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Friday, 21 November 2014, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa . . . . . (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 110

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

Note by the Secretary-General (A/69/300)

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/69/300.

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 110?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 28

Report of the Security Council

Report of the Security Council (A/69/2)

The President: I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Mr. Gary Quinlan, to introduce the report of the Council.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): 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. 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/69/2), which covers the period from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014.

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 full membership of the United Nations, the Security Council has discharged its responsibilities by supporting the peaceful resolution of conflicts and undertaking a range of peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities.

During the reporting period, the Security Council held 238 formal meetings, of which 218 were public. The Security Council adopted 55 resolutions and 26 presidential statements, while also issuing 113 statements to the press.

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The Security Council also conducted two field missions, one to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Ethiopia in October 2013 and another to Mali in February of this year.

During the reporting period, the Security Council maintained its usual focus on the African continent. Over the past year, there was some progress. The mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone was completed. Substantial gains were made by the Somali armed forces against Al-Shabaab, with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia. Constitutional order was restored in Guinea-Bissau. And the Force Intervention Brigade, deployed as part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, became fully operational.

The Security Council responded to conflicts in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Libya. The Security Council reinforced the protection-of-civilians mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

The situations across the Middle East also featured prominently on the Council's agenda, in relation to Gaza as well as to Iraq. The security situation worsened in both Syria and Yemen. In September 2013, the Council adopted resolution 2118 (2013), on the elimination of Syria's chemical-weapons programme, and adopted resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014) during 2014 to address the humanitarian situation in the country.

The Yemen Sanctions Committee was established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) to oversee the imposition of sanctions on spoilers of Yemen's political transition.

The Council met frequently on the conflict in Ukraine and responded quickly to the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 in Donetsk province, which resulted in the loss of 298 lives. The Council adopted resolution 2166 (2014) to condemn that incident in the strongest terms, to demand a full, thorough and independent investigation and to stress that those responsible must be held accountable.

The Security Council also adopted resolutions to extend the mandates of a large number of peace and stability missions. They included the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, the United Nations Office in Burundi, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq.

Complementing that focus on country situations on the agenda, the Council also paid close attention to thematic, general and cross-cutting issues. The Council held meetings on the protection of civilians, on children and armed conflict and on women and peace and security. The Council remained closely engaged on non-proliferation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. During the reporting period, the Council adopted significant resolutions on thematic issues, including on small arms, women and peace and security, children and armed conflict, security-sector reform and peacekeeping.

Upholding the rule of law and accountability for the most serious crimes remain significant topics of interest for the Security Council. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court briefed the Council periodically. The Council also worked to ensure close cooperation and collaboration with regional organizations. That included two consultative meetings with the African Union Peace and Security Council and a briefing by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

In conclusion, consistent with usual practice, the introduction to the report was prepared by Rwanda, which held the presidency of the Security Council in July 2014. 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 faithfully to my colleagues in the Security Council.

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), allow me first to express the Movement's appreciation to you, Sir, for holding this debate, which will provide the General Assembly with an opportunity to examine, scrutinize and evaluate the report contained in document A/69/2 and the activities of the Security Council.

The Charter of the United Nations stipulates in Article 24, paragraph 3, that

> "The Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration."

That provision was designed to help the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative and representative organ of the United Nations, to exercise its mandate in addressing issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security.

While 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 — in carrying out its duties under that responsibility the Council acts on their behalf. In that context, NAM stresses that the Council should report and be accountable to the General Assembly, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 3, 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 Charter provisions, as well as all General Assembly resolutions, that clarify its relationship with the latter organ 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 and administrative and budgetary matters, and in establishing definitions, bearing in mind that the Assembly is primarily tasked with the progressive development of international law and its codification.

NAM reiterates its concern over the Security Council's continuing encroachment on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council through its tendency to address issues that traditionally fall within the competence of the latter organs. In that regard, I would like to draw the General Assembly's attention to the latest case, namely, the Security Council briefing on the role of policing in peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peacebuilding (see S/PV.7317), which was held on 20 November 2014. As emphasized in my recent letter dated 14 November 2014, written in my capacity as the Chair of the coordinating bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement and addressed to you, Sir, as President of the General Assembly, to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretary-General, NAM believes that United Nations policing is an integral part of peacekeeping operations. The Security Council should therefore not act in a way that encroaches upon the mandate of the General Assembly, especially the Special Committee on Peacekeeping, as the only United Nations forum mandated to review the whole question of peacekeeping operations.

We furthermore express our concern over the constant attempts by the Security Council to use thematic issues under its consideration to expand its mandate into areas that do not pose a threat to international peace and security, and we further urge the Council to confine itself to its mandate in accordance with the Charter's provisions. All organs and bodies of the United Nations should carry only out those tasks that have been established within their respective mandates. In that regard, we reiterate that the principal United Nations organs have distinct and separate roles, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

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 coordinate among themselves on the agenda and programme of work of the respective principal organs that they represent, in order to establish increased coherence and complementarities among those organs in a mutually reinforcing manner, respectful of each others' mandates and with a view to generating mutual understanding among them. The members of the respective organs that they represent have, in good faith, vested in them their trust and confidence.

NAM also welcomes, as a step forward, the informal meetings between the Council's President in July and

Member States on the preparation of the annual report of the Security Council, and calls for more regular interactions each year between Presidents of the Security Council for July 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 in which the Council has failed to act, as well as the views expressed by its members during the consideration of the agenda items under its consideration. NAM further calls on the Security Council to elaborate the circumstances under which it decides to adopt different outcomes, whether they be resolutions, presidential statements, press statements or other statements to the press.

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 that they are issued in a timely fashion. The General Assembly may consider proposing parameters for the elaboration of such assessments.

Mr. Mendoza-García (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group of the Security Council, a transregional group comprised of 23 States. We are honoured to speak on its behalf with regard to agenda item 28, entitled "Report of the Security Council".

Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, for holding this debate. We believe it is important that this year's debate has been scheduled with a certain distance, both political and temporal, from the consideration of agenda item 119, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". That will allow us to conduct a more meaningful exchange of opinions on each of the two items.

The ACT group would also like to express its gratitude to Rwanda for its efforts and commitment in editing the report (A/69/2), and to Australia for its comprehensive briefing. The report summarizes the Council's activities and sets forth its priorities, which are embodied in those activities. In that regard, it is a clear and well-organized document. However, while we recognize the difficulty of producing a document that is simultaneously comprehensive and concise, we would have liked it to include more material for reflection and analysis. A presentation that went beyond a mere summary to include other elements, such as an analysis of the decision-making processes of the Council, would have assisted Member States in drawing their own conclusions regarding the contents of the report and the work of the Security Council.

ACT commends the Security Council's efforts to increase its transparency and effectiveness. In recent years, the Council has interacted with a greater number of external actors — civil society, non-governmental organizations, academia and others — through a range of innovative meeting formats, including the Arria Formula and informal interactive dialogues. The number of open debates, public information meetings, wrap-up sessions and substantive reports to the General Assembly has also increased. Moreover, greater and more flexible use has been made of the entire range of Council products, in particular press releases and presidential statements, in response to developing events. However, over the years, the Security Council report and the debate on the report have become more or less a ritual. As a result, it is of limited relevance.

In order to redress that situation, we urge both the Security Council and the General Assembly to adopt bold and innovative measures that will make better use of the annual report. If such measures were adopted, we could obtain more numerous and more tangible benefits from the contents of the report and the relevant debate, in the context of our shared resolve to strengthen international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, with full respect for the work, mandate and competency of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. With that in mind, our group would like to make six specific observations and suggestions with respect to the way in which the annual report might be prepared, the nature of its contents and improvements to the format for its discussion.

First, we question the importance of the number of open debates if different points of view and specific proposals are not included in the report. In assessing

the impact of its consultations, the Council should specifically include a selection of the opinions of non-member States. Such a process should also accord priority to the statements of groups that have made specific suggestions for change on which States have committed themselves to act.

Secondly, the Council's adoption of its annual report could provide an opportunity for an open debate with members of the Council. The topics of such an open debate could include decisions taken by the Council and the positions of the various Member States regarding their adoption; the challenges that the Council faces in carrying out its mandate and its proposals for addressing them; references to discussions in which the Council did not reach consensus; the reasons that led the Council not to take firm positions on important issues regarding international peace and security; and possible future strategies to promote a more preventive and less reactive focus in the face of global crises. ACT recommends that both retrospective and prospective viewpoints should be taken into account during such an analysis of the Council's work.

Thirdly, the annual assessments of the work of the subsidiary organs of the Council and the monthly reports of the Council presidencies, which provide more in-depth analysis than the annual report, should be compiled and included as an integral part of the annual report. Those assessments could play an important role in making clear which issues have been given priority by the Council, month by month. Any responsibilities discharged with regard to the positions of other members of the Council could also be included.

Fourthly, thematic issues should not be considered as free-standing topics. On the contrary, they are an integral part of the consideration of country situations. Although not formally part of the agenda, both underlying general themes and cross-cutting themes related to the work of the Security Council should therefore be linked by being cross-indexed to allow for their timely consideration as part of the corresponding country-specific analysis. Along those lines, we particularly urge the Council to make a greater effort to honour and involve other relevant actors within the United Nations in all its thematic commitments.

Fifthly, the annual report should also be a useful exercise in accountability in the area of the Council's working methods and should employ assessment tools related to key areas of the Council's work. A section of the report should therefore be devoted to that topic and should include a record of the progress made in the implementation of the presidential notes and other working methods recommended by other Member States and by ACT.

Finally, the adoption of the annual report should provide an excellent opportunity not only to review and evaluate the past, but also for all parties concerned to take note of the lessons learned, with a view to discussing options and strategies for the future. In other words, what do we need to do differently in order to better maintain international peace and security? Any discussion on the Council's annual report must not be merely a formal exercise in retrospection, but a forward-looking, reform-minded exercise as well. ACT suggests a possible format organized around a series of workshops clustered around country situations and/or major thematic issues, or even a less formal setting, such as Arria Formula meetings.

To conclude, allow me to say a few words on the working methods of the Security Council. We would like to highlight the increasing number of open debates organized by successive Council presidencies. At the same time, we recall that, although such debates demonstrate a greater willingness for openness and inclusion, they do not alone translate into meaningful discussions. In that context, it is necessary to put into practice the procedural changes that will make debates less formulaic and more likely ultimately to have a material impact. We welcome in particular the possibility of making Council consultations more spontaneous, vigorous and productive.

We commend the efforts led by France to establish a code of conduct on the use of the veto, under which the permanent members would commit to refrain from using the veto in cases involving atrocity crimes. During the period covered by the report, yet another veto relating to the situation in Syria demonstrated once again the importance of that initiative. As the Council's working methods become more collaborative and accountable, we anticipate that support for that proposal from all Member States will grow as well.

We encourage future Security Council presidencies to strengthen efforts to enhance the report's impact — something that should be taken into consideration from the report's inception and developed throughout the report's finalization, formal submission and discussion.

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for having presented the report of the Council (A/69/2) today. The report raises many important questions that deserve to be addressed separately from the question of Security Council enlargement. We are therefore grateful to you, Sir, for holding this separate debate today.

Liechtenstein is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group and aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the representative of Costa Rica. Allow me, however, to add a few thoughts on the use of the veto and on efforts to regulate it.

As the report notes in its introduction, two vetoes prevented the Council from referring the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. No reasonable person can deny that atrocity crimes have been committed in that conflict: they have been amply documented by the Commission of Inquiry and many other credible sources. Such use of the veto means that, for the victims of those crimes, justice will be delayed, if not denied. That was the fourth draft resolution regarding Syria blocked by a veto since that tragic conflict began.

The veto forms a part of the Charter of the United Nations, which all of our countries ratified. While some may call for its abolition, nobody denies the existence of that privilege granted to the permanent members. It is important to note, however, that the Charter also obliges the Council to act in accordance with its purposes and principles. That obligation rests on the Council as a whole, but especially on its permanent members, whose privileged position comes with special responsibility. It is for that reason that Liechtenstein and others have, for some time now, advocated for rules on the use of the veto, under which permanent members of the Security Council would commit to refrain voluntarily from using the veto if such use would block Council action aimed at preventing or ending atrocity crimes. Other Council members should similarly pledge not to vote against such action.

We have worked with our partners in the ACT group, as well as with France, to advance the discussion towards a code of conduct. In March 2014, Liechtenstein and France co-hosted a workshop at the International Peace Institute to discuss that issue with a wider circle of interested States and experts. We commend the workshop summary to all those interested in that topic. We will continue to work within ACT to make proposals to ensure the timely adoption of a meaningful code of conduct.

What would make such a code of conduct meaningful? It should contain a clear and unambiguous commitment not to vote against draft resolutions aimed at preventing or ending genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. Given the irreversible consequences of the crimes involved, it is crucial that prevention be included. The code should refer to some authoritative entity that can bring instances of such crimes to the attention of the Council. We believe that the Secretary-General is ideally suited to play that role, given his competence under Article 99 of the Charter and given his access to the early-warning capabilities of the United Nations system.

On 15 March 2014, the Russian Federation vetoed a draft resolution, sponsored by many countries, including Liechtenstein, in the aftermath of the Crimea referendum. That raises serious questions under the second part of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter, which obliges parties to a conflict to abstain on decisions taken under Chapter VI of the Charter. We were surprised that that matter was not raised in the Council. We believe that the time is ripe to re-examine the application of that paragraph. We encourage a frank discussion on the issue, and we would hope that future reports of the Council will reflect a critical examination of the applicability of Article 27, paragraph 3, in relevant instances.

Mr. Mukerji (India): I thank you, Sir, for having organized this meeting on the annual report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014 (A/69/2).

I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work put in by Ambassador Eugène-Richard Gasana, Permanent Representative of Rwanda, and his team in preparing the annual report of the Security Council. I also thank Ambassador Gary Quinlan, Permanent Representative of Australia, for presenting the report to the Assembly this morning.

The report of the Security Council is one of the principal means of interaction between the General Assembly — the most representative organ of the United Nations — and the Council — its most empowered one — on the substantive issues dealt with by the Council. The Charter of the United Nations mandates the Council to submit annual reports to the General

Assembly for its consideration. That clearly sets forth the accountability of the Council to the broader membership of the United Nations represented here in the Assembly, which has agreed to implement the Council's decisions under Article 25 of the Charter. The discussion of the Council's report therefore warrants that we, the Member States, pronounce ourselves on not only the substantive issues but also the working methods of the Council, as they have a direct bearing on the issue of the timely reform of the Council, in the terms of paragraph 153 of the 2005 Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1).

The participation of Member States in the open debates of the Council under rule 37 cannot be a substitute for the debate we are having here. It is also pertinent to point out that the Council resolutions or presidential statements that are the outcomes of such open debates are agreed to by the Council members before the participation of the Member States. This reduces our participation to mere tokenism, and, if it is not checked in time, will defeat the principle of such participation. Our first recommendation, therefore, is that the Council should give consideration to the suggestions made and views expressed by the members in open debates before any outcomes are adopted.

The outcomes of the Security Council meetings and actions of the Council are generally available to the Member States through its website. However, what would be helpful for Member States to know is how these decisions were reached, the sensitivities with which such decisions were taken, and whether the working procedures of the Council were applied consistently. It is in this context that the annual report of the Council assumes greater significance. Member States have repeatedly requested that the report be more analytical and incisive, rather than being a mere narration of events. Regrettably, however, the report continues to be a statistical compilation of events and listing of meetings and outcome documents. Our second recommendation is that the Council's reports should be made more analytical in future.

Thirdly, we feel that having a larger number of Member States in the decision-making process of the Council will make it more transparent, credible, legitimate and representative. That is directly linked to the early reforms of the Council mandated by our leaders at the 2005 Summit.

With regard to substantive issues, we note that most of the Council's work during the period in review centred around Africa, including the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Somalia, as well as on the situation in the Middle East. The Council held many thematic debates on various general and cross-cutting issues, including threats to peace and security caused by terrorist acts and peacekeeping issues.

In the context of mandates adopted by the Council for peacekeeping operations, we would like to offer the following concerns. First, we urge the Council to consult the troop-contributing countries, as clearly provided forunder Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations, while adopting the mandates of such operations. It is not only the formulation of the mandates but also the change of mandates midstream that is a source of concern for us. This was evidenced in the case of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) referred to in last year's report (A/68/2).

Secondly, as a major troop-contributing country and one with a substantial presence in both MONUSCO and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, India would like to emphasize the need for an objective assessment of the implications of robust mandates for the impartial nature of United Nations peacekeeping. The provisions of the Charter of the United Nations do not, in our view, allow the misuse of our peacekeepers. Impartiality and neutrality are key principles for ensuring the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeepers.

Another related issue is how to deter threats to United Nations peacekeepers posed by non-Government forces or militias. The Council has asked for the apprehension of those responsible for killing United Nations peacekeepers, but the report does not shed any light on what has happened to ensure that so far in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Mali or anywhere else.

Thirdly, the threats posed by non-Government forces, militias and terrorists to United Nations peacekeepers have to be taken seriously. Specific examples in this case are attacks in the Golan Heights and Mali. Unless effectively deterred, such threats will increase in number and scope. In the case of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, it has been alleged that the foreign terrorist fighters who attacked United Nations peacekeepers belong to the Al-Nusra Front, which is a terrorist organization proscribed by the Security Council, but the report does not give any information on the steps taken by the Council to use

its authority to investigate, prosecute and penalize the perpetrators of such terrorist acts. A clear obligation of all Member States to act against foreign terrorist fighters who attack United Nations peacekeepers should become an integral part of the peacekeeping mandates approved by the Security Council.

On the situation in Afghanistan, an agenda item considered by both the Council and the General Assembly, I am happy that yesterday the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/18, which we co-sponsored. We reiterate our full support to an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled process of peace and reconciliation.

On the issue of counter-terrorism, we recall that the Council adopted resolution 2178 (2014) on foreign terrorist fighters in September, and presidential statement S/PRST/2014/23 two days ago. We also recall that it has endorsed a policy of zero tolerance for terrorism. However, the report does not make clear what working procedures are applied within the Council when it deliberates on how to counter terrorism, which is becoming the single biggest threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. We feel that a more detailed account in the report of how the Council acts on information provided to it by Member States would go a long way towards offsetting the widely held perception that the Council uses different standards in dealing with terrorism.

I wish to recall that, at the debate on 12 November (see A/69/PV.49), a majority of Member States clearly affirmed the need for an outcome on the early reform of the Security Council by the seventieth anniversary summit, to be held next year. I would like to urge that while the Assembly takes note of the annual report of the Council, it should also ask the Council to bear in mind the suggestions made by Member States.

I conclude with the suggestion that the General Assembly consider establishing a review mechanism under your leadership and mandate, Sir, to list the various valuable suggestions made by Member States in this debate today, and ask the Council to submit a status report on their implementation for the consideration of our leaders at the seventieth anniversary summit, to be held in September next year.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): Let me first thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting on the report of the Security Council (A/69/2). We are grateful to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Gary Quinlan of Australia, for presenting and elaborating on the report.

The Security Council acts on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations. That makes it accountable to the general membership. We use this yearly debate in the Assembly to comment on the substance and procedures of the Council. The purpose of our debate should be to initiate a two-way communication and dialogue between the two organs.

During the period covered by the report, ending in July, the Security Council conducted its business efficiently. Despite daunting challenges, it demonstrated vigilance, decisiveness and resilience in responding to many escalating situations, especially in regard to South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Mali and the Malaysian airliner. We appreciate the Council's work on counter-terrorism in the areas of ransom payments, measures against Al-Qaida and the extension of the Office of the Ombudsperson. Many of the Security Council's meetings have remained public. This is a healthy trend. This growing culture of transparency should also be embraced by the Council's subsidiary bodies.

Increasingly, the Council is becoming more efficient and responsive, but it needs to work more on its effectiveness and working methods. The Council's propensity to rely heavily on Chapter VII measures has been persistent. We believe that there should be frequent resort to preventive diplomacy under Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Timely initiatives for negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, and the use of regional and subregional organizations and the good offices of the Secretary-General could save the world from many costly wars and conflicts.

The Security Council's conscious reticence on the situation in Gaza this summer was incomprehensible and unacceptable. Had the Security Council prevented the escalation in Gaza, the carnage that followed could have been averted. The Security Council's action or inaction is watched by the media, especially by social media, all around the world. The citizens of the world ask probing questions about why the Council cannot pronounce itself on developments that clearly imperil peace and security and fuel aggression and violence. A Council that is tongue-tied on certain issues reinforces the perceptions of selectivity based on realpolitik. In this day and age, the Council's actions should also have

broad street credibility. The Council must be perceived as a fair, unbiased and effective body.

The Council and the General Assembly should work as partners in the maintenance of international peace and security. The General Assembly should act as a counterpoise in the discussion of particularly thorny issues that do not yield to a solution in the Council. It is a bit strange that the Council has not heard the full deliberative voice of the General Assembly on the escalating crises of Ukraine, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and the Ebola epidemic. Diligent debates in the Assembly on those vexing issues can help mobilize world opinion to slow down a drift towards a new Cold War, stem the emergence of a new psychopathic ideology of hatred and revenge and prepare the health systems of the world to deal with pandemics. Those and other issues are as much the issues of the general membership as they are of the Security Council.

When Pakistan, during its presidency of the Council, revived the practice of holding wrap-up sessions, there were some misgivings about its format. Now we see that such sessions have proved their value in taking stock of the month's work in the Council.

United Nations peacekeeping is the most tangible contribution by the Security Council to international peace and security. Pakistan's consistent and leading contribution to United Nations peacekeeping is a source of national pride for us and a testament to our abiding commitment to global peace and security. We recently contributed troops to the Central African Republic. Pakistan fully understands the need to explore ways to adapt United Nations peacekeeping operations to the complex and dynamic nature of conflicts. However, adaptations in policy must follow an extensive dialogue among key stakeholders, including troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and finance-contributing countries. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's ongoing strategic review of peacekeeping.

We acknowledge the fact that some steps have been taken by the Council to improve its working methods. They include interaction and dialogue with non-members of the Council, consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries (PCCs), the appointment of more penholders from among the elected members of the Council and the early appointment of the Chairpersons of the subsidiary bodies.

We are also pleased to note the adoption of a proposal initiated by Pakistan on intra-Council dialogue, albeit in a diluted form. More improvement in the Council's working methods is required. It is a bit awkward, 70 years after its creation, that the Security Council continues to work using provisional rules of procedure. The Council's working methods need to correspond to the globally accepted values of the twenty-first century. Its work needs to be more transparent, participative and responsive to the needs of the wider United Nations membership. In that regard, I should like to offer some suggestions.

There should be substantive collaboration between the General Assembly and the Security Council based on their respective agendas. The monthly meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly and Security Council should be made substantive in order to choreograph action by the two bodies based on their agendas. Those meetings should not be only courtesy calls or cursory exchanges of information.

The annual reports of the Security Council should be analytical, and not merely a compendium of its activities. As provided in the note by the President of the Security Council of 12 December 2012 (S/2012/922), the Security Council's adoption of outcome documents should follow discussions in open debates. In our view, that should be done in a manner that allows the inputs provided by the wider United Nations membership to feed into the outcome documents.

Close collaboration between the Council and the TCCs and PCCs, especially during the negotiations on peacekeeping mandates, will make a mission's formation, force generation, deployment and operations on the ground much more effective and productive.

The Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions could be convened in an open meeting format — a suggestion made some time ago by the United States in one of the intergovernmental negotiations meetings.

The selection and appointment of expert panels and groups should be made more transparent, balanced and representative.

My final comment is that the Council may consider collating the views expressed by Member States today, circulating a synopsis of those views as an official document and forming a joint committee with the General Assembly to examine the implementation of some of the recommendations being made today.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Australia and President of the Security Council for the month of November, Ambassador Gary Quinlan, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council (A/69/2), which covers a period of intense activity in the domain of international peace and security.

The transparency and accountability of the Security Council to the general membership is a matter to which Brazil ascribes great importance. We therefore believe that the annual report, by providing a comprehensive account of the Council's activities to the General Assembly, represents an important tool for strengthening the Council's accountability vis-à-vis the 178 Member States that do not regularly take part in its deliberations.

We have also long been supportive of improvements in the Council's working methods aimed at making it less opaque and more democratic. The report makes it clear that attempts continue to be made to reach out to the wider membership, and we note with satisfaction the number of public meetings, open debates, wrap-up sessions and consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries being held. However, it is essential to deepen and broaden that trend in order for Council decisions to be more effective and legitimate.

During the period covered by the report, the situation in the Middle East once again deteriorated amid increasing tensions and threats to international peace and security in various parts of the region. After almost four years of conflict, fighting in Syria has created a perverse combination of death, suffering and destruction and has resulted in millions of internally displaced persons and refugees. As the situation on the ground further deteriorates, the Council's chronic inability to act promptly and substantively is seen by many as an illustration of a worrisome pattern of dysfunctionality.

It took 15 months for the Council to endorse the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex), which had been approved by consensus in June 2012, and has since been considered to be the most rational road map for a political settlement of the crisis in Syria. Similar delays were involved in the adoption of resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014), which allowed for humanitarian aid to be delivered to the civilian population.

Despite their irrefutable importance, those resolutions fell short of dealing with some of the most critical aspects of the Syrian conflict. While the political process remains paralysed and human rights violations are relentlessly being committed, the flow of weapons to all belligerent parties continues, resulting in more violence, instability and suffering. In other words, the militarization of the conflict proceeds with the tacit, or not so tacit, approval of Council members. How long will it take for the Security Council to adopt a common position against the continuing militarization of the crisis?

In Iraq we are also witnessing a severe deterioration in the security and humanitarian situations, with the expansion of extremism and the spread of terrorist activities. The crisis is a stark reminder of the unpredictable consequences of unilateral actions, such as those undertaken in 2003. It is our duty to support Iraq in its efforts to overcome the crisis and combat terrorism in a way that is fully and strictly compatible with the Charter of the United Nations.

The brief hope that emerged from the resumption of direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians in July 2013 quickly dispelled, owing to the parties' failure to deal with the essential elements of the conflict. As a result, the international community witnessed yet another devastating war in Gaza, the third in five years. The conflict not only undermined the prospects for talks, but also fed the cycle of violence and left an intolerable legacy of civilian deaths, destruction and displacement.

Let us not forget that the protection of civilians must be implemented in a universal and non-selective manner. The commendable emphasis placed by the Security Council on the protection of civilians when dealing with other items on its agenda cannot be sidestepped when it comes to the responsibility to protect the Palestinian people.

While the Security Council held a significant number of meetings on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, its deliberations have had little influence on the ground. Had its past resolutions on the matter been fully implemented, illegal unilateral actions might not have reigned with impunity, the situation might not have become so tragic and the gap between the parties might not have grown so wide. Brazil expects the Council to play a leading role on that issue, actively supporting and steering the peace

process, while positioning itself firmly against the status quo.

As the recent deterioration in Jerusalem and elsewhere shows, the current situation is neither sustainable nor acceptable. Brazil condemns all acts of terrorism, including the attack that took place on 18 November in a synagogue in West Jerusalem, which claimed the lives of five Israelis and left eight people injured. We firmly believe that only through the implementation of the two-State solution will Israel and Palestine be able to achieve durable peace and security and put an end to the suffering of the civilian population on both sides.

I would also like to address the issue of the relationship between the Security Council and the International Criminal Court (ICC), especially the referral and deferral mechanisms. The Security Council should strive to preserve a balance between, on the one hand, upholding the instruments of international criminal justice, such as the ICC Statute, while, on the other, responding with wisdom to requests that are legally sound and meet with wide political support.

Brazil is convinced that there is institutional space to defuse polarization, ensure respect for international law and the rule of law and address the legitimate questions being raised by regional groups. In that context, the fact that in November 2013 the Security Council failed to approve the deferrals of the Kenyan cases proved to be an avoidable misstep. That draft resolution, which would not have precluded the proceedings but just postponed them, could have represented a confidence-building manifestation, and in that sense was a missed opportunity (see S/PV.7060).

On a more positive note, let me refer briefly to the situation in Guinea-Bissau, where the Security Council, working in partnership with the United Nations team on the ground under the leadership of former Special Representative of the Secretary-General José Ramos-Horta and with the close attention of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), contributed to the restoration of constitutional order. As a close friend of Guinea-Bissau, Brazil is encouraged to witness the full re-engagement of international partners with the country, which became clear at meetings held in New York this week. We would like, once again, to express our support for the efforts that are being undertaken by the new authorities with a view to ensuring the stability, development, institutional progress and prosperity of Bissau-Guineans.

As I have previously mentioned to the Council in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, I believe that Guinea-Bissau provides us with a good example of how constructive and complementary the interactions between the Security Council and the PBC can be. That relationship is certainly worth strengthening in order for the Council to better take advantage of the advisory and early-warning roles that the PBC can and does play.

We are also pleased to note that Latin America and the Caribbean can increasingly be portrayed as an example of peace, sustainable development and corporation — a region that fully engages with the multilateral system of collective security. The situation in Haiti — the only item relating to the region that is inscribed on the agenda of the Security Council — continues to evolve positively, as rightly indicated in the Council's annual report and the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2014/617). We hope that, a year from now, when we meet again to discuss the next annual report of the Security Council, we will be able to institute a substantial drawdown in the international military presence in that country within our sights.

Finally, let me point out that one cannot discuss the work undertaken by the Security Council without mentioning the growing frustration among Member States and civil society with the absence of a satisfactory answer from the Council in response to some specific crises around the world, such as the situations in Syria, Ukraine and Palestine. The task of reforming the structures of the Council remains urgent. As we approach the watershed year of 2015, Brazil wishes to call once again on Member States to embrace the opportunity provided by the seventieth anniversary of the Organization to finally adapt the Security Council to the geopolitical realities of twenty-first century, making it a more legitimate and representative body that is capable of addressing contemporary challenges.

Before concluding, let me refer briefly to the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, and signal our interest in further pursuing some of the suggestions regarding the way the Council's annual report could be drafted, the nature of its content and how to improve its discussion in the General Assembly.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Sir, for having convened this important

meeting. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Rwanda for having prepared the introduction of the annual report (A/69/2) on behalf of the members of the Security Council, as well as the Permanent Representative of Australia for having presented the report.

As the Council is entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of the entire membership, we stress the need for the Council to act on behalf of the entire membership, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, by ensuring, to the fullest extent possible, that the contributions of Members to its decision-making processes are taken into account. The authority of the General Assembly should be fully upheld by ensuring that the Council acts in full conformity with the Charter.

We welcome the holding of the debate on the report of the Security Council independently from the larger question of Security Council reform, with a view to allowing more time for the General Assembly to discuss and reflect on the Security Council's work.

Egypt firmly believes that the work of the Security Council should be based on transparency, inclusivity and openness. We therefore call for increased interactivity between the Council and the broader membership throughout the reporting cycle. In that regard, I would like to highlight a few points.

First, we urge the further strengthening of the growing trend whereby the Council conducts a substantial portion of its work in an open format — 218 out of 238 formal meetings held during the reporting period were public. Hence, it is vital for future reports to provide a better reflection of the contributions by the broader membership to the Council's work, including the open debates.

Secondly, as highlighted in previous debates by many speakers, there is a need for the report to be more analytical, rather than merely a narrative compilation of events.

Thirdly, part of the efforts invested in the report should be allocated to assessment and evaluation. A picture of the Council's work is never complete without a clear assessment of the results achieved, as well as the shortcomings. We encourage the inclusion of monthly assessments prepared by the monthly Presidents in the annual report.

Fourthly, as a considerable amount of the Council's work takes place in its subsidiary bodies, they should also provide annual assessments of their work, and they should be incorporated in the annual report of the Council.

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

Mr. Mendonça e Moura (Portugal): I wish to thank you, Sir, for having organized this debate devoted solely to the Security Council's annual report (A/69/2).

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group by the representative of Costa Rica.

The submission by the Security Council of its annual report to the General Assembly, as called for in the Charter of the United Nations, is the very expression of accountability. It is therefore important that we use this meeting to formally discuss the work of the Security Council and the information provided in its report, an exercise that, in our view, should seek to strengthen the relationship between two principal organs of the United Nations.

We thank the representative of Australia, this month's President of the Security Council, for the presentation of the report. As we see it, the presentation is in itself another opportunity to further underline the main aspects of the Council's work and to highlight its main achievements and its shortcomings. For the future, we could also use the presentation of the report as a way of encouraging this debate to focus on selected aspects related to the action of the Council or on particular areas reflected in the report.

As we mentioned recently at the Security Council open debate on working methods (see S/PV.7285), annual reports serve two purposes: to provide statistical records and to provide information. A considerable part of the report is not meant to be read, but rather consulted. That is the part with statistical data for the historical record and future reference. The other part, which is basically the introduction, should be informative. That

is where there is still much work to do. We think that it is through the more informative monthly assessments, particularly on meetings held during consultations, that that part could be substantially enhanced.

Indeed, monthly assessments should try to highlight in particular the developments that occurred during consultations. We would thereby have a clearer picture of the difficulties encountered and the motivation for any action taken or the reasons for inaction on the part of the Council. That should be done without disclosing the elements that are understandably confidential. That is why we believe that the Presidents of the month should continue to be entrusted with the leeway necessary to write their assessments, which they are solely responsible for, notwithstanding the courtesy and practice of consulting with other Council members. A collection of more substantive assessments would result in a more substantive introduction to the report, and perhaps even in a shorter introduction, as one could dispense with the detailed information on public meetings, which repeats information in the annexes and on which records are publicly available. In sum, through better assessments one could have more substantive introductions.

In future General Assembly debates on the Council's reports, such as this one, the Council could also suggest particular areas of discussion on which it would welcome comments and observations, while, naturally, not preventing any delegation from commenting on any subject they wish. One way of bringing such focus to the debate would be for members of the Council to raise particular areas relating to the Council's work or to the contents of the report itself at the public meeting of the Council in October when the report is adopted. Presidential note S/2010/507 indeed suggests, in paragraph 74, that members of the Council who wish to do so may, at the meeting in which the report is adopted, comment on the work of the Council for the period covered by the report. However, until now, that opportunity has never been seized. We hope that it will, because we believe that such a debate in the Council could help inform and frame the debate here in the General Assembly.

Consultations, together with private meetings, account for more than half of the meetings. That means that more than half of the work is done behind closed doors, not to speak of the work of the subsidiary bodies. We understand that consultations are useful and that they are used across the United Nations system. However, in an organ with restricted composition that acts on behalf of the general membership, transparency is key.

We commend the Council for its efforts to hold more public meetings in recent years. Public briefings are now more frequent — or rather, such a format has now become the rule for briefings. But we would suggest that, as a next step, briefings could usefully evolve to the format of debates, because it is important that members of the Council be able to speak publicly and for the record after the intervention of the briefer. That would not prevent the Council from holding subsequent consultations, if need be, for reasons of confidentiality on particular aspects, the preparation of the ensuing decisions and so on. But such an approach would certainly reduce the time and possibly the number of consultations, and would thus contribute to increasing transparency and accountability.

We also welcome the recent efforts by the Council, which we hope will become an established trend, to promote interactivity during consultations, in line with presidential note S/2012/402. We are sure that such efforts will bear fruit in terms of saving time that could be used for other important Council activities, such as conflict prevention.

As we touch on conflict prevention, we welcome the fact that the report mentions the recent practice with regard to horizon-scanning. We think that that is a commendable development, which finds its reflection in this year's report. There is broad consensus on the importance of prevention in the maintenance of international peace and security. Hence the need for the Council to be kept apprised of early warnings relating to situations that threaten to become conflicts, as well as of new challenges that might threaten or have a serious impact on peace and security, such as the illicit trafficking in persons, drugs or arms, pandemics or climate change. We saw recently how the Council reacted to the Ebola outbreak, although the threat had been already on the horizon for some time. We therefore encourage the Council to devote more time to scanning potential threats and new challenges, using appropriate instruments such as horizon-scanning meetings, in whichever informal setting best serves that purpose, and also using the relevant subsidiary bodies to that effect.

We note the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, as described in the report, and we commend the launch

of the very useful web page with materials related to its work. We also welcome the report's information on the work of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, which we commend for holding organized meetings open to the participation of relevant actors and interested troop-contributing States. We believe the Council would benefit from discussing the Working Groups' reports in greater depth.

We also note that, in some cases, the Council resorted to interactive dialogues, as reflected in the introduction to the report. While we encourage the use of that tool, which opens new avenues for the Council to amplify its dialogue, we would welcome more information on such meetings. On the other hand, Arria-formula meetings are not reflected at all in the report, and we think they deserve mention, both for their importance as informal and flexible open-format meetings and for the relevance of the subjects they cover. Such information would give us a better idea of the concerns relevant to Council members and would serve to highlight important aspects related to Council activity.

Finally, I would like once again to commend the Council for its work on improving its working methods, particularly through the efforts of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, under the able leadership of Argentina. We would welcome more information in the report on that important area. Recently, for instance, the Council adopted an important note on penholders (S/2014/268), aimed at enhancing Council members' participation and inclusion in the decision-making process. It represents a breakthrough that has yet to be fully reflected in Security Council practice, including through the establishment of co-penholderships, which should be encouraged. We hope the next report will contain indications on penholderships, as well as information enabling us to better understand how the practice has evolved.

In conclusion, I hope the Security Council will find today's observations and input from the wider membership useful. We appreciate the fact that the President of the Council has taken the opportunity offered by presidential note S/2012/922 and hope that he will report back to the Council members on relevant suggestions and observations raised during this debate.

Mr. Nduhungirehe (Rwanda): I would like to thank you, Sir, for giving Rwanda the opportunity to participate in this plenary debate of the General Assembly. I would also like to thank Mr. Gary Quinlan, Permanent Representative of Australia and current President of the Security Council, for his presentation of the Council's annual report, contained in document A/69/2, covering the period from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014.

The report, as Ambassador Quinlan recalled, was prepared by Rwanda in its capacity as President of the Council for the month of July 2014. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude to all Council members for their invaluable contributions to the report and to the Security Council Affairs Division for its assistance. During the drafting process Rwanda was guided by the need to ensure that the report was made available as soon as possible in order to allow its timely adoption in the Council (see S/PV.7283 and S/2014/750) and to enable a timely debate in the Assembly. Consequently, the report is recorded as having taken the shortest time to be agreed on of any of the substantive annual reports of the Security Council. That said and as stated by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, we hope that in future the Security Council will consider improving its annual reports by introducing a section dedicated to the assessment of its effectiveness during the reporting period, with concrete recommendations on how it could act better and faster while maintaining international peace and security.

In his presentation of the report, the President of the Security Council highlighted the Council's activities during the reporting period, including meetings and presidential statements, which have increased significantly by comparison with last year's annual report (A/68/2). Indeed, during the period under review, the world witnessed unprecedented outbreaks or escalations of conflicts. In Africa, we witnessed conflicts in Mali, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Libya. In the Middle East, we deplored conflicts in Gaza, Yemen, Syria and Iraq, and the rise of a barbaric terrorist organization, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). In Europe, the crisis in Ukraine reminded us that, 100 years after the start of the First World War, that continent is not immune from relapsing into regional conflict.

For most of those situations, however, the Security Council shouldered its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and

adopted a number of resolutions aimed at addressing the conflicts. Through those resolutions it deployed peacekeeping missions with robust mandates, such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, and reinforced other missions, such as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. Regarding Syria, the Council adopted three important resolutions — resolution 2118 (2013), relating to the destruction of the Syrian chemical-weapons programme, and resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014), on the humanitarian situation in that country. On ISIL, the Council was also active, holding a summit in September on foreign terrorist fighters, which was presided over by President Barack Obama of the United States (see S/PV.7272), and adopting resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014).

However, Rwanda deplores the fact that the Security Council, owing to deep divisions among the Permanent Five members (P-5), continued to be gridlocked on important crises, such as the conflicts in Syria, Ukraine and the Palestinian territories, which all have a high potential for regional escalation. We call on the P-5 to be mindful of the unique responsibility entrusted to them by the Charter of the United Nations and to ensure that their decisions are always guided by the quest for sustainable solutions to conflicts rather than their geo-strategic interests. In that regard, Rwanda would like to reiterate its support for the French proposal for a code of conduct for the P-5 that would require them to agree to refrain from using the veto in cases of mass atrocities.

On 16 April, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2150 (2014), introduced by Rwanda on the occasion of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi. That first-ever Council resolution on the prevention of genocide calls on States to recommit to preventing and fighting genocide, and reaffirmed our collective responsibility to protect. In that context, it is regrettable that those who committed unspeakable acts in Rwanda 20 years back are still active in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where they continue to commit mass atrocities, while MONUSCO, one of the biggest United Nations peacekeeping missions, is unable to neutralize them despite the clear wording of resolution 2098 (2013). We hope that, since the 2 January deadline for the voluntary disarmament of the so-called Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) is fast approaching, MONUSCO and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will take appropriate action to neutralize that genocidal organization in accordance with the provisions of resolutions 2098 (2013) and 2147 (2014).

Before concluding, I would like to recall the increasing complexity of peacekeeping, which is faced nowadays mainly with situations where there is no peace to keep. As one of the top troop-contributing countries and guided by our conviction that effective peacekeeping requires regional partnerships and sustainable funding, Rwanda introduced a draft resolution, on 28 July, on peacekeeping that was adopted unanimously as resolution 2167 (2014). Looking forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General's High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, we stress the need for peacekeeping missions to improve the implementation of their duty to protect civilians, including against sexual- and gender-based violence, in order to uphold our collective responsibility to prevent mass atrocities. Most importantly, Rwanda has always believed that the best way to achieve protection is to prevent conflict by addressing its root causes, strengthening post-conflict peacebuilding and promoting preventive diplomacy in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. We therefore urge the Security Council to move away from a culture of daily crisis management to one of effective conflict prevention.

Allow me to conclude, Sir, by reiterating Rwanda's position on Security Council reform. As a member of both the African Group and the L.69 Group and given our two years of experience on the Council, we believe more than ever that the Council should be expanded in both categories, with the same rights and privileges, including the right to the veto so long as it exists. In the meantime, it is critical for the Security Council to continue to improve its working methods with a focus on transparency, effectiveness and fairness. Rwanda will continue working towards that goal in the Security Council and beyond.

Mr. Logar (Slovenia): I would like first of all to thank you, Sir, for organizing the annual debate on the report of the Security Council (A/69/2). I would like also to reiterate my appreciation to the representative of Australia for presenting the report to the General

Assembly and to the Mission of Rwanda for preparing this year's report.

Slovenia is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and, as such, aligns itself with the statement delivered by Costa Rica on behalf of the Group. Allow me to add a few thoughts in my national capacity.

We are aware of the highly complex topics and relations that the Security Council has tried to address and mitigate during the period under review. We are grateful for the dedicated efforts of its member States. On the other hand, we also regret that on some occasions the Council was unable to deliver — unable to deliver in time or unable to deliver at all. The Security Council should be based on transparent, accountable and coherent procedures that should address the concerns of the entire international community and should involve all United Nations Members.

The number of decisions taken by the Council is increasing, and we would like to encourage the Council to add, during each session, a complete implementation plan that could be regularly reviewed on occasions such as today's. New items are added to the agenda of the Council, yet none of them is removed. While respecting the responsibilities of the principal organs of the United Nations, we believe that the Council also needs to regularly address issues with potential security implications, such as matters relating to human security networks, food insecurity or public health.

We should bear in mind that the decisions taken by the Council impact all of us. The privilege of being a Council member also comes with the responsibility to do the utmost to preserve international peace and security. In that regard, we call for a voluntary commitment not to use the veto in cases involving atrocities. We would also like to see greater transparency in the preparation of the annual report on the work of the Security Council, which serves as a point of information on the work of the Council and the major threats to international peace and security. The report does not always fully reflect the process that led to the adoption or blocking of certain resolutions and decisions. The Security Council should enable the entire membership to acquire the relevant information about and participate meaningfully in its work.

Slovenia welcomes the improvements in some of the Council's working methods, such as Arria Formula meetings, public briefings and wrap-up sessions. We believe that the report should also reflect the views and ideas presented by non-member States in open and other debates. Such debates, which allow interaction across the entire United Nations membership, have already become an important instrument for achieving increased transparency and coherence on the part of the Council. Their minutes should therefore be part of the report.

Let me conclude by saying that Slovenia will continue to contribute to the work of the Council, including to its primary goal of maintaining international peace and security, and that we will remain engaged in the valuable dialogue among Member States.

Mr. Isnomo (Indonesia): Let me first thank you, Sir, for convening this important debate.

Through Ambassador Gary Quinlan, I would also like to thank Australia, as the current President of the Security Council, for presenting the Council's report (A/69/2) for the period covering 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014. Our thanks also go to Rwanda for preparing the report.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

As the report notes, the situations in Syria, Palestine, Libya, Yemen, Mali, Somalia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, South Sudan and some other regions required effective responses from the Council. There can be no doubt that the Council attempted to meet the challenges by undertaking peace missions and other diplomatic measures, including peacekeeping operations and the work of the sanctions Committees. A total of 51 resolutions and 21 presidential statements were issued during the period under review, and two new missions were established.

Indonesia applauds the Security Council for its efforts, as well as for convening important open debates on children and armed conflict, women and peace and security, the protection of civilians, post-conflict peacebuilding and cooperation with regional organizations, inter alia. While those debates have served to enhance global normative frameworks, they also highlighted the glaring need to further develop a fully resourced, comprehensive and coordinated approach to fostering peace from the outset of conflicts.

Reviewing the conflict cases that the Council addressed during the reporting period, it would be difficult to argue that a comprehensive, integrated and fully resourced peace effort, with the active participation of national stakeholders, has taken root. Clearly, the factors that give rise to conflict are different, and building peace is a long-term endeavour. However, it is imperative to continue to work relentlessly and to deepen national ownership. Indonesia would also like to highlight its deep concern over certain issues and cases of inaction by the Council. The Council's failure to meaningfully address the situations in Palestine and Syria is not only extremely harmful to regional and international peace and security, but it also negates the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law and humanitarian law, seriously undermining the credibility and intentions of the Security Council.

Echoing others, we would have welcomed a more analytical report that described at reasonable length the factors that led the Council to decide issues in a certain way. In particular, when the Council has taken no substantive action on a situation that threatens the peace and security of a country or people and in which casualties have occurred, it is crucial that all Member States, which have entrusted the Council to act on their behalf in order to maintain international peace and security, have full knowledge of the reasons why the Council did not act. We also support circulating a record of the veto, detailing the specific rationale for its use to all States Members of the United Nations.

Recognizing that at times the dynamics on the ground in conflicts can render the best of the Council's decisions ineffective, a frank assessment in the annual report of the impediments to the resolution of a conflict would make the elements responsible clear to everyone. That should also help to put a greater burden on the more relevant countries, in particular, to play a more responsible role in helping to resolve bottlenecks and pave the way to peace. A more communicative Security Council, openly sharing the rationales behind its decision-making and consulting more freely with the host countries of peace operations and those contributing troops and police to peacekeeping operations, as well as with the wider United Nations membership, will improve everyone's sense of ownership of the Council's decisions.

For its part, Indonesia will continue to play its role in support of efforts to make the Council more responsive and accessible and more effective in defusing hostilities in a timely fashion and in promoting sustainable peace and well-being, while upholding the norms established in the Charter of the United Nations, international law and humanitarian law.

Mr. Kolga (Estonia): At the outset, I would like to thank the Rwandan Mission for preparing the Security Council's annual report (A/69/2) and the Australian Mission for presenting it. I would also like to thank you, Sir, for your initiative in convening this timely debate on the report. The very fact that this discussion is being held in the Assembly is vital to enhancing transparency and including the wider United Nations membership in the issues discussed by the Council. I would also like to thank you for holding this debate separately from agenda item 119 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, thus allowing Member States to better contribute to the discussion of both items.

Estonia, as a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of ACT.

My delegation believes that enhancing transparency in the actions of the Security Council, as well as in its interaction with non-Council members and bodies, is crucial to building greater trust in the institution that bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The protection of human life is the greatest responsibility and priority that we, as the international community, have been given, and the Security Council's execution of that mandate should be clear and understandable to us all. To achieve that goal, we urge that the Council should normally meet in public and that detailed records should be kept and published, even for closed meetings. Furthermore, the wider membership's involvement should be a continuous process from the very beginning right up until a decision is implemented, since that would give stakeholders more input into the decision-making processes and enable them to contribute more to the work of the Council.

The annual report summarizes past activities of the Council and provides us non-members with an overview of its priority areas during the reporting period. But today's debate is not just an opportunity to evaluate or discuss the report as such; it is also a broader opportunity to outline issues that we consider

to be an important part of the Council's work. Bearing that in mind, I will focus on the issue of following up on Security Council referrals to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Council and the ICC are, first and foremost, connected through their common concerns about crimes that threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world. The Court is available to its States parties and to the Council, which has the power to refer cases to the Court that would not otherwise fall under the Court's jurisdiction. Whenever there is evidence that atrocity crimes are being committed with impunity, the Council should refer the situation to the Court. The Council should, however, do so in a way that fully empowers the Court to fulfil its mandate and supports the Court in its investigations and prosecutions aimed at ensuring accountability.

The Council must take measures to ensure that no doubt is left as to the support that the Council and the United Nations give the Court in delivering on its mandates. The reports from the Office of the Prosecutor, in accordance with resolutions 1593 (2005) and 1970 (2011), should lead the Council to reaffirm its responsibility to support the Court and its recognition of the Court's work. The follow-up measures must be implemented with resolve and determination, so as to ensure that the decisions of the Court, including arrest warrants issued, are executed. Furthermore, it should be recalled that referrals by the Council are essential, given the Court's limited jurisdiction in the absence of ratification.

Several attempts to adopt resolutions as part of an effective international response ensuring the accountability of perpetrators for atrocity crimes have been blocked by permanent members of the Security Council. Far too often, history has shown us how the distinct privilege of the veto, or even just the threat of using it, has been abused, leaving the Security Council paralysed and passive on the sidelines in situations where it is most needed. In the Charter of the United Nations the permanent members of the Security Council are given great power, but also great responsibility for using that power in a responsible manner. Today, we know that inaction is the biggest challenge there is to maintaining and restoring peace, and that such inaction will ensure that the Council's legitimacy and credibility quickly fade. We therefore gladly welcome and support the French proposal to establish a code of conduct on voluntary restraint on the use of the veto in cases involving atrocity crimes, and we firmly believe that such a step would help the Security Council live up to its mandate. In addition, convening horizon-scanning briefings and Arria Formula meetings would raise the preventive effectiveness of the Council's work.

Regarding future topics on the Security Council's agenda, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the issue of the appointment in 2016 of the next Secretary-General of the United Nations. We would like to echo the calls for more transparency and greater involvement of the General Assembly in the appointment process, since the Secretary-General represents the whole United Nations membership. Making the process more transparent requires widening the scope of consultations beyond the Council's permanent members and taking the views of all interested Member States into consideration.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that, in our view, efforts to achieve transparency should be made more consistent, and more attention should be paid to providing feedback from the Council to both non-Council member States and the ICC, whether in the form of holding open meetings or answering letters addressed to the Council. It is only through such feedback that we, the international community, can better assess how best to contribute to the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Security Council.

Mrs. Adnin (Malaysia): I wish to join earlier speakers in expressing appreciation to Ambassador Gary Quinlan, Permanent Representative of Australia, which holds the presidency of the Security Council for this month, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, as contained in document A/69/2. Malaysia also wishes to recognize the delegation of Rwanda, which oversaw the preparation of the present report during its presidency of the Security Council in July.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

On a procedural note, Malaysia wishes to register its support for your decision, Sir, to separate the General Assembly's consideration of the Council's annual report from the question of Security Council reform. Malaysia continues to believe that that move will allow for more a focused debate and exchange of views.

As an incoming member of the Security Council, Malaysia continues to believe that there remains significant room for improvement in terms of the relationship between the Council and the other principal

organs of the Organization, particularly the General Assembly. Malaysia further believes that the Charter of the United Nations has clearly identified the scope and roles and responsibilities of the principal organs and that each organ should accord due respect to the jurisdiction, roles and responsibilities of the others. However, that should not be taken to mean that the work of the principal organs is mutually exclusive; rather, there should be better coordination and understanding among the principal organs with a view to effectively contributing to the work of the United Nations as a whole. During its term on the Council, Malaysia intends to work closely with other Council members, as well as with all other interested partners and stakeholders, towards that end.

Malaysia notes the activities, initiatives and decisions taken by the Security Council during the reporting period, as reflected in the report before us. Malaysia is of the view that the Council has taken a number of important decisions on a number of key issues and situations that have posed and continue to pose threats to international peace and security. That said, the Council remains paralysed on a number of key issues, including the Palestine-Israel conflict. Malaysia notes that, while the Palestine-Israel conflict has long been on the Council's agenda and the Council remains seized of the issue, including through the scheduled quarterly open debates, that fact has arguably had little impact in terms of resolving the conflict itself. On that note, Malaysia would encourage the Council to continue considering fresh approaches, and, as an incoming member, Malaysia stands ready to contribute towards moving the discussion forward.

Malaysia is also encouraged to note that the calls for greater transparency, coherence and accountability on the part of the Council by the wider membership have, to a certain extent, been implemented or taken on board by the Council. They have, inter alia, been reflected in the various notes issued by the Council's presidencies over the course of the reporting period.

In addition, Malaysia is encouraged by the measures taken by Council members towards making its work more accessible and transparent, including through the increased use of Arria Formula meetings, as well as more regular and open briefings by the relevant special advisers or representatives, rapporteurs and other high officials of United Nations agencies, among other steps. That said, more could be done in that regard. For instance, Malaysia notes that, over the years since the adoption of the Council's presidential note S/2002/199, the introduction to the annual report has grown significantly in terms of length. For instance, in the current iteration of the report, the introduction stands at 63 pages, slightly longer than the introduction for the preceding year's report. Malaysia believes that the Council should address the call for the annual report to be more accessible and concise, while at the same time maintaining its comprehensiveness. In that regard, the Council may wish to consider revisiting certain elements, including the format and the structure of the report, among other things.

In line with the relevant decisions taken by the General Assembly, including resolution 68/307, Malaysia believes that the preparatory process for future annual reports of the Council could also benefit from more consultations with the wider United Nations membership. In conclusion, Malaysia wishes to underscore the need for closer interaction and better cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council, with a view to ensuring the effectiveness of the United Nations system, particularly in the context of maintaining international peace and security.

As a first step towards that end, Malaysia would welcome and support all initiatives aimed at making the Council's annual report a more useful and valuable resource.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank Ambassador Gary Quinlan for his introduction of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/69/2). I would also like to pay tribute to the dedicated professionalism of the Rwandan delegation, which took it upon itself this year to draft the introduction of the report. Beyond its quality and the comprehensiveness of its sizeable contents, the report is also a useful tool for evaluating the activities of that body, and it reflects the enormous responsibility that falls on the Security Council, the United Nations body responsible for the maintenance of collective peace and security.

It is true that the Council is, at times, criticized for its deficiencies, its composition, which is considered unequal, and its working methods. Nonetheless, the Security Council is currently the key body, if not the only body, that we have in the multilateral context for preserving international order, which, even with all its imperfections, has enabled us to avoid major global conflicts and has succeeded in some cases in mitigating

and even overcoming conflicts of limited geographical scope.

Indeed, thanks to its commitment to stability and peace on our African continent, which monopolizes 70 per cent of the Council's work and energy, the Council has succeeded in bringing an end to conflict situations and in assisting democratic transitional processes in others, as well as in supporting reconstruction efforts in post-conflict situations. Africa, which has made remarkable progress towards stabilization since the internecine conflicts of the 1990s and subsequent crises, is still facing a combination of growing security threats. Efforts to establish peace and development continue to face many problems and challenges, and it is imperative to respond to them collectively at the national, regional and international levels.

Transnational organized crime, food insecurity, the radicalization of youth, the sudden outbreak of pandemics and the fear caused by terrorism and violent extremism are all scourges that are mutually reinforcing in afflicting fragile State institutions and crumbling societies. In that regard, the region of the Sahel and West Africa are two prime examples of the close links between security problems, including political instability, terrorism and transnational organized crime, and their corollaries for development, including food insecurity, health crises and the lack of economic prospects.

Early on, the Kingdom of Morocco was aware of the dangers threatening the Sahel region and concerned by the increasing connections identified between terrorism, trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings and attacks against innocent civilians, humanitarian workers and even United Nations personnel. Morocco alerted the international community to the threat, calling on it to shoulder its responsibilities and undertake concerted preventive action against these scourges and contain their already visible adverse effects.

My country is convinced that we will never overcome insecurity and instability without addressing the underlying causes of poverty, illiteracy and lack of future prospects, especially for young people. We therefore urged the States of the Sahel region and the Maghreb to act together against these complex and interconnected challenges. To that end, during its membership in the Security Council, the Kingdom of Morocco was the torch-bearer for the issue of developing and implementing the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.

The Kingdom of Morocco believes that no State should presume that it can successfully fight alone against the threats to stability in Africa and has therefore always maintained that, without cooperation, unconditional and unconstrained regional coordination and a broad coalition of international actors in support of the countries in the region, no one will be able to overcome these threats. However, much remains to be done to align the strategy with the region's priorities. Many challenges still lie ahead, including the fight against poverty, marginalization, employment, education and the empowerment of women.

The impact of the United Nations strategy for the Sahel certainly remains dependent upon the support that the international community will provide to ensure its success in the interest of peace, stability and the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law in the region. Above all, it will depend on the degree of international commitment to combating terrorism and terrorist groups and entities seeking to destabilize and undermine the territorial integrity of the States of the region. In recognition of this reality, on 14 November 2013 Morocco hosted, in Rabat, a ministerial conference to strengthen security cooperation on the borders between the countries of the Maghreb, West Africa and the Sahel. The conference's findings contributed significantly to a coordinated and unified response to the scourge of drug trafficking.

In addition, as part of its initial and ongoing commitment to strengthening global efforts in the fight against terrorism, particularly violent extremism, the Kingdom of Morocco, which continues to take practical and appropriate measures at the national level, has never balked at sharing the know-how and experience it has gained in this field by actively contributing to the strengthening of bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

Thus, at the meeting organized on 30 September by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, the Moroccan experience in the fight against radicalism and violent extremism was presented by eminent Moroccan personalities and the representatives of friendly countries that have benefited from Moroccan cooperation in the matter. This event allowed us to highlight in particular the decision by His Majesty the King to train imams and preachers from several African countries on the precepts of tolerance, moderation and respect for others advocated by the Muslim religion.

Due to its rapid outbreak, the Ebola crisis, which is still raging in some countries of West Africa, provided a good opportunity for a precedent to be set in the history of the Security Council. Indeed, it was the first time that the Council qualified a health crisis as a threat to international peace and security. The Ebola epidemic requires an exceptional international response commensurate with the task of dealing with this exceptional health crisis and its broader threat to peace and security.

In solidarity with African countries affected by Ebola and the isolation and restrictions that have been imposed on them because of the fear caused by the pandemic in some countries, Morocco, on the instruction of His Majesty the King, continues to break through that isolation and the forced quarantine imposed on those countries by maintaining air service provided by its national airline, Royal Air Maroc. At the same time, and in another show of solidarity, Morocco, which has provided appropriate assistance to those three countries, remains at their side to provide them all necessary assistance.

The implementation of any sustainable strategy for stability in Africa should be based on the crucial role of subregional organizations. They are, for us, the cornerstone of any strategy for stability and development on the continent and the relevant framework in which to undertake any effort for economic integration or effective response to specific crises in each of its subregions. It is in that light that the Kingdom of Morocco is working, under the auspices of His Majesty the King, to revitalize the Arab Maghreb Union, give new impetus to the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States and develop interregional cooperation, particularly with the Economic Community of West African States and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community.

The United Nations system, with the Security Council in the lead, will always have in Morocco a constant, committed and tirelessly determined partner in efforts to strengthen and support its initiatives and constructive action for Africa.

Finally, I wish to congratulate the new members of the Security Council — Spain, New Zealand, Malaysia, Angola and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela — on their election. We are confident that their work within the Security Council will help strengthen the Council's effectiveness.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group of 23 countries whose aim is to improve the working methods of the Security Council. Switzerland therefore aligns itself with the statement read by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the ACT group.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for holding this debate. Switzerland would also like to thank Rwanda, which prepared the report of the Security Council (A/69/2), and Australia, which presented it today.

While the Charter of the United Nations confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the establishment of a more substantial dialogue between the General Assembly and the Security Council on the latter's annual report would have the advantage of leading to greater ownership of the Council's decisions by all Member States. Since the opportunities for interaction between the Security Council and Member States that do not have a seat in that body are infrequent, today's meeting is important. Switzerland feels that improvements in substance as well as in form are needed to improve the effectiveness of the process related to the annual report.

Therefore, first, with regard to form, there is no doubt that Member States need to be involved in the process at the earliest possible time. Since no informal meetings to that end were held this year, Switzerland calls on the Council to carry out such consultations prior to the drafting of the next report. Such consultations could be held as informal workshops, tackling a series of country- or thematic-specific issues. We also encourage the Council to organize an open debate before finalizing the report in order to have time to listen to the recommendations and points of view of Member States. Council resolutions are generally adopted at the beginning of the open debates, before Member States have even spoken. Yet we deem it essential that the Council provide responses to all Member States on the suggestions made. That could be done in the context of the annual report's preparation.

Regarding the substance, the annual report should not be limited to a retrospective view, but should also enable the Council to look forward. In both instances, we would like to see an approach that is more analytical and thus more relevant. It would be interesting in

that context to be able to present the lessons learned or best practices in each of the areas covered. At the time of the adoption of the Security Council's report, on 22 October, the representative of Rwanda suggested the inclusion of concrete recommendations in the introduction to the next report in order to increase the speed and effectiveness of the Council's work in terms of its mandate to maintain peace and security. It is worth noting that that meeting elicited no comment from the other Council members, despite the note by the President (S/2010/507) encouraging them to speak out on the matter.

I would now like to briefly mention six specific points of either a geographical or a thematic nature with respect to the report presented today (A/69/2).

In its introduction, the report notes the number of formal meetings held by the Council in the period under review, but not the number of consultations, that is, the Council's informal meetings. However, Switzerland notes with satisfaction that details are provided under each country heading on the various consultations held. In that case, it seems to us relevant to also make mention of the number of consultations held by the Council in the period concerned. Furthermore, the summaries of the debates contained in the report are often incomplete and do not reflect the discussions in the Council in a precise manner. Switzerland would like, for example, also to see the various products presented to the Council but not adopted, including the reasons why they were not adopted.

With regard to the veto, which Council members used on two occasions in the period under review, Switzerland feels that greater transparency on that matter is crucial. We would therefore like to be able to read in the descriptive section of the report the names of the members that made use of the veto as well as the reasons they gave for doing so.

With respect to peacebuilding, cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Council is not covered in the report. It would be desirable that the Council give its evaluation on the following points, inter alia, the relationship between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, the usefulness of the presentations of the Chairs of the country configurations, and the role of the Commission itself.

In the Council meeting at which the report was adopted (see S/PV.7283), the two visits carried out by the Council in the period under review were given prominent mention, but they are not part of the report. Switzerland would encourage the Council to include in the annual report detailed information on such visits, including the objectives, the implementation and the results achieved.

Finally, the Security Council dealt with various topics in the open debates. On the question of working methods, the report notes that concrete proposals were put forward. The nature of those recommendations and their follow-up should, in our view, be elaborated on in the annual report. Moreover, the question of implementing the Council's resolutions, and in particular resolution 2122 (2013), on women and peace and security, should also be analysed in the report. I hope that our suggestions today will enable the Council to continue its reflection on the process linked to the annual report. As we all know, the drafting and distribution of that document are key moments. It is time to take full advantage of that exercise in our efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Security Council.

With your permission, Sir, I would like to make one last remark. Everyone should have at his or her desk a small Swiss chocolate with a card that represents an app that increases the transparency, not only of the Security Council, but also especially of the General Assembly. A number of years ago, we published a guide to the General Assembly, and now that guide exists in the form of an app for smartphones and tablets. To sweeten the use of the guide and because we are about to have lunch, we have placed that little gift on everyone's desk, for dessert. Members may use the guide for their information and enjoy the chocolate at the same time. We wish everyone a fine weekend.

Mr. León González (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Our delegation thanks you, Sir, for having convened this meeting to examine the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/69/2). Unfortunately, every year we meet in this Hall to consider similar reports from the Security Council, which have not contained and continue not to contain any real critical analysis of the work of the Council. The report in question is limited once again to merely describing the actions of that body.

The Charter of the United Nations provides, in Articles 15 and 24, for the Council's obligation to

submit annual reports and special reports on its work. Unfortunately, the special reports continue not to be submitted. The annual report this year repeats the descriptive format of the matters considered by the Council without an appraisal thereof that would enable States Members of the United Nations to make a real assessment of the causes and implications of the actions undertaken by the Council in each case or of its failure to take a decision when it had before it the analysis of an issue regarding a threat to international peace and security. The current exercise represents far less than true Security Council accountability to the General Assembly.

Cuba reiterates its concern at the growing tendency of the Security Council to consider issues and assume functions that do not belong to it, usurping the role assigned by the Charter to other organs, particularly to the General Assembly. We emphasize the need to strike the right balance among the principal organs of the United Nations in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations. We again urge Council members to review its agenda so as to align it with the functions to be fulfilled by the Council in accordance with its mandate. The Council must strictly observe the provisions of the Charter and all resolutions of the General Assembly, which is the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations.

One of the main problems and challenges that the United Nations is still facing, 69 years after its creation, is its inability to carry out the Security Council reform needed for it to become a truly transparent, representative, democratic and efficient body. As long as the Security Council does not submit to a thorough reform process, the reform of the United Nations will remain unfinished.

Cuba invites all Member States to work urgently to ensure that consultations behind closed doors in the Security Council are the exception, that the Council's membership is enlarged in both the permanent and non-permanent categories in order to rectify, without the use of selective or discriminatory criteria, the inadequate representation of developing countries in that body, and that the obsolete, undemocratic and anachronistic veto is abandoned. Urgent changes are required in the working methods of the Council to enable meaningful participation on the part of all Member States in the work and decisions of the Security Council, including the formalization of its rules, which have remained provisional for almost 70 years, with a view to generally increasing transparency and the level of accountability.

The Security Council must immediately end its usurpation of the functions of other organs. The presentation of truly analytical annual reports on the work of the Security Council and of special reports pursuant to the Charter is essential, if the General Assembly is to exercise its mandate with regard to issues of maintaining international peace and security. We are confident that a Security Council with greater transparency will gain greater legitimacy and that a more inclusive and accessible Council that truly takes into account the opinions of the States Members of the Organization will be a more effective Council.

Cuba will pursue its efforts towards improving the work of the Organization in accordance with the mandates provided in the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Moktefi (Algeria): I would like to express my appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this debate, which is providing Member States with an opportunity to make their own assessment of the activities of the Security Council through the consideration of its annual report (A/69/2). I would like also to thank the Permanent Representative of Australia for introducing the report.

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

Our consideration today of the Security Council report is in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Indeed, the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative body of the United Nations, is exercising its mandate in considering issues related to maintenance of international peace and security. It is also important that Member States express their views on the manner in which the Security Council conducts its work.

Algeria wishes to stress the need to maintain the balance among the principal organs within their respective Charter-based functions and powers. In that context, we reiterate our concern over the continuing encroachment by the Security Council on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council by addressing issues that traditionally fall within the competence of the latter two organs.

All United Nations bodies should carry out only those tasks that are established in their respective mandates. In that regard, we reiterate that the principal United Nations organs have distinct and separate roles under the Charter. In order to address that issue, Algeria 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 agendas and programmes of work of their respective organs, with the view to increasing the coherence and complementarity among those organs.

Despite certain efforts, the contents of the annual reports of the Council remain a procedural overview of the Council's meetings, activities and decisions. The report continues to suffer from the lack of an analytical perspective on the work undertaken by that organ. For instance, in this year's report we have observed very few elements able to convey to the members of the General Assembly an exact sense of the types of debates that took place on the various agenda items. In fact, there is no mention in the report of what took place during the informal discussions.

The official record of the Security Council contains no reference to the reality regarding various issues. That lack of transparency could affect the credibility of the work of the Council. In addition, the overview of some specific issues in the report's introduction is not fully accurate and does not give the full picture. In that regard, we call on the Security Council to submit to the General Assembly a more explanatory, comprehensive and analytical annual report that would assess the work of the Council and reflect the views expressed by its members during the consideration of agenda items.

The debate clearly proves that the issue of the annual report of the Security Council is closely linked to the need for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. The present structure and functioning of the Council does not properly reflect either geopolitical realities or the structure of the United Nations membership in the twenty-first century. Therefore, in order to maintain the Council's authority and relevance in maintaining global peace and security, its reform must be undertaken and achieved. We support a Council with greater representation, greater democracy, greater efficiency, greater accountability and greater transparency.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 28, "Report of the Security Council".

Under paragraph 12 of the annex to resolution 51/241, the President of the General Assembly is called on, inter alia, to assess the debate on this item and to consider the need for further consideration of the report of the Security Council (A/69/2).

This has been an important debate, during which Member States have reiterated the importance that they attach to the work of the Security Council. Many noted with appreciation the relevance and complexity of the issues but also questioned the methods used by the Council. Many delegations highlighted the need for the Security Council to carry out its work in a more efficient and responsive fashion, while expressing appreciation for the Council's work on behalf of international peace and security. Speakers called on the Security Council to demonstrate greater decisiveness on the complex issues that have appeared on its agenda. Others noted the need for the Security Council membership to evolve in order to better reflect the realities of today's geopolitical landscape, particularly with regard to the use of the veto.

Representatives called on the Council to pay greater attention to the role of preventive diplomacy and to seek greater cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations. Speakers advocated for strengthened exchanges among the main organs of the United Nations, in particular between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Others called for greater consultation and cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries on issues relating to peacekeeping, while respecting the role of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, also known as the Committee of 34.

Representatives also stressed the importance of the Security Council providing regular, comprehensive updates to the General Assembly, so as to promote greater accountability and transparency. Speakers also called on the Security Council to pay greater attention to the respective roles and mandates of each organ of the United Nations. On the report itself, representatives noted with appreciation the overall improvements made in the quality of the report. However, many delegations also stressed that the report should be even more analytical and substantive in the future, so as to serve

its intended purpose as a means of communication with the General Assembly.

Finally, some representatives stressed the need for the creation of a synopsis on the comments and views that had been expressed by Member States on the report.

I have listened carefully to the requests made by many Member States for a follow-up to the suggestions made in this statement. I will list those proposals and follow them up with the President of the Security Council so that we can discuss the implementation of some of the necessary changes.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/69/2?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 28.

Agenda item 116

Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/69/93 and A/69/281)

Draft resolution (A/69/L.19)

The President: Eight years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 61/19, entitled "Commemoration of two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade", we are now just a few months away from the unveiling of a permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery in the transatlantic slave trade. That memorial, "Ark of Return", will occupy a prominent place at the United Nations and will be an important vehicle to educate and inform current and future generations of the causes, consequences and lessons of slavery in the transatlantic slave trade. The memorial will also be a key component of the educational outreach envisioned by resolution 61/19 and subsequent resolutions on the subject.

Allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate the Permanent Memorial Committee on its efforts thus far, aimed at realizing the construction of the memorial. As we enter the next phase in the goal of erecting a memorial, I encourage those Member States, individuals and other partners that have not yet done so to consider contributing to the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, and to ensure that the project comes to fruition.

With draft resolution A/69/L.19 before us today, the General Assembly takes note of the many initiatives undertaken by Member States to reaffirm their commitment to confronting the legacy of slavery and restoring the dignity of its victims. The report of the Secretary-General (A/69/281) highlights many of the educational outreach and awareness-raising activities carried out by Member States; by United Nations entities, in particular, the Department of Public Information and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; by various civil society organizations; and by other partners. I congratulate UNESCO on the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project, which over the years has been a significant source for research, pedagogy and public awareness on slavery and the slave trade.

Those campaigns have provided an opportunity to reflect upon the history and legacy of slavery, the slave trade and colonialism. They have also contributed to a global conversation that can help break down barriers raised by discrimination, racism and intolerance.

The International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is an important part of those outreach efforts. Given that one of the priorities of my presidency is gender equality and women's empowerment, I am pleased to note that next year's commemoration will focus on women and slavery. That theme will allow an exploration of the role of women in preserving cultural heritage. The legacy of slavery and the slave trade is a stark reminder of the dangers of racism and prejudice, as well as a warning against the devastating effects of modern forms of slavery. By promoting awareness and tolerance through education and outreach, we must reflect on the history, lessons and consequences of that tragic chapter.

As the General Assembly adopts the draft resolution today, we reaffirm the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In doing so, we renew our commitment to ensuring that everybody has the right to a life of dignity, free from exploitation and abuse. But above all, I think we should consider not so much that slavery is a physical act but that we need to free our minds from enslavement.

I now give the floor to the representative of Jamaica to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.19.

Mr. Rattray (Jamaica): Under agenda item 116, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.19, entitled "Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade". The draft resolution is of importance to my delegation not only because we have had the privilege of leading the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and African Group initiative to erect a permanent memorial at the United Nations, but also because the historical significance of slavery, its repercussions and ongoing manifestations have had an immeasurable impact on the present status and development prospects of my country.

Perhaps some may consider slavery and the slave trade as strictly an unfortunate period of history, with the emphasis placed on history. Countries like mine are, however, faced with present realities that owe much of their origin to the crime against humanity perpetuated upon millions of our ancestors over centuries. The harm caused to our societies by the abominable crime of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism has, in some ways, become entrenched in our societal construct.

As the noted historian and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Sir Hilary Beckles, said at a CARICOM press conference in December 2013,

> "The victims of those crimes and their descendants were left in a state of social, psychological, economic and cultural deprivation and disenfranchisement that has ensured their suffering and debilitation today".

As a country, we are also confronted by disadvantages in the global economic system, many of which find their roots in the systemic inequalities arising from the system of slavery and colonialism. Such matters are sensitive subjects, but ones we should face. Indeed, they are issues that we must address, whether within ourselves or among us all, if we are ever to break the persistent hold of slavery's legacies of racism, prejudice and discrimination.

Jamaica considers that the recently proclaimed and soon-to-be-launched International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) provides an opportune space and time to earnestly and practically address those matters, within the comprehensive programme of activities geared towards the further implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We welcome the constructive engagement of all States in that exercise.

Jamaica thanks the Secretary-General for his reports (A/69/93 and A/69/281) under this item. I also wish to use this opportunity to commend the Department of Public Information for its work in conducting the educational outreach and public-awareness activities requested in our recurring resolutions, up to and including resolution 68/7. The partnerships established over the course of the past year and the expanded scope of the programme have demonstrated a great degree of creativity and professionalism. We hope that, moving forward, that critical aspect of our efforts to address the history and enduring effects of slavery will grow stronger and extend its reach and effectiveness. Allow me also to commend the United Nations Office for Partnerships for its diligent stewardship of the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, an item on which I will shortly say a few words. I also thank UNESCO for its invaluable support and commitment to the project and congratulate Director-General Irina Bokova and her team on the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project.

We are, however, disappointed that, according to the report on the outreach programme (see A/69/281), only a few Member States have provided information on their efforts to deal with the issue. It is perhaps an indication of one of two things: either we have not been doing enough as Member States, or we are not sufficiently publicizing the positive things that we are doing. I encourage all Member States to address those matters, as appropriate.

One matter on which I can happily report is the steady progress that we are making on the permanent memorial initiative. As described in the draft resolution before us, we have moved into the construction phase. The architect and his team are currently fabricating The Ark of Return off-site and are on track to deliver the memorial in time for its unveiling early next year. I take this opportunity to express thanks to the Department of Management and the entire team working on the Capital Master Plan, with whom we have collaborated to ensure the smooth coordination between the work on the memorial and the work now being completed on the General Assembly podium.

We look forward to continued collaboration in the remaining months as we move the memorial onto the compound and install it at the Visitors' Plaza. The aim is to complete and erect the Memorial in time for

it to be unveiled on 25 March 2015, the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It will also be one of the first significant events of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

I use this opportunity to appeal to Member States, particularly those that have not yet done so, to make a contribution to the Trust Fund for the Memorial. The small gap that remains is not beyond our united capacity to fill. We are grateful for the generous contributions already made by Member States, civil society and private individuals. With the project at its current stage, the General Assembly cannot now afford to falter. We are therefore pleased that the President of the General Assembly will host a pledging luncheon on 10 December, which will be an opportune moment for Member States to pledge contributions. We urge Member States to ensure that, with the imminent completion of the project, they are counted among those that contributed to our noble initiative.

In closing, allow me to emphasize that, while we strive towards the completion of the memorial, the real work does not end there. We should remain seized of the need to continue to address the legacies of slavery, even as we deal with stamping out its contemporary forms. Until women are no longer forced to sell their bodies, until children are no longer forced into the work force, until every athlete of a minority race or ethnicity can take the field of play and not be confronted by racist chants in the stands, we must keep working. Until our Afro-descendant minority populations can rise to the fore and be seen, heard and valued, then we must keep working. Until we succeed in rooting out Afro-pessimism and instilling value in our black heritage as a mark of distinction, there is work to be done.

As we adopt the draft resolution, let us redouble our efforts to ensure that we do not merely pay lip service and repeat empty rhetoric; let us ensure that our actions speak loudly and clearly, lest we forget.

Ms. Kiernan (United States of America): The establishment of a permanent memorial to and in remembrance of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and the strong leadership of the United Nations system so as to break the silence on the slave trade will ensure remembrance of our shared heritage borne of that human tragedy. This year we also note the twentieth anniversary of the UNESCO Slave Route Project and embark on the International Decade for People of African Descent to recognize the contributions that enslaved Africans made to the building of nations, societies and culture. Those endeavours remind the world that we must continue to study the history and legacy of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

In the United States, students across the country learn the lessons of that history so as to understand the context of racism and discrimination in our contemporary lives and the challenges that remain around the world. The United States Library of Congress, our National Archives and other institutions also have a wide array of resources available for teachers, students and others interested in further study about slavery and the civil-rights movement. As a multicultural society, the United States continues to press forward on the task of eliminating discrimination within our own country and seeks to join the global community in creating a world that values diversity with freedom and equality for all.

At the domestic level, we have worked with UNESCO to establish the United States Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination. That effort, led by 50 United States mayors, was launched last years in Birmingham, Alabama, around the fiftieth anniversary of the tragic events that marked the civil-rights movement for racial equality.

Historical injustices, continued racism and discrimination contribute to inequality, economic disparities, marginalization and social exclusion. As we move forward, we need to learn from and redeem the past. We must recognize the moral courage of those individuals throughout history who worked to end slavery and joined together to stop all remaining forms of discrimination and slavery through all means possible.

Mr. Amihai Bivas (Israel): I thank you, Sir, for having convened this meeting. We also thank the delegation of Jamaica for their leadership and their efforts to bring this important issue to the forefront of the United Nations' agenda and lead the drive to formally honour the victims of slavery. We also recognize the many other Caribbean and African States that have lent momentum to that cause.

"Acknowledging the tragedy, considering the Legacy, Lest We Forget." That is the message to be inscribed on the permanent memorial in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. By remembering the slave trade, we acknowledge the tragedy and honour its victims. Lasting over 350 years,

the transatlantic slave trade uprooted and relocated 30 million people, who were driven into cruel and dehumanizing bondage. That period remains one of the longest and most sustained assaults on the lives and dignity of human beings in history.

In human terms, the cost was staggering. Many perished on the trek to ports along the African coast, while many more died on board ship in the so-called "middle passage". When the survivors reached the New World, their situation was little better. Treated as property rather than human beings, they were bought and sold at auction, beaten and abused. Generation after generation was born, toiled and died without knowing freedom. But they live on, in our memory.

The Jewish people share the pain of slavery. The Bible describes how the children of Israel emerged from bitter enslavement in ancient Egypt to become a nation in the land of Israel. Because we were born in slavery, we understand the yearning for freedom. Because we suffered from persecutions, we cherish the sanctity of life and the value of human dignity.

Unfortunately, the long arm of slavery continues to touch the modern world. Slavery's legacy lives on in discrimination and inequality, racism and prejudice. The most fitting tribute we can pay to slavery's victims is to address those issues and commit ourselves to fighting modern-day slavery, in all its forms. Wherever a child is forced into hard labour, wherever a woman is sold into prostitution, we must put into action the responsibility that comes with memory. We cannot undo the past. We can, however, ensure that the tragedies of the past serve as clear lessons for the future. We can honour slavery's victims by remembering them and what they endured.

In conclusion, Israel is proud to have played its part in honouring the memory of the victims of slavery by contributing to the Permanent Memorial and by co-sponsoring the draft resolution before us (A/69/L.19). We are grateful for that opportunity.

Mr. Mukerji (India): I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the agenda item (A/69/93 and A/69/281). The tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade has undeniably been one of the most inhumane chapters in recorded human industry. The slave trade, which happened over a 400-year period, completely altered the socioeconomic fabric of African society, and its effects are still visible today. The legacy continues in the form of racism and prejudice, which are an affront to human dignity.

We welcome, and are committed to continuing to support, the various activities and programmes undertaken by the Department of Public Information to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in March each year. Wide participation in those events should lead to changed attitudes, with salutary consequences for our global society. The International Decade for People of African Descent, which will start in 2015, will also provide an opportunity to showcase the most valuable contributions that enslaved people and their descendants have made to the societies that forced them into bondage. It is important that regular and adequate financial allocations be made to the Department of Public Information for organizing those events. The international community has an obligation to build upon the positive momentum gained in 2014 and to foster greater awareness of the ethical, political, socioeconomic and cultural dimensions of that history and memory.

We welcome the initiatives undertaken to implement paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, which are aimed at countering the legacy of slavery and contributing to the restoration of dignity to the victims of slavery. Through education and remembrance, we must build an understanding of the causes, consequences and lessons of the slave trade for future generations, so that the horrors of the past are not perpetuated through racism and prejudice. We should aim to reach a broader audience by strengthening the involvement of academics and institutions of learning.

The initiative to erect a permanent memorial at the United Nations headquarters is a fitting tribute to the millions of victims of slavery and slave trade. We welcome the selection of the "The Ark of Return" as the winning design for the memorial. India is proud to be the lead contributor to the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial with a contribution of $260,000. Our contribution reflects our firm belief that the international community must honour those who were the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. While we played no part in that trade, we are willing to share in the shouldering of the responsibility that the international community has for its remembrance. We are sure that others will not be found wanting as well.

We are happy to co-sponsor, as we have been doing since 2007, the text entitled "Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade" (A/69/L.19).

Mr. Régis (Haiti): It is a great pleasure for me to be here again in this Hall to participate in the follow-up to the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. On behalf of the Haitian Government, I would like to express the profound gratitude of my country to all of those who have contributed to making the educational programme of action on the transatlantic slave trade, slaves and slavery an enormous success.

Please allow me to thank the Secretary-General for his report, entitled "Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade: status of the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial" (A/69/93), regarding the Trust Fund that will contribute to the erection of a permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters, and for the report, entitled "Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave and slavery" (A/69/281).

Two hundred and ten years ago, the Republic of Haiti was established. This year, the topic for the commemoration, "Victory over Slavery: Haiti and Beyond", was chosen to pay tribute to those who combated slavery in countries throughout the world. Haiti was the first country to achieve independence after the victorious battles that men and women, reduced to slavery, waged under the leadership of Toussaint Louverture. The tribute was followed by a whole series of cultural activities commemorating and paying tribute to the Haitian author Daniel Laferrière for his election to the Académie française in December 2013. I want also to mention Michaëlle Jean, UNESCO Special Envoy for Haiti in the United Nations, who recalled in her speech at the commemorative meeting of the General Assembly (see A/68/PV.77) the role that Haiti played in inspiring other nations to fight for the abolition of slavery. On this occasion, allow me to quote a short excerpt from her speech that is mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, "From Haiti came the spark that lit the great cauldron of the right to abolish slavery, particularly in the Americas" (*A/69/281, para. 17*).

I would also like to note the very valuable support of the Department of Public Information, which included a cinematographic festival and an exhibit entitled "Victory over Slavery: Haiti and Beyond," at which the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representatives of Haiti and Jamaica, the Director-General of UNESCO and the Permanent Observer of the African Union gave stirring speeches. The commemoration was also marked by the presence of other eminent personalities and dignitaries, including that of Mr. Rodney Leon, the architect of "The Ark Of Return". His commemorative sculpture was selected in a competition from among 310 entries from 83 different countries. In conclusion, I would also like to express my profound thanks and pay tribute to the civil-society organizations and Member States for their awareness-raising activities carried out through the United Nations information centres.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on the agenda item 116.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.19, entitled "Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/69/L.19, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nauru, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, the Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Uruguay.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.19?

Draft resolution A/69/L.19 was adopted (resolution 69/19).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 116.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.