests as a possible format a series of workshops clustered around country situations or larger thematic issues, or even in a less formal format than the Arria Formula setting.

Allow me also to say a few words on other matters related to the working methods of the Council. We would like to highlight the increase in the number of open debates organized by each month's Council President. At the same time, we recall that they should also translate into meaningful discussions. We encourage more spontaneous, lively and productive consultations within the Council.

We are gratified that 106 Member States, including nine members of the Security Council, have supported the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We encourage all States that have not yet done so, especially those seeking election to the Security Council, to sign up. Now is the time to implement the commitments contained in the code of conduct by taking more consistent action to prevent or end the commission of atrocity crimes.

As we are in the important year before the selection of the next Secretary-General, the ACT group would hope to see enhanced cooperation between the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council on this issue by their sending the joint letter as requested in resolution 69/321 at the earliest.

In conclusion, let me stress that the ACT group welcomes all proposals aiming to improve the content and submission of the annual report, and in this regard we are looking forward to studying, among others, the Russian-Lithuanian proposal.

Finally, we encourage future Security Council presidencies to strengthen efforts to enhance the report and make it a more useful tool for us all.

Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria): I should like at the outset sincerely to thank British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft for his excellent presentation of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/70/2).

While renewing our commitment to and support for the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, I should like to add the following comments.

The Assembly's consideration of the Security Council's report should not be a mere formality, in that it should provide the General Assembly, the chief deliberative body of the United Nations, with a valuable opportunity for an in-depth analysis of the Council's activities, as well as identify the measures that should be taken to make the necessary improvements in its working methods. It is also an opportune occasion for Member States to express their views on the way in which the Council conducts its duties.

We believe that this interaction is also in the interest of the Security Council, which would benefit from it, by considering and using the ideas and constructive and innovative proposals that I am convinced will emerge from this debate. Moreover, as is its prerogative, and according to the Charter, the Assembly could even take any action it considers appropriate at the end of this debate.

With regard to the format of the report, we are pleased that it now contains an analytical section on the work of the Council aimed at responding to the comments and criticisms made in that regard by Member States throughout the years in this forum. The document before us indeed contains elements that are of interest to all Members of the United Nations. However, we have to underline the fact that the report is still far from being the substantive document that Members of the United Nations need in order to allow them to assess the work of the Council. We hope to see in future the analytical part of the report provide indicators of the results of the Council's work as well as a section devoted to proposals and recommendations aimed at improving its work.

With regard to the functioning of the Council, a significant number of Council members made efforts during the period under consideration to improve both exchanges with all Members of the United Nations and the transparency of that body's working methods. In order to limit the secrecy in the Council's work, a concerted effort needs to be made to improve the dissemination of information on the activities of the Council and to hold more open briefings in order to allow non-members of the Council to benefit from the information provided by the Secretariat on various situations and conflicts and to express their opinion on the decisions taken.

Algeria continues to believe that it would be wise, on a case-by-case basis, for the consultations preceding those meetings to be open to the parties interested or

involved in the question under consideration in order to obtain their views. That would allow the Security Council to have a better understanding of the subject under consideration and to take its decisions with better background information at hand. We appreciate the monthly holding of wrap-up meetings open to non-members of the Council. We believe those meetings provide opportunities to express views on issues of interest in an analytical, systematic, open and candid way.

With regard to the substance of the report, it illustrates that during the period under consideration, the Council has not only reacted to threats to international and regional peace and security, but has sometimes also taken direct action to address the large number of problems affecting the world. It has demonstrated determination and follow-up in dealing with certain issues. We believe that Security Council missions to areas in conflict are extremely important because they tackle the heart of the problem. Those missions have a positive impact on local actors. We encourage this type of initiative and actions and call for them to be formalized and expanded to other conflict areas.

On a less positive note, we regret the implicit endorsement by some Council members of Member States that do not respect Council resolutions, which certainly compromises the Council's authority, and in that regard, we regret the fact that certain important Security Council resolutions have not been followed by action. That state of affairs is often representative of a defiance of and lack of concern for the credibility of the Council. It is that very credibility of the Council that is in question today. That credibility will be further eroded if the Council does not succeed in reversing that trend and in demonstrating to the entire world its capacity to shoulder its responsibilities in the management and settlement of the disputes that have been on its agenda for a very long time and to no avail.

In conclusion, I should highlight the importance of strengthening and consolidating the cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and the African Union Peace and the Security Council, because we must spare no effort to equip the African Union with the capacity and the peacebuilding architecture needed to ensure the success of its missions that have been deployed on the basis of a Council mandate.

Mr. Mukerji (India): Let me, at the outset, thank the President for organizing this meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council (A/70/2), covering the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015. I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts made by Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen, Permanent Representative of New Zealand, and his team in preparing the annual report of the Council. I would also like to thank Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for presenting the report to the General Assembly.

Last year, my delegation proposed that the issues raised by Member States in this annual meeting to consider the Security Council's report should be followed up, so that the Council can respond to this debate. Several other delegations also made the same proposal. While paragraph 216 of the report before us today indicates that the President of the Council provided Council members last year with a summary of the Assembly's consideration of the annual report, that seems to have been the end of the matter, as far as the Council is concerned.

The attitude of the Council in that regard is highly objectionable. We expect the Council to take into account the views expressed by us in this annual exercise. If the Council feels that our views are not relevant, we expect to be informed of the reasons why that is the case. Otherwise, we are discussing the annual report of the Council without any reason, and the valuable time and resources of the General Assembly are being wasted in the process. We note, in paragraph 1 of the report, that the Council held 267 formal meetings, of which 248 were public. It also adopted 65 resolutions and 27 presidential statements.

The question that we pose today is in how many of the open debates in which Member States participated did the Council adopt its outcome documents — whether resolutions or presidential statements — after the participation of non-Council member States? The answer is quite clear: none. All the resolutions and presidential statements were adopted by the Council at its open debates before Member States, not represented in the Council, took the floor, making a travesty of such open participation. Of late, that attitude, directed at other Member States, has become even more worrying. At a recent open debate of the Council, we were shocked to note that plenipotentiary accredited envoys of Member States were given the opportunity to speak only after non-plenipotentiary representatives of non-Member State delegations.

The Council's report gives impressive statistics, but those statistics only cloak the Council's imperviousness to adapting its working procedures to the contemporary world, which would require it to meet the standards of transparency and accountability and be responsive to the views of other Member States. That is the nub of the problem.

The Council's report, being opaque and unaccountable, is therefore a halfway house. We read its 264 pages without really understanding why the primary organ of the United Nations responsible for maintaining international peace and security has allowed the world to slide further down the road to violence and conflict. Why have more than 60 million people become the victims of crises? Why is the world seeing so many refugees from crisis situations? We in the General Assembly do not receive any answers to such questions, nor, for that matter, does the general public. The consequence is a severe erosion of the credibility of the Council itself.

I would like to focus on three major areas of the Council's work, as contained in its annual report, to offer some comments. I do so to highlight the fact that the ineffectiveness of the Council imposes severe costs on all of us, especially developing countries. Judging from its report, we must conclude that the Council seems unable to comprehend the nature of the socioeconomic challenges faced by developing countries resulting from the breakdown in international peace and security, especially now when we are on the cusp of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), adopted unanimously, with the goal of eradicating poverty within a generation. That is due to the fact that, for the past 70 years, only one developing country is represented as a permanent member in the Council, while our total membership in the Assembly is more than 134. We call for the urgent expansion of the Council, in order to add more developing-country members in both of its categories, so as to offset that problem. The three areas of the Council to which I refer are its implementation of United Nations peacekeeping, the response of the Council to terrorism and the inability of the Council to discharge its primary task, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, to resolve disputes peacefully.

With regard to United Nations peacekeeping, the annual report states that much of the Council's activity focused on Africa. Yet none of the peacekeeping missions mandated by the Council to operate in Africa have been successfully completed. Going by its routine rollover of the mandates of peacekeeping operations, the Council is using peacekeeping as an open-ended mechanism, not as a means to bring about a sustainable peace, as recommended most recently in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95). That brings into focus the fact that the Council has not been able to use peacekeeping as a tool to secure peace. For peacekeeping in general, the Council continues to flout Article 44 of the Charter by not inviting troop-contributing Member States that are not represented in the Council to participate in decisions on how mandates for peacekeeping are drawn up.

We call on the Council to immediately implement Article 44 of the Charter, in its letter and spirit, so as to make United Nations peacekeeping more effective and cost-efficient. As far as crises in Africa are concerned, they are most probably due to the fact that none of the permanent members of the Council, who exercise the right of being the drafters of those mandates, or, as they call themselves, penholders, is from Africa. That is a major shortcoming, as seen from the report of the Council, and one that can be rectified only by expanding the membership of the Council, in both categories. Mere increases in short- or, for that matter, long-term rotational seats are not the answer, in the real world, to the glaring shortcomings of penholdership.

Regarding the second issue, the response of the Council to the threats posed by terrorism, especially in Africa and Asia, has been less than robust. In paragraph 49 of the report, the Council notes the growing terrorist threat that affects the neighbouring countries of Libya and beyond. In paragraph 51, the Council calls for the terrorist threat to be addressed. The same pattern is evident in reading paragraphs 121 and 127, regarding Syria and Iraq. In addition to the landmark Council resolutions adopted earlier against terrorism, such as resolution 1267 (1999), resolution 1373 (2001) and resolution 1540 (2004), we note the reference in this report to more recent resolutions, such as resolution 2195 (2014), resolution 2170 (2014), resolution 2178 (2014) and resolution 2199 (2015). Despite all its exhortations and resolutions, the report is silent on what the Council has actually done in terms of acting to meet that threat. The increasing number and brutality of terrorist acts, meanwhile, vividly illustrates the ineffectiveness of the Council in countering terrorism.

Last year, my delegation pointed to the need for the Council to investigate, prosecute and penalize

terrorist acts, especially those directed against United Nations personnel and peacekeepers. Regrettably, the Council has not acted on that issue, and paragraphs 134 to 140 of the report make for dismal reading regarding the ineffectiveness of the Council in that regard. The report does not reveal anything about the way in which the Council's sanctions regimes against terrorism have functioned, which, by itself, is a significant omission, hidden from our scrutiny in the Assembly.

The third area where the Council's report glosses over the Council's ineffectiveness is in the pursuit of peaceful negotiations to resolve disputes. For example, efforts to use political negotiations to resolve crises are now occurring outside the Security Council, not in it. The Council has watched such negotiations from the sidelines, whether they concern the crises in Syria, South Sudan or Ukraine. We note that the negotiations have been conducted by Member States, not all of which are represented in the Council. That is a telling comment on the fact that, today, the Council is not the primary driver of resolving disputes through political processes, which is its core competence under the Charter. Such a trend again illustrates why, 10 years ago, our leaders, in their wisdom, unanimously agreed that the Council needed urgent reforms to make it more representative in order for it to be more effective.

Against that broad backdrop, we note with concern the information in the report that the Council, rather than focusing on its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, is instead venturing into areas that are in the domain of the General Assembly. Paragraphs 98 to 100 of the report illustrate that trend clearly, especially when we recall that it was the General Assembly that successfully galvanized the international response to the Ebola crisis through the Ebola Trust Fund, to which my country was a major financial contributor.

In conclusion, the report illustrates vividly that, today, the Council's effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security, the reason for which it was set up by the Charter, has been severely undermined. The solution, from our vantage points here in the General Assembly, is to reform the Council as soon as possible, as was mandated by all our leaders at the 2005 World Summit. We are hopeful that our discussion today, Mr. President, will strengthen your resolve to implement that mandate during your presidency, so that we will be able to correct that major anomaly in international relations by the time we conclude the commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of our United Nations in September 2016.

Mr. Mendoza-García (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Estonia on behalf of the Accountability, Consistency and Transparency (ACT) group.

Costa Rica would like to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council for the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015 (A/70/2). The information it gives us about the Council's huge and growing workload is in many ways complete and useful. My delegation would also like to thank New Zealand for its efforts in preparing the report's introduction. In that regard, we want to highlight the significant work that has been done by the Security Council's current non-permanent members, who are responsible for much of the energy directed at ensuring the Council's health, transparency and accountability.

The presentation of the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly is an important occasion that not only encourages accountability on the part of the Council but also gives members of the Assembly an opportunity to address some of the most urgent and compelling issues of the year in question. It is a year that has seen a number of deteriorating situations, especially in Africa and the Middle East, and in which the Security Council has launched a number of prescriptive initiatives on the protection of civilians — including journalists, women, girls and children — in armed conflict. It is a year in which the Council has also displayed dynamism in its response to new challenges, as it showed in its renewed determination to work more closely with the United Nations system as a whole in addressing terrorism and sexual violence, to cite only two of its most significant efforts.

Costa Rica appreciates the Council's efforts each year to improve its annual report and urges it to continue to improve its quality and comprehensiveness. In that regard, I would like to make some specific, respectful recommendations that we hope can be put into practice in order to improve the report's value, particularly to members of the Assembly in general. We urge the Security Council to make its annual report more analytical and thoughtful, which would be a welcome change, because at present it is a statistical compilation

of events and a bland summary of meetings and final documents.

We would be grateful if the Council could provide us with an analysis of its decision-making processes, especially where viewpoints diverge and converge. We would also like to see candid assessments of the obstacles to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, including some discussion of the circumstances in which the Council decided to adopt particular types of texts, whether presidential statements or resolutions. The hows, the whys and why nots are key for this type of report.

The adoption of the annual report should also be an opportunity for the Council to take note of lessons learned, with the aim of discussing options and strategies for improving its performance in future. In that regard, we would like to emphasize how important it is to have higher levels of substantive participation by the entire membership in the early stages of the drafting process. That can be done, for example, through open interactive discussions or other informal formats, in which views can be exchanged between the first draft of the report and the Council's final approval of it.

As the report says, the Security Council has held a significant number of thematic debates, in which participation has been open to the Organization's entire membership. However, interactivity in those debates is virtually non-existent, and any resulting document is generally agreed on by the Council without taking Member States' views into account. We must find a way to ensure that the discussions in which the membership participates have more impact on the Organization's policies.

The Security Council also plays a very important role in the fight against impunity. Costa Rica urges the Council to strengthen its cooperation with the International Criminal Court, especially where atrocities are concerned, so as to empower the Court and enable it to fulfil its mandate, as well as to support the Court in its investigations and prosecutions and thus ensure accountability for perpetrators. In that regard, we would like to reiterate our proposal for establishing a uniform, predictable and transparent protocol whereby the Council can refer cases to the Court, while at the same time ensuring that the Council does not insert jurisdictional exceptions that could violate the principle of equality before the law and jeopardize the Court's credibility. Such measures would help to strengthen the Court's role, while safeguarding its independence. The Court's concerns about financing, security and access all deserve the Council's sustained attention if the promise of the International Criminal Court is to be fulfilled.

Because human lives are at stake, Costa Rica supports the initiative of France and Mexico aimed at limiting the use of the veto when mass atrocities are involved, a proposal that dates back to our membership in the "Little Five". In particular, we support the complementary efforts led by Liechtenstein in the ACT group through the establishment of a code of conduct. Costa Rica is pleased that 106 States have joined that initiative, and we encourage more Member States to accede to it, especially those seeking a seat on the Security Council. We would also like to reiterate our call on the Council's permanent members to keep an official record of their use or threat of use of the veto, along with their justification for its use, and to regularly circulate such information to all Members of the United Nations. We suggest that States take a State's adherence to the code of conduct into account when deciding which States to support in elections to the Security Council and the Human Rights Council.

Costa Rica is proud to have been one of the first States to advocate for reforms in selecting and appointing the Secretary-General, who represents the entire United Nations system. It is crucial to ensure that the General Assembly plays a proper part in the selection process. We cannot stress enough how urgently we need to be able to rely on a democratic and transparent process, if we are to ensure we can rely on our next leader — one who Costa Rica hopes will be a woman — a leader able to inspire the complete confidence of the United Nations family. Resolution 69/321 calls on the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly to send a joint letter to all Member States to begin the process of requesting nominations. The letter should contain a description of the entire process and should invite States to submit nominations, particularly of women, in a timely manner.

Costa Rica would particularly urge the United Kingdom, as the current President of the Security Council for November, to launch a collaborative process together with you, Sir, as President of the General Assembly, to begin implementing that historic resolution. Costa Rica views that process, along with consideration of the Council's report, as an excellent opportunity for strengthening the relationship between

the two principal organs of the United Nations. All we need now is political will and the initiative of our leaders.

Mr. Sobral Duarte (Brazil): Let me begin by thanking the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom and President of the Security Council for the month of November, Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council (A/70/2). I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen, for preparing the introduction to the report in his capacity as President of the Council in July.

The report under discussion today is an important element in the overall effort to make the Council more accountable to the broader membership. Delegations deserve to be better informed about the Council's deliberations. Brazil has been a long-standing supporter of measures to promote transparency and accountability for the benefit of the 178 Member States that are not part of the Council's daily routine.

There are three reports currently under consideration by the broader membership that provide us with relevant inputs for reflection on the strengths and shortcomings of our collective security mechanism. The emphasis on the primacy of politics and on prevention proposed by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture and the authors of the Global Study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is a welcome development. Bearing in mind that, as the Council's annual report highlights, the Security Council is facing increasingly complex threats with an alarming rise in the number of civilian victims, we must put conflict prevention at the forefront of our strategies.

Among the various tools at the disposal of the United Nations for promoting conflict prevention, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission deserves to be highlighted. By fostering joint international strategies on reconstruction, institution-building and policy development in vulnerable environments, the Peacebuilding Commission has a key role to play in averting the recurrence of conflict and in promoting a culture of prevention of conflicts. That proved to be particularly true during last year's Ebola crisis in West Africa, when the Commission issued an early warning to the Security Council on the destabilizing regional implications of the epidemic. It also contributed to raising awareness within the international community, thereby helping to prevent the public-health emergency from reversing the important peacebuilding gains that had been achieved in that part of the world.

One of the highlights of the Council's work during the past year was the high-level review of the women and peace and security agenda, which culminated in a successful open debate held last month (see S/PV.7533), when resolution 2242 (2015) was adopted. A number of countries, including my own, presented new, specific measures to protect and empower women and girls affected by conflict. The debate was inspired by the Global Study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its vital recommendations, not least of which is the imperative of avoiding the securitization and the militarization of the women and peace and security agenda.

The situation in the Middle East further deteriorated during the period covered by the Council's report, amid increasing tensions and threats to international peace and security. In Syria, the conflict has entered its fifth year. The spiral of violence and destruction continues to worsen, resulting in the shocking figures of more than 250,000 people killed, almost 8 million internally displaced persons and more than 4 million refugees. The indiscriminate attacks against the civilian population, including the use of so-called barrel bombs, continue unabated. There are also persistent reports of chemical materials, such as chlorine, being used as a weapon.

Against that tragic background, the Council's recurring inability to act decisively to achieve a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis is distressing. Despite the general recognition that there is no military solution to the conflict, we continue to see a disconnect between the priority that should be given to political initiatives and the level of hostilities and military engagement on the ground. Despite the adoption of important resolutions to address the humanitarian challenges and the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the Council has not truly dealt with crucial aspects of the conflict. It must act to prevent further militarization, stop the flow of weapons to all belligerent parties and move the political process forward.

In the same vein, we are once again witnessing a severe upsurge in violence in Palestine and Israel. While the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians remains stalled, living conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories have deteriorated and

illegal actions and provocations have increased. Many delegations, including that of Brazil, have repeatedly called on the Security Council to fully assume its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations and to actively support and steer the peace process towards a two-State solution. Not only has the Security Council fallen short of engaging in the promotion of a durable and peaceful solution to the conflict; it has also repeatedly missed opportunities to meet its responsibilities.

Last December, the Council failed to act when a draft resolution on the issue was brought to a vote. Just a few weeks ago, a draft presidential statement requesting the Secretary-General to provide options for a temporary international observer presence in Jerusalem was presented, but so far no progress has been achieved. We were glad to hear that a non-permanent member has proposed a new draft resolution with the goal of relaunching substantive peace talks. We hope that this time the Security Council will not stand still on that issue, which is critical to the stability of the entire Middle East.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo has remained a concern in 2015. Efforts to counter certain armed groups have been hindered by the partial suspension of military cooperation between the Congolese armed forces and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The ongoing security-sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is key to the sustainable withdrawal of MONUSCO, still faces considerable challenges and requires international attention.

Brazil stresses the need to develop and implement comprehensive and sustainable strategies to overcome the root causes of conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the promotion of socioeconomic development and the extension of State authority. South-South cooperation also has a role to play in the process. In that regard, Brazil has worked together with the United Nations and civil-society organizations to provide assistance to victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

With regard to the situation in Haiti, Brazil welcomes the ongoing progress achieved in recent years, which has allowed the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to downsize. However, there are still reasons for concern with respect to security, including in the context of the ongoing electoral process. In this sense, it is important that any assessment mission be deployed after the formation of a new Government and that the reconfiguration process be guided solely by conditions on the ground, as well as by the need to preserve the progress made in the past 11 years.

Brazil also underlines the importance of the tools mandated to MINUSTAH to develop quick-impact and community violence reduction projects. The experience of Haiti has clearly shown that such activities directly benefit the local population and assist in building confidence in the peace process and the Mission throughout its life cycle. Any future presence of the Organization in Haiti should take that success story into account and ensure the continuity of such activities, so as to contribute to the sustainability of the reconstruction efforts.

Mr. González Franco (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As a concluding remark, let me emphasize how encouraged Brazil was by the significant participation in the General Assembly debate on Security Council reform held a few days ago (see A/70/PV.43). As we reiterated on that occasion, the only way to ensure a more efficient, transparent and accountable Security Council is through comprehensive reform that adapts the Council's anachronistic structure to contemporary international realities. Brazil is confident that, under the leadership of the President of the General Assembly, we will be able to make substantive progress during the seventieth session.

Mr. Mwinyi (Tanzania): My delegation would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council (A/70/2), in line with paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

As underscored in our statement made during the debate on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (see A/70/PV.45), we deem the continued interaction between the Assembly and other principal organs of the United Nations to be absolutely critical to advancing their respective Charter mandates. It is in that regard that we wish to thank the President of the Security Council for his excellent presentation of the annual report, and New Zealand for its preparation. We also wish to fully endorse and align ourselves with

the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Tanzania recognizes the central role being played by the Security Council in discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We are aware that it does so not on its own behalf, but on behalf of each and every State Member of the Organization. For that reason, we are genuinely proud of the progress achieved over the course of the 70 years of its existence. Similarly, we are gravely concerned about the failures we have met, the consequences of which must serve as lessons if we are to preserve the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization. In other words, we must embrace and advance the comprehensive reform of the Security Council with a view to making it more effective, inclusive and reflective of contemporary global realities. We believe that Member States are at a decisive moment with the setting in motion of the intergovernmental negotiations towards text-based negotiations. Let us forge ahead with greater zeal and determination to achieve that important objective as soon as possible.

In the meantime, we welcome measures being taken to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of the Security Council. These include the open debates, which Tanzania has been attending in order to share its perspectives. We hope that in future the Council will arrange the debates in a way that would allow its members to take into account the views expressed by delegations before adopting its outcomes. Initiatives proposed by France, Mexico and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, aimed at limiting the use of veto in cases of atrocity crimes, are a step in the right direction. Whereas the code of conduct is justifiable, albeit not in a way that undermines its validity in line with the Charter, the bottom line is for the members of the Council, especially those with veto-wielding power, to act in accordance and only in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

We call on the Council to include, in its future reports to the Assembly, an assessment of its actions and inactions, including due to the use of the veto, as well as the attendant repercussions thereof. It has been emphasized repeatedly, including by my delegation, that the Council's annual report should be analytical and incisive. As a matter of fact, there have been many recommendations from the Chamber to the Council through its President, including those incorporated in the letter of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, dated 4 December 2014**.** My delegation is unaware of any feedback from the Council in that regard. We therefore request a follow-up to the letter and the proposals contained therein by the President of the Assembly at the current session.

We welcome the Council's increased interaction with external actors, including representatives of civil society, academia and others to discuss a wide range of topics. We note with regret, however, that in the recent past some of those meetings have covered divisive topics that have nothing to do with the Council's mandate. We wish to recall that, as a representative body with a mandate distinct from that of the General Assembly, the Council must refrain from entertaining such topics, which only serve to derail it from its core responsibility.

We note that the nature and scope of situations being addressed by the Security Council have evolved. Conflicts have become complex, fragmented and intractable, and increasingly involve non-State armed groups that employ unconventional and gruesome methods of warfare. United Nations peace operations are also operating in perilous environments with little or no peace to keep. It is imperative, therefore, that the Council adapt accordingly. It must use all the tools at its disposal in discharging its Charter mandates. It must give ample prominence to political solutions and invest in conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding. It must also forge stronger ties with regional and subregional organizations so as to support them, as appropriate, in their endeavours towards conflict prevention and resolution. Finally, it must strengthen cooperation with other principal organs whose role in addressing some of the root causes of conflicts, including poverty and chronic inequality, is vital.

In conclusion, we wish to underscore the importance of upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; of fostering friendly relations and cooperation among States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; and of strengthening cooperation among the principal organs of the United Nations and between the organs and regional and subregional organizations, while respecting their respective mandates.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): Liechtenstein is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and

Transparency group and aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Estonia.

Our comments today are being made against the background of the launch, three weeks ago, of the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. In signing onto the code, 106 States have pledged to support timely Security Council action to prevent or end atrocity crimes and, specifically, not to vote against credible draft resolutions to that end. We hope that such commitment, which was also made by nine of the current members of the Security Council, will lead to an improvement in the Security Council's track record in that respect. We have reviewed the annual report (A/70/2) with that in mind and would like to make some comments on the Council's action in that regard.

The Council's sustained engagement in the situation in Burundi during the reporting period was commendable and necessary. Indeed, the Council's visit to the country in March seems to have been well timed. Nevertheless, the Council was not able to address the violence that accompanied the elections and the chaotic circumstances surrounding them. Meeting regularly and issuing a press statement did not prove to be an adequate response to a crisis that led 144,000 Burundians to flee their country during the reporting period alone. The inability to engage in effective preventive diplomacy has resulted in the present situation, on which the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), among others, have commented and expressed their deepest concern. The Council is challenged to act with resolve to address an explosive situation that could serve as a test of the practical application of the code of conduct. We therefore welcome the fact that the Security Council has scheduled action on a draft resolution later today.

The Council engagement in Darfur is long-standing and yet, despite the presence of one of the largest peacekeeping operations in the history of the United Nations, targeted sanctions and the referral of the situation to the International Criminal Court, the conflict continues, as do serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. During the reporting period, the Council was confronted by reports of mass rape by members of the Sudanese armed forces in Thabit, Northern Darfur. No proper investigation was commissioned, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur was repeatedly denied access and the Sudanese Government even demanded its eventual withdrawal. The Council has not applied sanctions against any of the persons indicted by the ICC or made any new listings in the light of new atrocity crimes. At the same time, the Government has continued its policy of non-cooperation with the ICC, to which the Council referred the situation 10 years ago, without any response from the Council. Over time, all this has fostered a climate of impunity in which the commission of atrocity crimes is only a logical consequence. We share the frustration of the Prosecutor of the ICC, who has decided — despite the continued commission of crimes that demand urgent attention — to direct her limited resources elsewhere in the face of Council inaction.

In Syria, too, the Council has not been able to adequately respond to what has become the defining conflict of the decade. It adopted two resolutions during the reporting period. Resolution 2191 (2014), on the humanitarian situation, demanded, among other things, that

> "all parties to the ... conflict comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law" (*Security Council resolution 2191 (2014), para. 1*).

The resolution continues to be manifestly breached daily, and yet the Council is unable to respond.

Resolution 2209 (2015) addresses the issue of chemical weapons, which, to be sure, constitutes one of the more morbid aspects of the conflict in Syria. And yet the Council's one-sided focus on the chemical-weapons track is, at best, missing the larger point in a conflict that has killed more than 250,000 people. At worst, it gives the impression that mass killings of civilians perpetrated by other means, including torture, starvation and barrel bombs, deserve less attention than the use of weaponry prohibited under international law. On the humanitarian track, the Council has taken commendable steps, but implementation continues to be an enormous challenge, of which the ongoing large-scale displacement of the civilian population is but the most obvious manifestation. Conspicuous by their absence from the report are references to any attempt to provide justice to the victims, establish a credible accountability mechanism and provide effective protection to the civilian population.

We acknowledge the efforts of some members of the Council to move the Council to do the right thing in

each of these situations. There is, however, no way to avoid the conclusion that the Council has been largely unable to take adequate action to prevent or end the commission of atrocity crimes in spite of the varied and impactful toolkit at its disposal. While it has used that toolkit most creatively in some situations — for example, when chemical weapons were being used in Syria, or to develop world-wide anti-terrorism sanctions — it has been unable to do what is required in many situations involving atrocity crimes. We are concerned in particular because the Council's performance is key to the overall perception of the United Nations; an inability or unwillingness to act in the face of atrocity crimes is especially harmful for the Organization as a whole.

We expect the Council to be responsive to the demands of the membership as a whole and to conduct its work in a culture of political accountability. By supporting the code of conduct, 106 States have made it clear that they expect zero tolerance for atrocity crimes. The Council members that have signed the code of conduct have a special responsibility in that respect, but we hope that the Council as a whole will be responsive to the call for a change in culture. We look forward to reading about the start of such a change in next year's report.

Mrs. Del Sol Dominguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba supports the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Our delegation thanks the President for convening today's meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, contained in document A/70/2. Unfortunately, the Assembly meets every year to discuss similar reports of the Security Council, which have not contained and still do not contain any real critical analysis of the work done by the Council. Once again, the report merely describes the action taken by that organ.

Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations state that the Security Council shall submit annual and special reports on its work. Unfortunately, special reports are still not being submitted. The annual report this year once again takes only a descriptive approach, listing the issues considered by the Council without any assessment thereof. Such an assessment would have enabled Member States to themselves carry out a real assessment of the causes and implications of the actions undertaken by the Council in each case, and also of its non-action in cases where there was consideration of an issue representing a threat to international peace and security.

This exercise fails to provide true accountability of the Security Council to the General Assembly. How long will we continue with this purely formal exercise? Why are our repeated calls for change not heeded? Who benefits from continuing this formal exercise, with no real accountability to the most important organ of the United Nations?

Cuba reiterates its concern at the growing tendency in the Security Council to consider issues and assume functions that are not within its purview, thereby usurping the role entrusted by the Charter to other organs, particularly the General Assembly. We stress the need to strike the right balance between the principal organs of the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter.

We once again urge Council members to review the Council's agenda and adapt it to its mandated functions. The Council must strictly abide by the provisions of the Charter and all resolutions of the General Assembly, which is the principal deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations.

One of the main problems and challenges still facing the United Nations on its seventieth anniversary is its inability to carry out the reform the Security Council needs to make it into a truly transparent, representative, democratic and effective body. Until the Security Council is thoroughly reformed, any reform of the United Nations itself will remain incomplete.

Cuba calls on all Member States to work urgently to ensure that the closed-door consultations in the Security Council are the exception to the rule; that there is an increase in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, in order to remedy the underrepresentation of developing countries in the Council, using no selective or discriminatory criteria; and that an end is put to the obsolete and anti-democratic veto.

Urgent changes are required in the working methods of the Council so as to enable genuine participation by all Member States in its work and decisions. This includes formalizing its rules of procedure, which, 70 years on, remain provisional, so as to help to increase transparency and accountability.

Truly analytical annual reports on the work of the Security Council, and special reports, as provided for in the Charter, are essential if the Assembly is to be able to discharge its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. We believe that a more transparent Council would be a more legitimate Council. A more inclusive and accessible Security Council that truly takes into account the views of States Members of the Organization would be a much more effective Council.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): At the outset, I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom for presenting the annual report of the Security Council (A/70/2). I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of New Zealand for having prepared the report's introduction.

Egypt aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and would also like to make the following additional remarks.

First, the Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, on behalf of the entire membership. Egypt therefore firmly believes that the work of the Security Council should be based on transparency, inclusivity and openness. We call for increased interactivity between the Council and the broader membership throughout the reporting cycle.

Secondly, the report appears to be more of a statistical compilation of the outcomes of the Council's work. Future reports need to be analytical rather than descriptive and provide a deeper understanding of the stumbling blocks that faced the Council on specific issues.

Thirdly, we note the growing tendency of the Council to hold thematic debates on issues that do not constitute imminent threats to international peace and security. These debates often encroach on the territory of other organs of the United Nations and overlap with their work. In this regard, we underscore the role of the General Assembly in norm-setting, legislation and administrative and financial issues, and we urge the Council to maintain the balance between the various organs of the United Nations as reflected in the United Nations Charter.

We also urge the Security Council to hold regular consultations with relevant States that are non-members of the Council. Such consultations should include the active participation of non-member States relevant to the issue at hand. In this regard, it is crucial to actively engage regional stakeholders in Council deliberations on a crisis before considering taking action on it. Moreover, troop-contributing countries should also be engaged in the Council's discussions of a peacekeeping mandate prior to its adoption.

Finally, Egypt welcomes the continuous debate on the Council's working methods and will continue, during its coming membership in the Security Council for 2016-2017, to contribute to strengthening transparency, inclusivity, openness and the democratization of the Security Council's work, as it is indispensable to the credibility of the Council in carrying out its mandate and ensuring its effectiveness and ability to address the growing challenges.

Mr. Alday González (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to thank President Lykketoft for convening this meeting. We also thank New Zealand for having prepared the annual report (A/70/2) this year and the United Kingdom for introducing it to the Assembly.

The Charter states that the Council should carry out its work on behalf of the membership. Given the absence of any other opportunities, this debate should in principle be the best possible opportunity to further strengthen dialogue and communication on the work of the Council and the perception of the Council by Member States.

However, neither the format nor the content of the report, nor the way in which this debate is being held, is truly conducive to a truly substantive or interactive dialogue. We acknowledge the limitations of this exercise and the difficulties faced by Council members in reaching agreement on the content of, and adopting, the report, but we believe that there could be an improvement if changes in working methods are incorporated.

The proposals that have been made for years by the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and its predecessor, the "Little Five" group, are, in the view of my delegation, viable options for making the report's content more useful to the membership and strengthening the dialogue between the Council and the other Members of our Organization.

In its current format, the report of the Security Council remains devoid of any analysis or high-quality information. We believe, for example, that were it to discuss, in a factual manner, occasions on which the Council was not able to reach agreement, this would provide the membership with a more accurate and appropriate record of its deliberations. Giving equal weight to the views expressed by all members in those cases would, without prejudice, improve both the quality of the report and the transparency and accountability, the lack of which impacts the work and decisions of the Security Council, to the detriment of its credibility. The convening of an increasing number of briefings, open debates and interactive dialogues would be an important step towards realizing transparency and effectiveness in the Council's work. We therefore propose that the Security Council hold, at least once a year, an open debate accessible to all Member States to discuss the content of its annual report prior to its adoption, so that the final product submitted to the Assembly would incorporate the views of non-members of the Council.

On the question of the powers of the Council, my delegation reiterates that the Council should act in accordance with its mandate under the Charter, and avoid the temptation to expand into areas that are not within its purview but fall clearly within that of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council. On the substance of the Council's work, we welcome its overall sustained attention to a growing number of conflicts around the world, ranging from the Central African Republic to the Middle East and from the Great Lakes region of Africa to Haiti, among others. We are concerned, however, that the dysfunctionality of the Council, when it cannot or will not act, exacerbates its chronic inability to fulfil its mandate, thereby making its failure to act an additional threat to peace and international security.

The work of the Security Council must not only be balanced, objective and impartial, it must also be perceived as such by Member States and our citizens around the world. Along with other Member States, Mexico is discussing and will discuss in the coming months a number of practical recommendations to build on efforts and proposals that are already on the table, to be presented in due course for the membership's consideration.

In that vein, we have been encouraged by the broad tacit support that the membership has enthusiastically given to the French-Mexican initiative to limit the use of the veto and to the complementary proposal that has been launched with equal success by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. Both initiatives send a clear and strong message to the Security Council and constitute irrefutable evidence that most Member States want the Council to change its working methods.

Mr. Jinga (Romania): Romania welcomes the adoption on 20 October of the report of the Security Council (A/70/2), covering its activities for the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015. We congratulate New Zealand on preparing a comprehensive document, based on a revised approach, in order to provide an accessible summary of the Council's activities. We also appreciate the introduction of the report by the United Kingdom presidency of the Council.

Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen has said that he "would have preferred a document that contained more self-reflection on the Council's performance" (*S/PV.7538, p. 2*). In fact, I think that the Permanent Representative of New Zealand did a great job and, in that respect, I suggest that we take a 70-year look back at the first such report, of 3 October 1946:

> "The first twenty-three meetings of the Council were held in London and the remainder in New York ... Up to 15 July 1946, the Council had held fifty meetings ... In fulfilling its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has dealt with ... [five] questions." (*A/93, p. viii*)

One may argue that at that time, we were dealing with other realities, different from those of today. Indeed, according to the latest report,

> "During the period under review, the Council held 267 formal meetings, of which 248 were public. The Council adopted 65 resolutions and 27 presidential statements and issued 148 statements to the press" (*A/70/2, p. 10*).

Moreover, we just heard that there are currently 66 matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Council.

Romania is of the view that not only has the quantity of the Council's workload significantly increased; so has its complexity. In that respect, I would like to refer to three particular aspects. First, let me recall that on 16 October, we marked the 10-year anniversary of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005), on cooperation

between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. The theme represented a priority of Romania's 2004-2005 mandate in its role as a non-permanent member of the Council. Through that resolution, my country made a conceptual and practical contribution to the United Nations efforts in maintaining international peace and security, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Developments at the international level, including crisis situations that emerged in the aftermath of its adoption, confirmed the viability of our initiative. Regional organizations have become increasingly profiled as privileged partners of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security. To give but two examples, I will cite the African Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. As a member of the European Union (EU), Romania also welcomes the enhanced cooperation between the EU and the United Nations, and reaffirms its willingness to further strengthen that process.

Secondly, we are pleased to note the increased presence of the members of the Security Council on the ground, as was the case with the three missions it undertook to Europe and Africa in August 2014, to Haiti in January 2015 and again to Africa in March 2015. We hope that this approach will be maintained because we consider it critical for Council members to interact directly with people affected by the conflicts that the Security Council takes action on.

Lastly, I would like to underscore the efficiency of United Nations activities by referring to the decisions to reduce the overall force levels of the Missions in Haiti and Liberia, as a result of their positive outcomes. At the same time, I think it is worth underlining the capacity of the Security Council to adapt and respond appropriately to new types of crises, as was the case with the first United Nations emergency health mission in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea and with its leadership role in combating Ebola.

The report of the Security Council for the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015 is more than a factual document. It is a mirror of its activities. We all need a Security Council that is involved, committed, transparent and efficient in its work.

Allow me to conclude by extending our deep appreciation for their contributions as former non-permanent members of the Council to Argentina, Australia, Luxembourg, the Republic of Korea and Rwanda, and to the outgoing members Chad, Chile, Jordan, Lithuania and Nigeria. I also take this opportunity to wish a most successful mandate to incoming non-permanent members Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay.

Mr. Mamabolo (South Africa): South Africa joins others in thanking the President for scheduling this debate on the annual report of the Security Council (A/70/2) and for linking our discussion to Article 12 of the Charter of the United Nations. We also thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, President of the Security Council for the month of November, for introducing the report, as well as the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen, and his team for preparing the report.

While the report before us indeed provides a useful factual account of the work of the Security Council, South Africa is once again disappointed that it does not provide an analytical evaluation of the Council's work, in particular with respect to its effectiveness in discharging its mandate, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council's annual reports remain too clinical, merely conveying events in a chronological, descriptive manner, with almost no analysis. We believe that a more analytical report would be beneficial to the broader membership, because it would likely provide better insight into the challenges that the Council faces as it deliberates on the various situations on its agenda, as reflected in its ability to resolve certain conflicts.

Furthermore, the report makes clear that very little has changed for the elected members of the Security Council, who constantly face numerous challenges that result from the high-handed tactics of the permanent members of the Council. South Africa has also long been critical of the practice of having important resolutions drafted by a small group that often consists of countries that do not serve on the Security Council. Such texts are then presented to members of the Council as faits accomplis. While we support broad consultation by the Council, its decisions should be open to debate among all members of the Council.

As we stated in the recent debate of the Security Council on its working methods (see S/PV.7539), South Africa is pleased with the Council's commitment to enhanced strategic cooperation with the African

Union Peace and Security Council. That is particularly relevant in the context of the Secretary-General's most recent report on the future of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in which he identifies the need for institutional cooperation and global-regional partnerships "so as to enable consultation, common early warning and conflict analysis, and coordinated responses to the specific dynamics of each region" (*A/70/357, para. 46*). More specifically with regard to the African Union, South Africa supports the Secretary-General's call to "institutionalize consultative processes and, where appropriate, joint mechanisms" (*ibid., para. 52*), as well as the need to elaborate "early communication and procedures for crisis consultation" (*ibid., para. 29*). In that regard, we call on the Security Council to fully implement resolution 2033 (2012), which decides, among other things,

> "to elaborate further ways of strengthening relations between the two Councils, including through achieving more effective annual consultative meetings, the holding of timely consultations, and collaborative field missions of the two Councils, as appropriate" (*Security Council resolution 2033 (2012), para. 17*)

and

> "to formulate cohesive positions and strategies on a case by-case basis in dealing with conflict situations in Africa" (*ibid.*).

Unfortunately, the annual report before us does not reflect the commitment to regular engagement and consultation, aside from the ninth annual meeting between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council, which took place in March. We believe that this points to the selectivity with which the Security Council coordinates its positions with those of the African Union. South Africa reiterates its concern about the tendency in certain cases where the Security Council selectively picks elements of decisions of regional organizations that advance the national interests of some Council members. It is important that the principle of subsidiarity be respected if we are to establish better synergies for enhancing cooperation, especially on the African continent. We therefore call for greater consistency from the Council in engaging with regional bodies.

With regard to the Security Council's working methods in general, we join other delegations in acknowledging the Security Council's attempt to be more transparent in its functioning and the small steps taken in that regard, such as regularizing the briefings to Member States at the beginning and end of each presidency, and the increased number of public briefings on the issues discussed. However, more needs to be done to include Member States in the Council's deliberations, in particular those States directly affected by a specific conflict, We continue to believe that broader and more inclusive consultations by the Council with the larger membership of the United Nations can only serve to enhance the Council's efficacy and credibility.

We do not need to read the annual report of the Security Council to conclude that the Council has again lapsed into dysfunction and has not been able to address the most pressing issues on its agenda, including the question of Palestine and the situation in Syria. In both instances the General Assembly has acted where the Council was unwilling or unable to respond, including with respect to the resumption of the General Assembly's tenth emergency special session, held pursuant to the Uniting for Peace resolution 377 A (V), to discuss the grave developments in Gaza, as well as the adoption of resolution 64/10, endorsing the recommendations of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict in 2009 and 2010, and the appointment of a Special Envoy to Syria against the backdrop of a total deadlock in the Security Council in 2012.

It is our firm opinion that measures to enhance the effectiveness of the General Assembly regarding its role in the maintenance of international peace and security should be discussed and adopted. South Africa does not wish to see the General Assembly usurp the role of the Security Council, but we advocate the need to improve on the balance of competence between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as members of the African Union called for in the Ezulwini Consensus. That is especially critical at the present session, when we will begin discussion on the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General.

In conclusion, we reiterate our view that the representative nature of the Assembly makes it the ideal body to respond to and address issues of concern that affect the entire world. We are therefore committed to seeing closer and better cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Fesko (Ukraine): First of all, we would like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Gerard van

Bohemen and his team for preparing the introductory part of the Security Council report (A/70/2), and to Ambassador Matthew Rycroft for providing an excellent presentation.

As a newly elected member of the Security Council for the period 2016-2017, Ukraine takes particular interest in the report. We welcome the attempt at making the document more concise. We believe that shortening the introductory part is a step in the right direction in the preparation of a document for which the General Assembly has long been calling, namely, a more analytical and substantive paper and not a mere recollection of the Council's proceedings over the reporting period.

It is our strong belief that the membership of the United Nations must be informed not only about what happened and when, but also why and how a given action was taken or not taken. That aspect is still missing from the traditional annual reports of the Council. Having answers to such questions would not only enhance Member States' understanding of the Council's work, but could also prove beneficial to the Council by encouraging it to find workable solutions to specific situations.

Analysis of the decision-making processes in cases where the Council either failed to act or where its actions did not bring about the expected result in the form of a peaceful resolution of a given conflict could help identify areas for improvement in the Council's methods of work. That would facilitate the search for more effective ways of addressing issues that are brought before the Council and dealing with them in a decisive and results-oriented manner, as opposed to following the dangerous trend of avoiding an issue up to the point of ignoring it. In other words, in our opinion, the annual report should provide the United Nations membership with a clear answer as to how successful the Security Council has been in carrying out its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

A candid assessment reveals that behind many pages of fine print lurks the conclusion that the Security Council has yet to rise to the challenges of today. As the external aggression against Ukraine clearly demonstrates, when the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations are violated, when international law is subject to frivolous and selective interpretations and when perpetrators avoid accountability, the world needs a strong Security Council that is capable of taking resolute action.

We need the Council both to protect the Charter and to follow it. Apparently, the second part of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter, which obligates a party to a dispute to abstain from voting, proved too high a mountain to climb both for a party in question — as was the case with the two Russian vetoes on the draft resolutions concerning Ukraine — and the Council itself, which shied away from proper consideration of the application of the relevant provision. In that regard, we welcome and fully support the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes put forward by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, as well as the French-Mexican initiative on limiting the use of the veto. Those are very timely initiatives that may facilitate the transformation of the Council into a body in which the veto right is used responsibly in the interests of the world, and not abused to promote and protect the narrow interests of a single party.

Ukraine recognizes that the aforementioned shortcomings are not the result of a lack of trying on the part of the overwhelming majority of Council members, including permanent ones, but rather the outcome of all-too-clear institutional deficiencies in the Council's composition and established working methods. In that regard, we encourage the Council to explore new ways and approaches to improve its overall performance. As an incoming member, Ukraine stands ready to contribute to pertinent discussions on the subject, both within the Council and with the wider United Nations membership.

Mr. Rakhmetullin (Kazakhstan): The delegation of Kazakhstan welcomes the report of the Security Council (A/70/2) and commends its outstanding work as one of the key entities responsible for regional and global peace and security. We acknowledge the sincere commitment and stewardship of each of its Presidents, and we commend all the members of the Council for their tireless, year-long efforts, as manifested in this comprehensive report on all aspects of the agenda.

The Security Council's outcomes would be more effective if the report were analytical and evaluative and if it pointed out how the various decisions taken could have greater impact and how their accompanying processes could be better utilized. It would also be advantageous to have interim reports from the Council

in addition to the yearly one, to allow for ongoing feedback. The report describes the remarkable work of various peacekeeping operations. It would also be helpful if their mandates were comprehensive, realistic and achievable and if there were an analysis of how they could be more effectively implemented. The Council could also have benefited from greater dialogue with troop- and police-contributing countries on their expanded mandates, mutual expectations and the security of their personnel. The Security Council could gain much from lessons learned and could reflect greater coordination among the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), international organizations, regional structures and neighbouring countries surrounding areas of conflict. Together with DPKO and regional organizations, the Council could mirror more analytically such operations in the field.

Kazakhstan appreciates the fact that the Council held open debates on a vast range of topics — on such customary topics as women, children and armed conflict, inclusive development, the protection of journalists, Ebola and, for the first time, the security of small island developing States. While the debates served as a platform for airing approaches, there is a stark need to further plan a comprehensive strategy rather than simply to archive statements. It would help the Council to work in close cooperation with the Secretariat, the United Nations system, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other international regional organizations. The work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council could also be strengthened through close cooperation among them and United Nations specialized agencies and other bodies so that the Council becomes more robust in addressing the various complex issues that continue to evolve. A greater number of field missions by Security Council members would also help its members to appreciate the realities on the ground.

We would also like to see a better reflection of the Security Council's response to the various recommendations of the intergovernmental negotiations with respect to both individual and groups of countries, so that there is greater momentum towards dynamic change. Security Council reform is part of a global process of reform of the United Nations aimed at enhancing its response capabilities in tackling complex and multidimensional issues. That must not lie outside the responsibility and accountability of the Council itself.

Since 2016 is the year for the selection of the eighth Secretary-General, we look forward to seeing the report of the Security Council's deliberations on the selection process in close coordination with the General Assembly.

Kazakhstan, for its part, will continue to play its role and to wholeheartedly support efforts to make the Council more responsive, accessible and effective in fulfilling its mandate as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Laassel (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, at the outset, to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for introducing the report (A/70/2) of the Security Council to the General Assembly at its seventieth session. I also thank and congratulate the Permanent Representative of New Zealand for coordinating the preparation and the adoption of the introduction to the report.

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

The Security Council continues to face new challenges in the implementation of the mandate conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations. A number of those matters weigh heavily on the maintenance of international peace and security. In fact, beyond the conflicts and regional disputes already on its agenda, the Council is increasingly forced to address the issues associated with the fight against terrorism and extremism and combating transnational organized crime.

Faced with those global phenomena, it is important to note that the Security Council has reacted with one voice and in a concerted manner by taking appropriate measures to counter those threats, in particular the threat of international terrorism. Moreover, the Security Council has maintained and strengthened the practice of holding public debates on thematic issues related to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, women and peace and security, and the role of young people in the fight to combat violent extremism, among others. Morocco participated in almost all of those debates and fully appreciates them, because they make it possible for the members of the Security Council to listen to and interact with all the States Members of the United Nations. As we mentioned previously, it is

important for the debate topics to be focused so that we can benefit as much as possible from them.

In the same vein, my delegation believes that the practice, now established, of holding annual debates on the Council's working methods is a positive that contributes, specifically through the Ad Hoc Working Group dedicated to the issue, to imbuing its work with greater effectiveness, efficiency and transparency. My delegation wishes to congratulate the members of the Council for the important improvements introduced in recent years in that principal organ's working methods. We are persuaded that the latter will continue to address those questions with great interest.

Furthermore, my delegation wishes to stress the importance of strengthened interaction between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and its country-specific configurations. The briefings by the Chair of the Commission and the country-specific configurations allow the Security Council to integrate the related peacebuilding components essential to sustainable peace into its consideration of situations on the Commission's agenda and its decisions in that regard.

The Security Council has continued to pay particular attention to the African continent. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the significant progress made by many African countries on the path of peacebuilding, improving security conditions and the normalization of political life and the implementation of national reconciliation processes.

With regard to the Central African Republic, the period under review includes the deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic in September 2014, nearly two years after the outbreak of the crisis in that country. Morocco, in accordance with its commitment to peace and stability on the continent, worked during its 2012-2013 term on the Council to create the Mission and was among the first countries to send troops into the Central African Republic, initially to constitute the guard unit and then to strengthen its presence at the time the Mission was being established. Since then, significant progress has been achieved, notably at the political level, with the convening of the Bangui Forum, which for the first time brought representatives from all levels of Central African society to take important decisions, which we should ensure are implemented.

Morocco also chairs the PBC country-specific configuration on the Central African Republic and works to strengthen peacebuilding in that country. The work of the configuration essentially focuses on support for the political process, particularly the financing of elections, but also on national reconciliation projects and strengthening the rule of law. The Central African Republic remains in an unstable situation that requires our ongoing support and special attention, particularly on the part of the Council, to put the country back on a path to peace and stability.

With regard to the Sahel, Morocco has never ceased to draw the international community's attention to the situation in the region. That role was pursued and strengthened during our Council term, which strongly supported the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. We note that the hope and the approach behind the implementation of the Strategy is constantly being eroded, despite the fact that the deteriorating situation in certain regions of the Sahel demands increased and substantial support on the part of the international community. We hope that the next briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, at the end of the month, will enable us to be informed in a more detailed manner on the progress made, especially on the difficulties encountered in implementing the Strategy. It is important to think about an action plan to implement and improve the Strategy and to minimize its shortcomings.

The Security Council has continued its regular review of the Palestinian question, and my delegation has participated in all Council open debates on the issue. Nevertheless, we must take the opportunity afforded by the review of today's report to note that, unfortunately, the situation continues to deteriorate in the occupied Palestinian territories in general and in Al-Quds Al-Sharif in particular, following an escalation of violence and repeated incursions by Israeli settlers on Haram Al-Sharif of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, in violation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. In that regard, on the instructions of His Majesty the King, as President of the Al-Quds Committee, on 26 September, on the sidelines of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, Morocco chaired a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Ministerial Contact Group, which adopted a declaration condemning the Israeli violations and calling for protecting Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

The impasse on the Palestinian issue must not continue. The Security Council must play its role in

finding a solution to the Palestinian issue and bringing the two parties to the negotiating table to reach a lasting solution to enable the establishment of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, based on a two-State solution and within the 4 July 1967 borders, living side by side in peace and security.

With regard to Libya, since the uprising of the Libyan people in February 2011, the Kingdom of Morocco has consistently supported the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people to live in dignity and democracy. Also, at the request of the Secretary-General, His Majesty King Mohammed VI agreed to host the talks for inter-Libyan peace in Skhirat, under the auspices of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. The talks led to the initialling of the Skhirat political agreement on 11 July. In that regard, Council members expressed their gratitude to Morocco for its efforts to make progress on the agreement and welcomed the Libyan dialogue. My delegation continues to call all Libyan parties to persevere on the path of dialogue to reach a settlement to the situation in that country with the participation of all sectors of Libyan society.

The Security Council has devoted a major part of its agenda and its meetings to the fight against the scourge of terrorism. That demonstrates the gravity of the horrific phenomenon and the increasing threat it poses to the international community. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the adoption, during the period under review, of Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015) and Security Council presidential statements S/PRST/2015/4 and S/PRST/2015/14, which introduce a set of measures to counter terrorist groups, including Daesh and Boko Haram, and to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

The Kingdom of Morocco, an active participant, responsible and respected on the international scene in the area of the fight against terrorism and religious extremism, has developed for that purpose an approach based on the following principles.

First, we must work to optimize security governance and to upgrade the legal framework for combating terrorism.

Secondly, we must combat social instability and promote sustainable human development. We must recall that His Majesty the King launched in 2005 the national initiative for human development, specifically to combat social gaps, exclusion and poverty.

Thirdly, we must restructure the religious area, particularly through the training of imams on the real teachings of Islam based on tolerance, coexistence, openness and respect for others. We should note in that regard that the countries of the friends of Africa and Europe have concluded bilateral agreements with Morocco for the training of imams in Morocco, who later become trainers in their own respective countries. That experience, in its three dimensions, has led to the Moroccan approach to combat incitement to commit terrorist acts motivated by extremism and intolerance, which was shared during a high-level meeting held in 30 September 2014 with members of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), together with the Members of the United Nations, at the initiative of Morocco and the CTC Executive Directorate.

I cannot conclude without warmly congratulating Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay on their well-deserved election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the period 2016-2017. I am sure they will fully and successfully contribute to the efforts of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's meeting. My delegation welcomes this opportunity to express its views on the report of the Security Council (A/70/2). This annual debate is useful in reviewing not just the work of the Security Council but also the manner in which the Council operates. We also thank Ambassador Matthew Rycroft of the United Kingdom for presenting the report in his capacity as the President of the Security Council for this month.

The Security Council is the premier institution charged with responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security — which does not, of course, strip the General Assembly of its role in that regard. The Council acts on behalf of the broader United Nations membership, and is therefore accountable to it. Only with a substantive annual report by the Council and a two-way communication between the Council and the General Assembly can this debate on the report of the Security Council become meaningful. I would like to outline our main observations and impressions about the Council's report.

We believe that the Security Council conducted its business reasonably efficiently, as reflected in the number of meetings that it held as well as the substantial number of outcomes that it was able to agree on. We appreciate the Council's ability to reach consensus and make progress on counter-terrorism issues. Important work was done in that regard during the past reporting period.

There has been a gradual yet perceptible increase in the number of public meetings. We hope that such a culture of transparency will continue to grow. We are also pleased to note the continuation of wrap-up sessions by the monthly presidencies of the Council, which is a practice that Pakistan revived during its presidency in January 2013. Seven such meetings were organized during the reporting period.

On the other hand, the report of the Council continues to be a compilation of documents and information, and it lacks substance. More than a fourth of the report is made up of compendiums of meetings. While we understand the possible difficulties in preparing a substantive report, greater effort is required in that regard. That would enable all delegations to offer substantive comments and would make the debate on today's agenda item more useful.

We recognize those limitations and would like to share some observations on the work of the Security Council. The continuation of the robust work of the Council in peacekeeping is indeed welcome. As a leading troop-contributing country (TCC), Pakistan takes pride in being a part of that important endeavour of the Council. In order to make United Nations peacekeeping more effective, however, we believe that closer interaction and consultations between the Council and the TCCs is warranted. That continues to be a persistent shortcoming in the Council's work. We remain concerned at the Council's tendency to use in particular measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, without fully utilizing Chapter VI and Chapter VIII possibilities.

The Council's inability to act effectively or decisively, or even to pronounce itself clearly, on the situation in Palestine is inexplicable and frankly inexcusable. That inability imperils peace and security and contributes to aggression and violence. Importantly, it reinforces the perceptions of selectivity. An impression of double standards in its approach will undermine the effectiveness of the Council. The Council must not only stake its claim to being fair, unbiased and effective; it must also be perceived by others to be so. The Council would also enhance its credibility if it were able to respond to the raging violence and spreading chaos and disorder elsewhere in the Middle East.

The Council and the General Assembly should work as partners in the maintenance of international peace and security. The General Assembly can discuss vexing issues that do not find a solution in the Council. The number of annual meetings of the Council clearly indicates the burden that it bears on a day-to-day basis. It should not seek to further burden itself by trying to assume functions that other United Nations bodies are mandated to perform. That approach not only undermines the effectiveness of the relevant United Nations bodies, it also prevents the Security Council from devoting more focus and time to the issues that directly fall within its scope.

The Council needs to be more responsive to the membership's call for improvements in its working methods. We acknowledge some progress in the Council's interaction with the wider membership, sharing penholderships with non-permanent members and the adoption of a Pakistan-initiated proposal of intra-Council dialogue. However, most Member States agree that progress in those areas is far too slow.

The Council's working methods need to be in sync with the values promoted by the United Nations — the values of transparency, inclusiveness and participation. Pakistan made certain recommendations in that regard during last year's Assembly debate (see A/69/PV.58) on this agenda item. We also proposed that a synopsis of the views of all Member States be circulated as an official document. We were pleased to see action taken by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session in that regard.

The foregoing views and suggestions can still be helpful in improving the working methods of the Council. Also, a joint committee of the Security Council and the General Assembly could be formed to examine implementation of our recommendations.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Pakistan is also open to other initiatives that could promote the values I have just outlined. To that end, we assure the President of our cooperation and support.

Ms. Zahir (Maldives): At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank His Excellency Mr. Gerard van

Bohemen, Permanent Representative of New Zealand, and his team for their efforts in drafting this year's report (A/70/2) of the Security Council. I also wish to express my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Matthew Rycroft, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which currently holds the presidency of the Security Council, for introducing the document here today.

My delegation takes note of the activities, initiatives and decisions taken by the Security Council during the reporting period, which have had a positive impact in a number of situations across the globe that have and continue to pose threats to the maintenance of international peace and security. Maldives commends the efforts that have been made to enhance the accountability, coherence and transparency of the Council. The efforts made to acknowledge the broader dimensions of international peace and security are greatly welcome and form the foundation for a Council that is truly representative of the Organization's membership. The Arria Formula meeting of the Security Council in June on the security dimensions of climate change and the open debate on the security concerns of small island developing States in July of this year (see S/PV.7499) are two recent initiatives that embody a necessary recognition of the vast array of security concerns faced by States Members of the United Nations. It is important that the momentum that those events generated not be lost.

The report of the Security Council constitutes an annual exercise of summarizing past activities conducted by the Council. We note that it does not effectively underline important priority areas. However, while debates in the General Assembly focus on closer cooperation between the Assembly and the Security Council and on the Council's ability to foster international peace and security, my delegation would welcome a more analytical and reflective approach, with a view to making the Council more effective in its future work.

The Security Council is a principal organ of the United Nations, and the adoption of its annual report should be an occasion for more comprehensive engagement on the part of the entire membership of the United Nations. Non-members of the Security Council should be afforded an opportunity to make their suggestions and share their analyses on the efficacy with which the Council has represented the Organization for the year. To that end, my delegation joins the call for an open debate of the Council to be held prior to the finalization of the Council's report.

With regard to the substance of the document, Maldives would like to highlight its deepening concern about the Council's inaction on a number of issues that are of dire importance to international peace and security. The inability of the Security Council to take concrete action with regard to the situations in Palestine and Syria and in countering the expansion of and the impacts caused by the so-called Islamic State represents one of the gravest failings of our time. That those issues have not been meaningfully addressed by the Council negates the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law.

It is imperative that the report adequately analyse the work of the Council, while acknowledging its shortcomings, and that an opportunity be given for those shortcomings to be addressed when moving forward. The Council acts on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization, and any inability to fulfil its mandate calls into question the Council's legitimacy and relevance. Any such inability therefore also calls into question the legitimacy and relevance of the Organization as a whole. The States Members of the United Nations deserve better. The people of the world, whom we represent, deserve better as well. Maldives looks forward to continuing its engagement and advocacy in favour of a Council that is both truly reflective of the broader membership and representative of its views.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to align myself with the previous speakers who affirmed the importance of improving the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, which, as the principal consultative organ for States Members of the United Nations, is the forum in which they can express themselves and voice their opinions.

In its annual report (A/70/2), the Security Council highlights its role as contributor to the maintenance of international peace and security pursuant to its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations. It is important to note, however, that the Security Council's role does not preclude the General Assembly's own role as a main actor in the maintenance of international peace and security. Indeed, the General Assembly's role in terms of international peace and security should not be limited to briefings such as today's, which are merely pro forma.

The report we have before us is simply a quantitative procedural account of the cases and situations under review at the Security Council. It is a compendium of events that occurred during the period covered and of the activities undertaken by the Council in the past year. We believe that such a procedural review does not reflect the true role that could be played by the General Assembly together with the Security Council in dealing with questions related to international peace and security. We have therefore stressed in all of our statements that a pivotal aspect of reforming the United Nations would be to reform the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council with a view to implementing a better and more effective relationship leading to the General Assembly's taking its rightful place and playing its full role in that regard.

We also reiterate the importance of taking into account the concerns of those Member States that find themselves on the agenda of the Security Council, and call the Assembly's attention to the fact that the State most concerned in a Security Council discussion is often completely excluded from the discussions and consultations on it. Furthermore, the new practice that gives certain States the right to be an exclusive penholder revives, in essence, an outmoded colonial methodology that is not supported by the Charter.

In our view, reforming the working methods of the Security Council and its procedures is vital for achieving comprehensive reform, one that provides for the just geographic distribution of membership in the Council among the continents of the world, in particular our mother continent, Africa, which consists of 54 States. In fact, more than 67 per cent of the matters on the Council's agenda are related to Africa.

As we are concentrating today on the procedural measures needed to improve the effectiveness of the Security Council in its work, we reaffirm what has been expressed in the documents of the ministerial conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement countries, including the conference held in Bali in May 2010 on improvement of the Security Council working methods. We also support the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council on procedural measures, contained in document S/2010/507, as well as the circulation of the Council's daily programme of work in the *United Nations Journal*, which would make it accessible to all. In addition, transparency and objectivity require that the monthly programme of work of the Council also be circulated to all Member States at the beginning of each month.

When it comes to briefings by members of the Secretariat or representatives of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, we stress the importance of making written texts and any audiovisual materials that accompany such briefings available to all Member States. With respect to official documents of the Council, especially reports of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping missions, we underline the importance of circulating such reports in all six official languages of the United Nations long enough before the start of Security Council deliberations for delegations to review them. In many cases such documents are circulated only in draft form and often only to members of the Security Council, while the report under consideration, which is an official document, is rarely circulated to Member States before the day itself of the deliberations, and sometimes even only afterwards.

With respect to the types of meetings held, despite the relative increase in the number of open or public meetings, it goes without saying that the majority of Council meetings are in the form of closed consultations, and thus are exclusively for members of the Security Council and their invitees, whose opinions are sought, for example representatives of the Secretariat. However, for objectivity and transparency to be ensured, at a minimum the State concerned should be allowed to take part in such consultations. We also stress the importance of the principle of consultation and cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations, including the holding of joint consultative meetings in compliance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. We would also note the right of Member States to participate in open meetings in accordance with Articles 37 and 39 of the Charter and the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure.

In conclusion, we stress the importance of cooperation and coordination among the organs of the United Nations, including through consultations among the Presidents of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Such an approach in no way violates the exclusive competencies and mandates of each organ. We look forward to the first fruits of reform, in particular the reform of the Security Council and its working methods, together with its relationship with the General Assembly. That

reform should be undertaken in a practical manner that revitalizes the role of the General Assembly as the main deliberative organ of the United Nations.

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/70/2?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.