



# Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

**8967**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 16 February 2022, 11 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Vershinin/Ms. Evstigneeva . . . . . (Russian Federation)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Ms. Dautllari
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. Costa Filho
China . . . . .	Mr. Zhang Jun
France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
Gabon . . . . .	Mr. Biang
Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Agyeman
India . . . . .	Mr. Tirumurti
Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Heimerback
United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. DeLaurentis

## Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization

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*The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

#### **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization**

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Stanislav Zas, Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, to whom I now give the floor.

**The Secretary-General:** I welcome this opportunity to address the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). My thanks go to the Russian presidency for organizing this open debate.

Cooperation with regional organizations is at the core of United Nations activities and enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Our founders understood that no single organization can alone ensure peace, security and development in a complex and rapidly changing world. It requires partnership across all levels — from the local to the regional to the global. Now more than ever, a more effective United Nations depends on stronger and deeper cooperation with regional organizations.

The CSTO has been an important partner for the United Nations. Several memorandums of understanding and protocols on cooperation between the CSTO and various United Nations entities are testaments to the increasing depth and breadth of our relationship — notably in the areas of counter-

terrorism, drugs and crime, refugees and peace and security. Biennial resolutions of the General Assembly welcome and note with appreciation our partnership. And I am pleased that — since the signing of the Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the Secretariats of the United Nations and of the Collective Security Treaty Organization in 2010 — we have continuously strengthened our ties and deepened our response to regional challenges.

On the tenth anniversary of the Joint Declaration, Secretary-General Zas and I reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing the scope of our cooperation even further. We identified a number of key areas, including early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, preventing and countering terrorism, the fight against international crime and illicit arms trafficking, disaster preparedness and response, and information-sharing.

Let me briefly touch on three priority areas for strengthening relations across the peace and security spectrum.

First, with regard to cooperation on conflict prevention, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has been working in close partnership with the CSTO to address the root causes of potential conflict and develop shared solutions to shared problems. Today, good working relations between the CSTO and our Regional Centre enable constructive early-warning exchanges and regular contacts during security-related events in the region. The Centre is also promoting measures against cross-border crime, terrorism and drug trafficking to ensure conditions for peaceful sustainable development — all areas where we look forward to building our partnership with the CSTO.

Secondly, with regard to cooperation on peacekeeping, we are grateful to CSTO countries for their contributions to our peace operations. Further deepening our cooperation in this area will help advance the Action for Peacekeeping initiative and its implementation strategy, Action for Peacekeeping Plus. Regular expert participation in joint working groups already provides an important catalyst of cooperation. CSTO experts recently visited the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, providing them with first-hand insights into the prevention work done by the mission, as well as highlighting the potential needs and gaps it faces. We also appreciate the participation of

senior CSTO officials at United Nations Chiefs of Police Summits, as well as ongoing partnership in support of United Nations training standards. As we deepen our ties in the years ahead, we look forward to receiving further pledges from CSTO members to the United Nations Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System.

The third area I want to address is cooperation in the context of Afghanistan. The humanitarian crisis is worsening by the day. Meanwhile, terrorism remains a constant threat — not only to the security of Afghanistan and the region but also to the entire world. Without determined action, the severe economic contraction, rising unemployment and escalating humanitarian crisis will fuel despair and breed extremism. The threat from illicit drugs and arms flows, as well as criminal and terrorist networks, is increasing.

Regional and interregional cooperation are an essential element in our response; so too are strengthened regional dialogue, as well as cross-border law enforcement and judicial coordination. Close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the CSTO, will be critical in helping defuse those evolving threats, prevent spillover, promote stability and, ultimately, save lives.

*(spoke in French)*

The three areas that I have discussed have a common theme: the fundamental role of regional organizations in our joint efforts to advance peace and security. We are determined to strengthen this work together. We are also counting on the participation of regional organizations in United Nations peace and security efforts. We are counting on their support both politically and in terms of civilian and military capabilities. We have succeeded in strengthening our partnership and are increasingly supporting each other in addressing common threats.

One of the main goals of my report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) is to build, by encouraging partnerships, a more inclusive and effective multilateralism that operates more like a network. To that end, I will continue to hold annual meetings with all the leaders of regional organizations. In all of this, we are guided by the Charter of the United Nations and other instruments of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Together, we are accountable for everything we do and how we do it. And we have an ultimate responsibility to the people we serve.

We look forward to exploring ways to strengthen the important cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO in our common quest for a more peaceful and secure future for all.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Zas.

**Mr. Zas** (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank the Russian presidency of the Security Council for the invitation to discuss the participation of our organization in the maintenance of international peace and security. I am convinced that today's meeting will help to develop additional mechanisms for cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in the interest of fostering peace.

We fully support the ideas expressed by Secretary-General António Guterres in the new agenda for peace on the importance of reducing strategic security risks through preventive regional action. We agree with his assessment that regional security organizations play a central role in maintaining peace and preventing and overcoming instability. For its part, the CSTO is focusing on how to effectively address these challenges in its area of responsibility, and it has the necessary capacity to do so.

We view the United Nations as our main international partner and are interested in strengthening the role of the global Organization. This approach is enshrined in the joint statement of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the CSTO member States on reaffirming the commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and strengthening cooperation to ensure their strict observance.

I would also like to point out that our organization was commended as a partner in General Assembly resolution 75/276, on cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. The resolution notes that

“since the signing of the Collective Security Treaty, the Collective Security Treaty Organization has transformed into a multifunctional structure with the potential to provide an adequate response to a wide range of threats and challenges within the area of its responsibility” (*General Assembly resolution 75/276, seventh preambular paragraph*).

We intend to further develop all areas of cooperation with the United Nations, including with the Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy, on the basis of the Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the Secretariats of the United Nations and of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, dated 18 March 2010, and existing memorandums and protocols on cooperation between the CSTO and the United Nations in various areas.

We are pleased with the development of our cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime within the framework of existing memorandums. We are in favour of further expanding that cooperation.

The CSTO has developed practices to deprive international terrorist organizations of their breeding grounds, including by countering drug trafficking and the use of information and communications technologies in the interests of the international terrorist activities.

For the past three years, CSTO special security forces have been conducting Operation Mercenary, whose main objective is to cut off channels for the recruitment, entry and exit of nationals of our States to participate in terrorist activities. The idea is also to remove the resource base of terrorist organizations, which has proved to be effective.

During the most recent anti-drug operation last year, known as Operation Channel-Centre, more than five tons of various drugs were seized from the illicit market. This year we plan to conduct three active stages of that operation in the CSTO's area of responsibility.

To improve international cooperation in combating the spread of terrorist ideology and propaganda, and in line with existing resolutions, in particular resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2354 (2017), we stand ready to unite our efforts in the information sphere. Under the auspices of the United Nations, the aim is to develop universal rules, norms and principles for proper conduct in the information sphere. The principles for our joint action to prevent and combat the illicit use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, including with the central coordinating role of the United Nations, are outlined in the relevant joint statement by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member States of the CSTO adopted on 2 December 2021.

We are prepared to share our experiences in conducting rapid response prevention operations. Incidentally, just today, the CSTO secretariat conducted a trilateral meeting on strengthening cooperation and sharing experiences in the area of combating international terrorism and extremism. Participants included the Secretary-General of the CSTO, the Director of the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Head of the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We would like to use this opportunity to encourage international and regional organizations and individual States not only to observe our activities but also to participate in them. The mechanisms for partnership of that kind exist within our organization and enable it to flourish. In order to share experiences and information on those issues, we support the proposal to hold regular consultations with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and CSTO experts. We stand ready to begin an in-depth exploration of those various agenda items.

We deem cooperation in the area of peacekeeping to be an important practical area of our cooperation with the United Nations over the long term. In that regard, I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix. Considerable progress has been made since our meeting on 22 June 2021. A joint United Nations-CSTO working group on peacekeeping has been established. Expert-level consultations with representatives from the Department of Peace Operations were held at the beginning of December 2021. With the assistance of the Department, CSTO representatives conducted a working visit to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. Useful meetings were held with the leaders of the peacekeeping mission and other peacekeepers in the field.

We received beneficial assistance in conducting certification procedures for various programmes and methodology for the training of our peacekeepers, based on CSTO methodology, in line with United Nations standards. We are reviewing the possibility of CSTO peacekeepers participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations through a coordinating State. We stand ready to involve peacekeeping units, including military police and medical and engineering units, which would all be staffed by the member States of the organization.

Heads of State established a position for a Special Representative of the CSTO Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, with the rank of Under-Secretary-General. We look forward to his active cooperation with the relevant United Nations structures.

The CSTO has considerable resources, enabling it to effectively participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Currently, CSTO peacekeeping forces are approximately 3,800 strong. They are highly trained units and are properly equipped with modern weaponry and equipment. The majority of them have military experience. They have also participated in peacekeeping operations. They meet the standards and requirements of the United Nations, in terms of their structure and preparedness alike.

The professionalism of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the CSTO was confirmed during the recent peacekeeping operation in Kazakhstan. The operation was conducted at the request of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, in line with articles 2 and 4 of the Treaty on Collective Security and the agreement on the CSTO peacekeeping activity. It attests to the legitimacy of, and compliance with, the agreement, which was ratified by members of parliament of the States of our organization. Furthermore, the operation was fully in line with the political and international legal principles of the United Nations.

In line with the requirements under Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations and article 4 of our Agreement, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was swiftly informed by letter about the operation. That was the first case of CSTO peacekeeping capacity being used in practice. It is important to note that the objective of eliminating the threat to security and stability was swiftly achieved. I would like to underscore that the goal of the operation was achieved, in large part, thanks to the moral and political support provided to the Republic of Kazakhstan by its CSTO allies, and thanks to the clear, coordinated actions of the peacekeepers. They arrived swiftly and left immediately once the operation ended. We welcome the fact that, throughout the entire operation, no shots were fired by our peacekeepers — not one shot. The peacekeeping units were used purely to protect essential infrastructure facilities and to prevent a humanitarian disaster.

I would like to assure the members of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and all participants in

today's meeting that the CSTO has genuine potential and capacity, including peacekeeping capacity that, if necessary, could be used to foster the maintenance of international peace and security. Of course, we are seeking the broadest cooperation possible with the relevant United Nations structures and departments.

I have touched upon a few areas of the CSTO's work where, in our opinion, we can and should expand our cooperation with the United Nations and other organizations and countries. Of course, the list of tasks performed by the organization is a much longer one, and the spike in international tensions and the recent negative trend in the area of global and regional security are exacerbating current challenges and create new challenges for our countries.

In our work, we pay particular attention to our southern borders, where Afghanistan remains a long-term ongoing source of danger, in the light of the unfolding socioeconomic and humanitarian disaster resulting from the situation in the country, the terrorist threat and the risk posed by drug trafficking continue to rise. There has also been an unprecedented increase in tension on our western front, so to speak, in Eastern Europe.

The ongoing expansion in recent years of troop formations, military infrastructure and military activity near the western border of CSTO member States, coupled with the lack of progress in reaching a peaceful settlement in eastern Ukraine, has led to a situation on the verge of spiralling into military hostilities. We very much trust that the parties to the negotiating process will be able to find acceptable solutions to the issue and stop the deployment of military activities.

It is clear that the challenge posed by regional conflicts will not dissipate, which poses a permanent threat to international peace. With regard to preventive action and to overcoming threats, we are prepared to tap into our significant potential by uniting the efforts of the CSTO and the relevant United Nations structures in the area of security and, above all, in peacekeeping and combating new challenges and threats.

This year we commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Collective Security and the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the organization. This year's anniversary is welcomed by the CSTO as a body that views itself as an effective international organization that, on a collective basis, protects member States from existing security threats.

We reaffirm our commitment to developing friendly and mutually acceptable relations with third countries and international organizations to maintain peace and stability. We wish to build cooperation based on the principles of international law, the rejection of confrontation and an embrace of lasting solutions reached purely through political and diplomatic means, in line with the provisions and aims of the United Nations Charter.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Zas for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

We thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing on such an important topic for our region. We also thank the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Mr. Stanislav Zas, for his detailed briefing and information about the work of the organization.

The Russian delegation has made this meeting one of the main events of the Russian presidency of the Security Council for several reasons. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is key to the current international agenda, in general, and the Security Council, in particular. We unswervingly advocate the development of such cooperation in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and, above all, Chapter VIII.

Regional organizations must complement United Nations efforts within their areas of responsibility and mandates. In most cases, they are more familiar with the situation on the ground and should play a key role in determining ways to resolve conflicts. That is particularly the case in the Eurasian region with regard to the Collective Security Treaty Organization. We cannot ignore the fact that, at times, we have found that some members of the international community are inadequately informed of the CSTO's work. Such a lack of information is apt to lead to an incomplete picture of its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, which we would like to avoid. We hope that the briefers' presentations and further discussion will inform the international community about how the CSTO is helping find solutions to the problems encountered in our region.

As was mentioned earlier, this year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Collective Security Treaty and the twentieth anniversary of the subsequent establishment of the multifaceted Collective Security Treaty Organization. Over the years, the organization has established itself as an important actor in regional and international security. We would like to emphasize the peace-loving and open nature of the work of the CSTO and its willingness to develop and expand constructive cooperation with third countries and organizations, including with the United Nations.

As a result, practical contacts have been established with the Secretariat related to the various aspects of the situation in the Eurasian continent. Cooperation is supported with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. Cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO in peacekeeping is continuously being examined. In December 2021, representatives of the Secretariat and the CSTO joint staff visited the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon to gain knowledge of practical United Nations peacekeeping experience.

The normative and legal framework for peacekeeping activities within the CSTO itself has been evolving. In 2021, the principle of a coordinating State was established. Under the latter, one of the CSTO member States will be mandated to register CSTO peacekeeping resources within the United Nations system and conclude agreements on their use. In addition, last year the institution of the Special Representative of the CSTO Secretary-General for Peacekeeping was established. One of his tasks is to expand contacts and coordinate peacekeeping activities with the United Nations.

The first positive CSTO peacekeeping experience was garnered during the January events in Kazakhstan. The country faced an unprecedented challenge to its security, integrity and sovereignty. Only the effective actions of the Kazakhstan authorities, as well as the legitimate operational assistance of the CSTO allies, helped prevent a catastrophe. The operation was carried out on a sound international legal basis and in a transparent and predictable manner. The President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, made a request of his CSTO partners to that effect, in accordance with article 4 of the Treaty. It was immediately supported by all Heads of the organization's member States, and the Security Council and the Secretary-General were immediately informed of that.

The presence of peacekeepers — who, as Mr. Zas stressed earlier, did not fire a single shot — was shown to be a stabilizing factor in exerting the necessary influence on the radicals. The CSTO contingents were engaged in protecting strategically important facilities, did not take part in military operations and, with the agreement with the Kazakhstan authorities, left the country as soon as the situation stabilized. In that context, we note the growing positive interest in the work of the CSTO on the part of individual countries in the region, as well as international organizations, primarily in terms of experience in countering new challenges and threats, including terrorism, its related extremism, illegal migration and drug trafficking.

The situation in Central Asia has been and remains a priority topic on the CSTO's agenda, while primarily taking into account the Afghanistan factor. The organization is taking preventive measures to curb threats, including those emanating from that country. Joint comprehensive exercises are conducted on a regular basis. Operation Illegal and Operation Channel, against illegal migration and drug trafficking, respectively, have already proven to be highly effective, and a set of operational and preventive counter-terrorism measures, known as Operation Mercenary, are also being carried out.

In order to overcome all those challenges effectively, a dialogue has been established with key United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The CSTO is developing cooperation with the relevant structures of other regional organizations, in particular the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-terrorism Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Such a trilateral meeting, in fact, was held today.

In order to ensure international cybersecurity within the CSTO, Operation PROXY, to combat the cybercrime, is being carried out. Countering threats in the area of biosecurity is also a priority. The coordinating council for biological safety is a brand-new mechanism for carrying out work in that area. It will combine the capabilities of both military and civilian structures responsible for shielding our countries from biological threats.

One of our most important joint tasks is to preserve the historical truth surrounding the Second World War and counter the justification and glorification of Nazism. We would like to point out that the resounding majority of United Nations Member States supports our efforts in that area, as demonstrated by the broad support for the related annual General Assembly resolution.

We are concerned about the risks and threats posed to the security of CSTO member States on their southern and western borders. Like our CSTO allies, we cannot but be alarmed by the build-up of NATO military capabilities near our borders. Over the past year, we have seen a high intensity of NATO exercises aimed specifically at offensive operations training. That is a fact, and no propaganda can gloss it over.

In that regard, we recall that the CSTO has repeatedly approached NATO with initiatives for cooperation. At one time, cooperation on Afghanistan, which was relevant at the time, was proposed. Two years ago, the Foreign Ministers of CSTO member States signed an open appeal to their colleagues from NATO countries to strengthen mutual trust and develop cooperation. The proposals went unanswered.

For our part, we would like to express the shared desire of the CSTO member States to resolve emerging problems exclusively through political and diplomatic means under international law, with the United Nations playing the primary role. We are ready to cooperate constructively with all members of the international community, and it is precisely that approach that is enshrined in the fundamental documents of our organization.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General and Mr. Stanislav Zas for their briefings today on cooperation between the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the United Nations.

The United Kingdom followed the violent clashes in Kazakhstan in early January with deep concern. We condemn the acts of violence seen and greatly regret the loss of life. There is much that we still do not know about those events, but we note that President Tokayev set up an investigative commission to establish

the causes of the violence. It is vitally important that the investigation process be conducted urgently, transparently and effectively.

We note that a CSTO force was deployed to Kazakhstan at the invitation of the Kazakh Government to stabilize the unrest. We were clear at the time that such deployments should be proportionate in any use of force and that Kazakhstan's sovereignty must be respected. Sovereignty and territorial integrity are at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations and essential to the work of the Security Council.

We welcome regional partnerships on peacekeeping where those partners share the values and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We emphasize the importance of United Nations primacy in United Nations-funded and United Nations-mandated missions, and we again stress the importance of respect for human rights and gender equality during operations in response to security threats. It is also vital that the United Nations human rights due diligence policy be applied wherever the United Nations is working with external actors.

Finally, we would like to underline the importance of the rule of law as a key component of institutional cooperation, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. De Rivière** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his briefing and the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization for his presentation on its activities.

The United Nations needs to cooperate with regional organizations to address the crises affecting the world. Because they are closest to the ground, those organizations are the first to witness such crises. They also know the deep roots of those crises and the effective solutions to resolve and prevent them. That is the entire point of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which must be the framework for all cooperation with regional organizations. The aims, principles and actions of regional organizations must be compatible with our founding Charter.

Those organizations must also respect and promote human rights, including women's rights and the full, equal, substantial and effective participation of women in all aspects of public life. Those are the conditions for lasting peace and security, and that is why the

promotion of, and respect for, those rights must be at the heart of all United Nations cooperation with regional organizations, as well as our collective action.

Among our priorities for collective action is the fight against terrorism, which presents a constant challenge. The threat from terrorist groups, whether Da'esh, Al-Qaida or their affiliates, persists. France is fully committed to fighting that scourge. Our action is targeted at drying up the resources of terrorist groups, countering their propaganda and hindering the movement of foreign terrorist fighters, wherever that may be.

The fight against organized crime is also essential to ensuring that criminal dividends, particularly those from drug trafficking, do not finance terrorist actions. High yields, the growing prevalence of synthetic drugs and the dynamism of the Eurasian market must continue to spur us to take action.

We must also ensure that there is no impunity for terrorists. They must be tried for their actions as close as possible to where they committed them.

The region we are dealing with today is facing major challenges. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan by force has led to a severe humanitarian crisis and economic collapse in the country, the impact of which is already being felt and may lead to further significant repercussions throughout the region and internationally. The response of the international community has been very clear, with five preconditions for any normalization of relations with the Taliban. One of those conditions is the severing of Taliban links with terrorist groups, as the terrorist threat persists. Attacks by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan Province have increased and, more generally, terrorist groups — including Al-Qaida — seem to have drawn strength from the Taliban taking power.

At the same time, France is committed to the collective effort to help the Afghan population. Exceptional humanitarian aid, in the amount of €100 million, announced at the conference in Geneva on 13 September, was fully disbursed by the end of 2021, mainly by United Nations agencies. While we will soon review the modalities of the presence of the United Nations in Afghanistan, we will be attentive to the fact that it respond to current threats as well as to the constant concern that human rights — in particular those of women and girls — be respected in the country by all, starting with the Taliban.



Finally, with regard to the situation in Kazakhstan, I would like to reiterate our wish that light be shed fully on the circumstances that led to the tragic events that took place in January. Respect for the rule of law must remain a priority.

**Mr. Agyeman** (Ghana): I welcome your presence, Sir, at today's debate. I also welcome the presence of our Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, as well as the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and note with appreciation the insightful remarks respectively made. I further welcome the representatives of the five Member States participating in this meeting under rule 37.

Without dispute, the Security Council is the foremost body designed by the architects of the present order for the maintenance of international peace and security. However, the founders of our Organization also recognized that, beyond the work done by the Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, the peace crafted within the walls of the United Nations must be kept by the States whose existence are intertwined with the destinies of the regions within which they are located. The Charter of the United Nations is therefore prescient in envisaging an Organization that works with regional arrangements or agencies to prevent, manage and resolve crises.

Regional arrangements as provided for under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations are, in that regard, a veritable but often under-utilized opportunity for establishing peace across the world. Indeed, recent historical and contemporary experiences have underscored the imperative of promoting better coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations for ensuring security and the enjoyment of the dividends of peace.

In welcoming the cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO, Ghana believes that debates such as this can help identify the opportunities for cooperation and the challenges that militate against enhanced collaboration. In that context, I recall Ghana's working paper placed before the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations, entitled "Strengthening the Relationship and Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Organizations or Arrangements in the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes", aimed at addressing apparent gaps or shortcomings at the level of cooperation and working relationships between

the United Nations and regional arrangements in the context of the peaceful settlement of disputes.

It is my delegation's view that enhanced cooperation should be based on clearly defined arrangements with mechanisms for periodic monitoring and evaluation. We also see opportunities for increasing the role of academia, research institutions and women and youth in preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding through coordinated partnerships with regional organizations or arrangements.

Within the context of the CSTO, and in an effort to identify opportunities for strengthening security in the Eurasian region, I would want to share three brief points.

First, we note the Joint Declaration by the United Nations and the CSTO of 18 March 2010 and encourage further regular consultations between the two organizations to help bridge conceptual differences in the understanding of the security challenges of the Eurasian region and to improve the harmonized responses required in addressing such challenges. More, not fewer, consultations within a structured format are therefore required.

Secondly, the wealth of experience of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy should be enhanced in its engagement with the CSTO, particularly through the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy. The two organizations can work even more closely together in identifying the root causes of conflicts in the Eurasia region and develop shared solutions within the context of sustaining peace with programmes that prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict.

Thirdly, the CSTO has established a clear interest in developing its capacity. The further processes of that development would require close engagement with the United Nations and in a manner that ensures the incorporation of the harmonized arrangements that exist within that context with other regional arrangements, such as the African Union. Collaboration with the African Union in that regard has led to the development of a few initiatives, including the United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security and the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. In that respect, and while taking note of the deployment of the CSTO force to Kazakhstan early this year, we believe that closer collaboration on

any future deployment would enhance the Security Council's accountability over actions for regional peace and security.

Let me conclude by once again drawing attention to the many untapped opportunities that exist in enhancing the implementation of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Our effectiveness as a Council lies in deepening such cooperation.

**Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America): I thank Secretary-General Guterres for his remarks. I am also grateful for those of Secretary-General Zas, of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

The United States strongly supports the work of regional organizations around the world and welcomes their contributions to international peace and security, sustainable development and prosperity and to upholding and protecting human rights. We also support cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations to prevent and resolve conflict, whether through promoting confidence-building measures, fostering political dialogue with all parties concerned or furthering efforts to build just, lasting and sustainable peace.

The United States partners with numerous regional organizations globally, and we are proud of our robust partnerships in Central Asia. The C5+1 — the five Central Asian States and the United States — is an essential diplomatic platform that enhances United States cooperation and coordination with and within the region to advance shared goals. Those goals are clear and simple: the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of Central Asia. We support a Central Asia that is free to pursue its political, economic and security interests on its own terms.

The C5+1 seeks to enhance regional security and prosperity by focusing on rights-respecting approaches to national security issues, fostering economic development and addressing climate change. Since its launch in 2015, the C5+1 format has contributed greatly to efforts to increase economic connectivity and trade, mitigate environmental challenges and jointly address security threats and advocate for women's empowerment.

Beyond our work through the C5+1, the United States engages throughout Central Asia in numerous bilateral and regional initiatives that promote security and prosperity and respect for human rights and

fundamental freedoms, including with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The United States supports the work of the OSCE Transnational Threats Department's Action against Terrorism Unit and Border Security and Management Unit. Those efforts promote reliance on the rule of law and the implementation of a legal framework to counter the types of extremism and radicalization that lead to violence or terrorism. The United States also supports efforts by participating States and partners to improve travel data exchange and travel fraud prevention, which has a direct impact on preventing terrorist travel throughout the region.

With respect to the CSTO, we are concerned that the CSTO's recent military deployment in Kazakhstan — the organization's first deployment since its inception — was sought before sustained efforts at national dialogue, reconciliation and the peaceful resolution of disputes. The Security Council has emphasized that advancing such efforts is the most critical role that regional organizations play in maintaining international peace and security. If the CSTO seeks to develop its own peacekeeping capacity, it is important to bear in mind that peace operations are an important and useful tool for protecting civilians and mitigating conflict in specific circumstances and must be undertaken with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As we have said previously in the Council, the United States underscores its commitment to regional organizations and our support for the work of the United Nations to partner with those entities as engines of diplomacy. We welcome the engagement of the United Nations with regional and civil society organizations in order to promote the rights and well-being of all persons, including underrepresented and at-risk populations such as women, youth, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons, members of religious and ethnic minority groups and persons with disabilities. The voices of all deserve to be heard and must be incorporated to ensure that resolutions to conflicts are inclusive and respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**Mr. Kiboino** (Kenya): I thank Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Stanislav Zas, Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), for their briefings and perspectives on the subject under discussion. I also welcome the participation of the member States of the CSTO.

International peace and security today is under immense pressure from a growing web of threats ranging from inter-State and intra-State armed conflicts to terrorism and violent extremism to other transnational organized crimes. Kenya believes that the maximum utilization of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations must be the cornerstone for responding to those threats.

Kenya has always upheld the role of regional and subregional organizations, working in partnership with the United Nations, as the most strategic option in efforts to confront threats to peace and security in the Horn of Africa and on the continent at large. I therefore commend you, Mr. President, for convening us today to consider this subject of enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO.

I will limit my remarks to four points.

First, Kenya welcomes the ongoing work on strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the CSTO. History and experience remind us that, when there is good cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, emerging crises can be effectively contained with manageable peace and security implications. But whenever we read from different scripts or take unilateral actions, conflicts become unnecessarily complex, protracted, internationalized and, certainly, more destructive. That is why in Africa, for instance, the role of subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Economic Community of Central African States, as part of the African Union's peace and security architecture, has become indispensable, especially as the first recourse to seeking solutions to challenges in each organization's respective subregional context.

Secondly, peaceful solutions to threats to international peace and security demand sustained coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. The adoption of best practices in dealing with common threats is critical in ensuring complementarity and harmonious responses to threats to international peace and security. Kenya therefore commends the CSTO's ongoing efforts to strengthen its peacekeeping capacities and its efforts to counter terrorism and other transnational organized crime, to combat illicit trafficking in drugs and weapons, irregular migration and human trafficking,

as well as to respond to disasters, thereby contributing to the realization of the objectives and principles of the United Nations.

Thirdly, we note that collaboration between the United Nations, the CSTO and the countries of the region creates an important platform to develop shared solutions to their common challenges, thereby strengthening the security, political and economic environment in Central Asia.

We ask the United Nations and the CSTO to undertake joint horizon-scanning and analysis to inform strategic actions that draw specific support from the Member States of the region.

Fourthly, in a globalized world where many security threats are shared, regular exchanges between regional and subregional organizations with the United Nations can be enriching, not only in sharing experiences and best practices but also in building collaborative frameworks to deal with transregional threats such as terrorism, piracy and sea-based crime. We recommend that the CSTO and other regional and subregional organizations intentionally engage and work together in that regard.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Kenya's commitment to the values and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We will continue to work collectively with all Members at all levels to strengthen international cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Mr. Tirumurti (India):** At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, for having organized this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with a special focus on the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). I fondly recall the visit to New Delhi of Deputy Minister Sergey Vershinin a fortnight ago and the meetings with our leadership.

I thank Secretary-General António Guterres and CSTO Secretary-General Stanislav Zas for their comprehensive briefings today. I welcome the presence of CSTO member States at today's meeting. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the CSTO, which is celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its establishment this year.

Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations ascribes a special role to regional organizations for dealing with matters relating to the maintenance of

international peace and security. In fact, Article 52 of the Charter encourages the settlement of disputes through regional arrangements or by regional agencies. Regional and subregional organizations have time and again shown how important their role is in the maintenance of international peace and security. They have an important role in the settlement of disputes, especially in conflict situations. Because of their deep knowledge of local factors and complexities, regional and subregional organizations are uniquely placed to provide better solutions to conflicts in their regions. We therefore support active engagement between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

The world order that we inherited following the Second World War has seen a complete transformation. Similarly, the threats that Member States were faced with when the United Nations was founded 75 years ago have also changed substantially. Contemporary security challenges such as terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, transnational crime and pandemics transcend physical or political boundaries. To effectively tackle such diverse challenges, we need coordinated and concerted actions across borders. Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations can therefore be useful in that regard.

Today regional organizations have become more assertive, and Member States have increasingly reposed faith in their actions. That has brought positive synergy to the actions of the United Nations and the Security Council.

India notes the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO based on the 2010 Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has also contributed further to the strengthening of cooperation on issues of shared interest and concern, mainly terrorism, violent extremism and drug trafficking.

Central Asia is central to India's vision of an integrated and stable extended neighbourhood. The diplomatic relations between India and Central Asian countries have completed 30 meaningful years. On that occasion, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted the first-ever India-Central Asia Summit in virtual format on 27 January. The summit was symbolic of the importance attached by the leaders of India and

the Central Asian countries to a comprehensive and enduring India-Central Asia partnership.

In the spirit of our development partnership with the Central Asian region, India has just offered, *inter alia*, a \$1 billion line of credit for priority development projects. India is also providing grant assistance for the implementation of high-impact community development projects. We have created the India-Central Asia Dialogue platform for strengthening cooperation between India and the Central Asian countries. India's steps to modernize the infrastructure of the Chabahar port in Iran, which will become an important link in trade and transport communications between the markets of Central and South Asia, has been appreciated by the Central Asian countries. India welcomes the interest of Central Asian countries in utilizing the services of the Chabahar port. The port has now emerged as a commercial transit hub for the region. In the context of United Nations peacekeeping, India also has a co-deployment of Kazakh troops within the Indian battalion in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, reflecting our long-standing partnership.

The developments in Afghanistan will have wider ramifications for the Central Asia region, particularly the possible growth in international terrorism and drug trafficking emanating from Afghan territory. Resolution 2593 (2021) reflects the expectations of the international community that Afghan soil should not be used for sheltering or training terrorists or for planning or financing terrorist acts. The international community needs to take cognizance of the concerns that Central Asian countries have with respect to the developments in Afghanistan.

Let me conclude by reiterating our strong support for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In the current difficult circumstances caused globally by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the United Nations and its agencies should continue to work closely with regional organizations to ensure resilient supply chains of medicines and vaccines. We believe that this partnership is important to promote global peace and development.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): I wanted to welcome among us this morning Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing earlier and warmly welcome Secretary-General Zas to our meeting today. I would like to

acknowledge the participation of Collective Security Treaty Organization member States in today's debate.

We in Ireland have a deep appreciation of the vital role that regional and subregional organizations can play in building and sustaining peace. That is an appreciation informed directly from our own national history and experience. Our membership in the European Union (EU) was central to the growth and development of our country. But the EU also played a key role in the journey to peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland.

The Council is charged with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. But we know that this requires collective and multilayered efforts. We have seen time and again the critical role that regional organizations can play, from promoting dialogue to mediation to advancing confidence-building measures.

It is clear that strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations enhances our ability to prevent and resolve conflict and to advance the broader goals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations.

United Nations peacekeeping helps countries navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace. In that context, regional organizations have also played an important role. Ireland, as a long-standing troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping, also participates in a number of United Nations-authorized EU missions and operations. Those support peace and security, facilitating political processes, protecting civilians, promoting human rights and enhancing the rule of law.

In the 15 years since the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia was established, it has supported the efforts of the Central Asian nations to jointly build peace and security in their region through cooperation. Those efforts are an ongoing process but, by seeking solutions to common challenges rooted in cooperation, the countries of Central Asia have sought to ensure better outcomes for their citizens. Joint endeavours on transboundary water management, climate and security, counter-narcotics and cross-border trade have begun to lay the groundwork for stronger, more sustainable and resilient communities and economies across the region.

We welcome Central Asian countries' engagement with the women and peace and security and the youth and peace and security agendas. We see those as crucial to maintaining peace and stability in the region. The United Nations has played a critical role in supporting such regional efforts. The Central Asia Women Leaders' Caucus is a clear demonstration of the undeniable impact of women's engagement in peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy.

Providing spaces for the Central Asian youth to address the issues directly affecting them encourages reflexive cooperation and dialogue. It also sets the stage for continued regional peace and stability. Ireland strongly encourages the sustained prioritization of the women and peace and security and the youth and peace and security agendas in all regional organization partnerships.

Ireland understands all too well from its own history that parity of esteem and mutual understanding — essential building blocks for peace — are achieved through constructive, interpersonal dialogues grounded in equality. We also know the value of the support that regional organizations can provide to peace processes and peacebuilding efforts.

The recent events in Kazakhstan underlined the importance of preventive diplomacy and close cooperation of neighbouring States in preventing destabilizing conflict. Ireland and our EU partners were deeply concerned by the violence that occurred following peaceful protests across the country. Respect for the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all citizens is fundamental to peace and stability in all circumstances, including in Kazakhstan.

Ireland will always stand in strong defence of democratic principles and the right of a people to determine their political leaders and their system of Government.

To conclude, Ireland reiterates its strong support for continued and strengthened cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations. By working together, we can do more, and we can do it better.

**Mr. Costa Filho** (Brazil): Let me acknowledge the presence here today of Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin. I would also like to thank Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Mr. Stanislav Zas, Secretary-General of the Collective

Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), for their briefings to the Security Council.

As the world continues to be confronted with peace and security challenges, exacerbated by the ongoing coronavirus disease pandemic, it is of paramount importance to strengthen partnerships and enhance linkages between the United Nations and regional organizations. They should not only complement each other, but also combine efforts to develop effective tools for conflict prevention, mediation, crisis management and post-conflict peacebuilding. We have different examples of such partnerships.

The United Nations partnership with the African Union (AU), for example, is of particular relevance. Brazil supports the role of the African Union and subregional organizations in the search for African solutions to African problems. In order to avoid the duplication of efforts and optimize available resources, we need to continue working towards improving the collaboration between the Secretariat and the AU Commission, as well as between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. In that regard, I particularly praise the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union, which deserves to be strengthened.

In our region, the Organization of American States (OAS) is well placed to contribute to the defence and promotion of democracy, human rights and sustainable development, as well multidimensional security. From the perspective of the OAS, security is multidimensional in nature given that we face both traditional threats to security and new threats with complex characteristics.

On the Collective Security Treaty Organization specifically, we welcome the renewal of its commitment to tackling common challenges. The recent clashes on the border between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan last January were cause for serious concern. We praise the efforts of the CSTO for its role in halting the armed confrontation on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border. We echo the words of the CSTO Secretary-General that this conflict must be resolved exclusively at the negotiating table, where the member States will find peaceful ways to resolve their differences. In order to achieve peace and stability, regional organizations should not only bring together the relevant stakeholders in situations of conflict but also provide strong support for confidence-building measures.

Regarding the recent events in Kazakhstan, we reiterate our support for dialogue and negotiation to achieve political change through pacific means and the rejection of violence. We hope that Kazakhstan can overcome the consequences of the events of last January. The rule of law should be maintained and strengthened, and the Kazakh Government and institutions should remain attentive and responsive to people's legitimate aspirations.

We note that cooperation among the CSTO members has already achieved significant results in dealing with various issues. The shared management of scarce water is an example. We are conscious that other relevant challenges remain, such as the persistent criminal activities across the region, especially the trafficking of illicit drugs, and the threat of terrorism and extremism. Moreover, in the current difficult global circumstances caused by the pandemic, regional organizations must consider how best to work with national Governments to ensure resilient medical supply chains, vaccines and active pharmaceutical ingredients.

The CSTO's work on the women and peace and security agenda is also of great importance. The international community must support all initiatives to raise awareness and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. We urge that the women and peace and security agenda remain at the core of all CSTO activities in peace operations and crisis management. We see that as a cornerstone of any peacebuilding partnership.

We believe that various regional and subregional organizations are very relevant in tackling global challenges, with the United Nations at the core of multilateral efforts. The international community gains from robust and renewed cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to promote peace and security. The driving principles and values of such cooperation should be based on respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The common objectives of that cooperation must be the promotion of peace, reconciliation, stability, freedom and economic prosperity. We expect the CSTO and its members to work together to deliver progress along those lines.

**Mr. Zhang Jun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China appreciates Russia's initiative to hold this meeting. I also thank Secretary-General Guterres and Secretary-General Stanislav Zas for their briefings, which

provided important insights for today's meeting. I also welcome members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) who are represented at today's meeting.

The promotion of cooperation in the field of peace and security between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, is conducive to strengthening the universality and effectiveness of collective security mechanisms and to improving the maintenance of international peace and security.

As a regional security organization with significant influence, the Collective Security Treaty Organization has played an important role in safeguarding the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of its member States and in preventing and responding to new threats and challenges to regional security.

China appreciates the cooperation of recent years between the CSTO and the United Nations in the fields of counter-terrorism, combating drug smuggling and organized crime, and peacekeeping. We support the CSTO in continuing to leverage its advantages and forming synergies with the United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security.

On 28 April 2021, the General Assembly adopted by consensus, at its seventy-fifth session, resolution 75/276, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which welcomes the cooperation outcomes between the two organizations and sets out the planning for their future cooperation. The resolution is of great significance.

Recently, large-scale anti-Government acts of violence broke out in Kazakhstan, causing heavy casualties and loss of life and property. China is highly concerned about this. China supports all measures that are conducive to restoring stability to Kazakhstan. At the same time, China is firmly opposed to attempts by any force to undermine Kazakhstan's stability or threaten its security. We are against the attempt of external foreign forces to create turmoil and a so-called colour revolution in Kazakhstan. On this issue, Chinese President Xi Jinping sent an oral message to President Tokayev, expressing in clear terms China's support for Kazakhstan in maintaining its stability and ending the violence. Chinese State Councilor and Minister for Foreign Affairs Wang Yi had a telephone conversation with Mr. Mukhtar Tileuberdi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, in

which he reiterated China's relevant position. At the request of the Kazakh Government, the CSTO went to Kazakhstan to assist it in maintaining law and order in the country. At that critical moment, the CSTO played a positive role in stabilizing the situation in Kazakhstan.

As a friend and neighbour and permanent comprehensive strategic partner of Kazakhstan, China looks forward to Kazakhstan's achievement of lasting peace and stability and supports the country's efforts to restore stability, develop its economy and improve people's livelihoods. We believe that the Kazakh authorities are capable of resolving the problem properly and keeping the country on a path of steady and healthy development. We also hope that the international community can fully respect Kazakhstan's sovereignty and play a constructive role in maintaining stability and development in Kazakhstan and the region.

The world is entering a new period of turbulence and change. Regional hotspot issues pop up one after another, while conventional and non-conventional security threats are intertwined. The threats of terrorism, extremism and separatism continue to rise. Problems, such as transnational organized crime and drugs, are becoming ever more prominent. Compounded by the coronavirus disease pandemic, they pose severe challenges to the security and development of all countries.

A certain country in particular is pursuing unilateral hegemonic policies, running amok with power politics and harming the security and development interests of other countries through improper means by provoking a new world war and geopolitical competition, which has severely undermined the international order and global strategic stability. Faced with this complex and grave situation, the international community needs to practice genuine multilateralism and oppose bloc politics and the forming of cliques. It needs to strengthen solidarity and cooperation and to oppose confrontation and exerting pressure. It needs to strengthen equality and mutual trust and oppose bullying by power. Only by staying on the right path can we join hands to build a more prosperous, stable, equitable and just world.

China and the CSTO member States, including Russia, are important partners with long-standing friendship and mutual trust. Against the new backdrop, China stands ready to work with the CSTO member States to deepen cooperation in the areas of the Belt and Road Initiative, the economy, trade, security and

people-to-people and cultural engagement to improve our connectivity and promote the economic integration process. We will explore effective means to fully unleash the cooperation potentials of mechanisms, such as the CSTO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, to firmly crack down on terrorism, promote sustainable peace and common prosperity in the region and build a closer community with a shared future.

In their interventions, some Council members have referred to the situation in Afghanistan. The top priority for the international community in Afghanistan now is to do everything possible to avoid a humanitarian crisis. To that end, massive efforts must be made to provide humanitarian relief, and the overseas assets that belonged to Afghanistan should be returned quickly and in full to the Afghan people. We will also step up foreign policy communication and coordination with the CSTO member States and carry out close cooperation on multilateral platforms, such as the United Nations, so as positively contribute to the maintenance of international order, based on international law, and safeguard the central coordination role of the United Nations in international affairs.

**Mr. Biang** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for the initiative of convening this debate on issues that are so central for most African States. African States view regional and subregional organizations as key actors in responding to international crises and conflicts and increasingly advocate the prevalence of a regional narrative in the Security Council's consideration of the items on its agenda. I thank United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Mr. Stanislav Zas, for their enlightening briefings. I also welcome the participation of States members of the CSTO in this debate.

The choice of this topic leads us to revisit and reassess the crucial role of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Against a security backdrop marked by multifaceted crises and exacerbated by an unprecedented pandemic, the number of calls on the United Nations and the increasingly regional nature of crises require the United Nations to strengthen its strategic cooperation

with regional and subregional organizations to ensure effectiveness and greater connection to the realities on the ground.

In Africa, the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union has had significant achievements in many areas. It has even been strengthened in recent years, in particular in the areas of peace and security. I would like to mention the closer relations between the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, in particular through regular consultations on crises and conflicts in Africa.

In Central Africa, aware of its important role as an interface in peacekeeping, the Economic Community of the Central African States, under the leadership of President Bongo Ondimba, together with the international community, has finalized its institutional and organizational reform process so as to endow itself with the means to respond to the challenges it faces, in particular in the fields of peace and security. Ultimately, the involvement of regional stakeholders, along with United Nations action, enables us to bolster the effectiveness of the stabilization process and better understand persistent threats.

Although it is true that through its actions in recent years the United Nations has made a genuine effort to engage in regional and subregional partnerships, the proliferation and complexity of crises compel us to go further. The Group of Five for the Sahel and the African Union Mission in Somalia, now the African Union Transitional Mission to Somalia, continue to generate high hopes for the partnership between the United Nations and Africa. They are flagship regional peacekeeping initiatives in the fight against terrorism and require predictable financial, logistical and technical support of the United Nations, in the light of the fact that peacekeeping is, above all, one of the priorities of the Council, pursuant to the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

With regard to the cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), we must recall that that organization covers a vast zone — from Eastern Europe to the Far East — and has great political, diplomatic and military potential, as well as a collective security strategy that extends to 2025. The CSTO has demonstrated commitment in its response to the common challenges of collective security and the fight against terrorism. That potential



has paved the way for CSTO efforts in the context of peacekeeping and for the organization to play a decisive role in normalizing and stabilizing the situation in Kazakhstan, via an effective regional solution. Needless to say, it is vital to continue enhancing the partnership between the CSTO and the United Nations system, in particular with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, not only in conflict prevention and peacekeeping efforts, but also in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and in the prevention of violent extremism and drug trafficking.

I conclude by again calling for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, including interregional partnerships. One main consequence of such partnerships is the support provided to the United Nations in its mission to maintain international peace and security. Working in synergy with regional organizations is not an option, but rather a *sine qua non* that reminds us of our commitments inscribed upon the tablets of international solidarity and within the collective memory of the peoples of the world.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I welcome Deputy Minister Vershinin to the Council. I thank Secretary-General Guterres and Secretary-General Zas for their briefings. I also welcome the representatives of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

Mexico attaches the greatest importance to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution. Experience has shown that those organizations often possess more in-depth knowledge of the specificities of each region, which is essential in more effectively addressing challenges to peace and security.

Today's briefings have already highlighted several challenges we all face. It is time to identify new opportunities for cooperation and complementarity and to put them into practice.

One such challenge, which is a threat to us all, as we have already heard, is international terrorism. Cooperation and coordinated efforts among CSTO member States are key to combating terrorism in a region that has been particularly hard hit by the complex situation in Afghanistan. Greater interaction

between the United Nations and the CSTO, in particular in terms of information-sharing, becomes relevant in such circumstances. Mexico reiterates that all actions to combat terrorism must be in line with international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Other challenges we all face are the illicit trafficking in drugs and the illicit trafficking and diversion of weapons. We recognize the efforts of the countries of the region to address drug trafficking. However, countering the traffic in small arms and light weapons requires greater commitment, with a vision of shared responsibility and joint efforts to address that scourge more effectively. Resolution 2616 (2021) specifically encourages regional cooperation, including through joint border activities, which are essential to halting trafficking in such weapons before they fall into the wrong hands. The resolution also underscores the importance of capacity-building within member States to achieve that objective.

I conclude by reiterating Mexico's position in the Council. Our work should be more preventive in nature, so as to address the underlying causes of conflict: marginalization, lack of opportunities and inequality, which are all on the rise throughout the world. They encourage radicalization and the illicit flow of drugs and weapons.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in that area, as well as other areas related to the women and peace and security agenda. We hope that we can create new synergies between the United Nations and the CSTO in those areas.

**Ms. Dautllari** (Albania): I too would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for briefing us on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). I also welcome CSTO Secretary-General Zas to today's meeting and thank him for his briefing.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a long-standing practice that has contributed to advancing the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In that vein, we support regional cooperation forums that advance those principles in spirit and in letter.

We are in favour of sharing best practices and exchanging views with various regional organizations engaged in matters of peace, security and cooperation among countries. We therefore welcome today's discussion under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, on the understanding that all regional organizations should work in a transparent manner, following clear rules and principles. We support the idea that any country must be able to decide in full freedom on the regional body it wishes to join or not join, in accordance with the aims and aspirations of its people.

From that perspective, it is not without concern that we followed the recent deployment of the CSTO in Kazakhstan. We understand that those forces have left the country, but transparency about such a critical matter is needed in order to create a climate of trust and understanding. It is important that such operations be conducted in full respect for human rights and fundamental rights. All regional organizations need to adhere to international law and international humanitarian law when engaging in activities of peace and security. The work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia is crucial in that respect, and we commend the Centre for its activities in the region pertaining to counter-terrorism, border demarcation, transboundary water management and the women and peace and security agenda.

There are excellent examples to learn from, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — one of the largest regional security organizations in the world. In 2020, while chairing the OSCE, we devoted particular focus to seeking solutions through negotiations and diplomacy. Doing so and acting in good faith in several regional and international organizations in the Western Balkans, Europe and beyond has produced tangible results in our case with regard to building good-neighbourly relations, promoting the rule of law and human rights, in particular the rights of the children, women and minorities.

In conclusion, let me emphasize once again that regional organizations are important players and serve their purpose when they reflect the goals and aspirations of all their members.

**Mr. Abushahab** (United Arab Emirates): I would like to thank the Russian Federation for organizing this meeting. I also thank Secretary-General António

Guterres and the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Stanislav Zas, for their insightful presentations.

The United Arab Emirates attaches great importance to prioritizing regional views in conflict resolution, as well as peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We are a member of a wide range of regional and subregional organizations, including the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and we value those organizations for the coordination and synergy that their platforms offer to jointly address common challenges.

The United Arab Emirates supports the principle of regional solutions to regional problems. Regional mechanisms impart the local context and the knowledge that are essential for supporting sustainable solutions. In some cases, regional issues have international consequences, and the context provided by regional organizations can critically inform the work of the Security Council. From this perspective, we are pleased to see the United Nations strengthen its relationships with various regional and subregional organizations, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Building on such relations, the United Arab Emirates also hopes to see the enhanced inclusion and participation of regional actors in the discussions of the Security Council. Today's debate is a good manifestation of how voices from the region can inform the Council's deliberations on security challenges impacting Central Asia. The United Nations and the CSTO have a number of overlapping objectives, including peacebuilding, countering terrorism, combating trafficking in persons and combating illegal trafficking in narcotics and arms.

The Council should encourage enhanced cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional actors, as well as the sharing of best practices. In that regard, we also note the regular high-level and working-level contacts between the CSTO and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Department of Peace Operations. Cooperation between the CSTO and the United Nations, as well as other subregional organizations in Central Asia, is all the more warranted in the light of recent developments in Afghanistan.

The challenges resulting from the radical shift in the political, security and humanitarian environment in Afghanistan pose risks with regional implications for Central Asia, including in relation to transnational

crime, drug trafficking, terrorist activities and refugee flows. We welcome regular contacts between the CSTO, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to coordinate approaches for addressing the threats of terrorism and extremism in the region, as well as other cross-border challenges.

With regard to recent events in Kazakhstan, the United Arab Emirates closely followed the stabilization of the situation. We expressed our support for the Government of Kazakhstan's efforts to maintain stability and security within its borders and fulfil the aspirations of its people. Such steps are critical to maintaining stability in neighbouring countries and the region, as a whole.

The Council must ensure that regional perspectives are systematically included in its consideration of items on its agenda. Factors of conflict, like terrorism or drug trafficking, are neither easily contained within State borders, nor can they be addressed by one State alone. Taking into account the experience, knowledge and perspectives of neighbours will be vital for creating comprehensive strategies for conflict prevention and resolution.

**Ms. Heimerback** (Norway): We welcome today's debate organized by the Russian Federation and the presence of Your Excellency Deputy Minister Vershinin presiding over the Security Council today. We thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) for their briefings.

Norway welcomes strengthened institutional cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in order to make the most of our combined resources in both the prevention of conflicts and peacebuilding. We support developing partnerships between the Security Council and relevant regional and subregional organizations and efforts to achieve the peaceful settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Through peace operations and efforts to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflicts, regional organizations are important partners of the Council. Traditional political-military threats are not the only security challenges we face today. Rather, there are multiple security challenges. They range from instability and

armed conflict to the deprivation of human rights. There are also transnational threats, such as violent extremism, terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings. Regional and subregional cooperation is one important way of handling those challenges.

We believe that good governance, the rule of law, gender equality, respect for human rights and fostering democratic institutions are essential components of maintaining peace, security and prosperity. A case in point is the situation in Kazakhstan. As the country now deals with the aftermath of the recent events in January, we believe that political reform and the observance of human rights will be of key importance.

Norway appreciates regional efforts in Central Asia to improve counter-terrorism cooperation and ensure the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Norway supports the United Nations and the countries of the region in those efforts. We also believe that regional cooperation in Central Asia could contribute to reducing conflict levels in the wider region, especially in Afghanistan. We appreciate the engagement of regional countries in supporting the peace process in Afghanistan.

Regional and international cooperation is necessary in dealing with the variety of transnational challenges of today. That must be firmly based on democratic principles, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

**Mr. Margaryan** (Armenia) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Russian Federation for organizing this Security Council meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). I thank Secretary-General António Guterres and CSTO Secretary-General Stanislav Zas for their detailed briefings on developing dialogue and cooperation between the two organizations on various international and regional security issues, as well as prospects for greater cooperation.

Armenia attaches particular importance to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security and preventing and responding to traditional and new challenges and threats, in line with the

purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Expanding cooperation between the CSTO and the United Nations, including by stepping up dialogue between the various Secretariat bodies of the two organizations on global and regional security issues, is one of the priorities of Armenia's chairmanship of the CSTO. We note the considerable potential for cooperation in such key areas as early warning, peacekeeping, preventing and combating terrorism and countering international crime.

Of great significance is cooperation between the CSTO Secretariat and departments of the United Nations Secretariat on matters of the participation of the CSTO peacekeeping forces in peacekeeping activities, the study of practical experience of CSTO member State national contingents participating in peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the United Nations, and the coordination of training CSTO peacekeeping forces, harnessing the potential of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Developing the potential of a collective CSTO peacekeeping force is also bolstered by experience gained at the national level. Further, we note the importance of the exchange of practical experience at the field level. For example, late last year, CSTO representatives visited the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, in which an Armenian peacekeeping contingent was also involved.

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Collective Security Treaty and the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the CSTO. Since the signing of the Collective Security Treaty, the CSTO has evolved into a multifunctional organization capable of responding to a wide range of challenges and threats within its area of responsibility.

One of the organization's key areas of cooperation is the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including countering the use of foreign terrorist fighters to destabilize the situation in various regions and their deployment into areas of armed conflict.

In early January, the CSTO's rapid response to the tragic events in Kazakhstan helped to stabilize and normalize the situation in the country, demonstrating the high effectiveness of the organization's collective peacekeeping forces, which were deployed for a

limited period of time based on the official request of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in accordance with the provisions of the Collective Security Treaty and the Charter of the United Nations.

During its chairmanship of the CSTO, Armenia will contribute to further deepening cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO in preventing and resolving conflicts and crises, combating terrorism, extremism and other cross-border threats in order to maintain global and regional peace and security.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

**Mr. Ilyassov** (Kazakhstan): Let me start by expressing my gratitude to the Russian Federation presidency of the Security Council for placing a very important spotlight on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

We thank United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and CSTO Secretary-General Stanislav Zas for their detailed statements and constructive proposals to further strengthen joint collaboration between the United Nations and the CSTO.

I am taking the floor to inform the Council of the tragic events that took place in January in my country, Kazakhstan, which required the short-term yet prompt involvement of the CSTO peacekeeping contingent for the first time in the history of the organization.

On 2 January, protests started in western Kazakhstan, triggered by a sharp increase in the price of liquified gas. Despite the timely steps taken by the authorities to meet the demands of the initially peaceful protesters and engage in a meaningful dialogue with them, criminal elements and religious extremists, including foreign fighters, hijacked the protests and deliberately escalated them into coordinated, violent armed riots in 11 out of the country's 14 provinces in order to destabilize constitutional order. As a result of the plot, many people were injured throughout Kazakhstan, including law enforcement officers, and, unfortunately, lives were lost.

At the special meeting of the National Security Council of Kazakhstan on 5 January, the situation in the country was qualified as a terrorist threat to national security and an act of aggression. The Charter of the United Nations recognizes the right of every State to individual or collective self-defence in such events.

In that regard, and in accordance with article 4 of the Collective Security Treaty, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, officially requested the CSTO to provide to provide peacekeeping assistance in order to maintain stability in the country. The request was promptly met and supported by all members of the organization. The United Nations was properly informed in a timely manner about the intention of the CSTO to send a peacekeeping contingent composed of all five member States to Kazakhstan to the situation.

The deployment of the peacekeeping troops, which started on 6 January, turned out to be extremely timely and effective. I would like to underline that, during the mission in Kazakhstan, the peacekeepers were providing security for strategically important facilities and infrastructure and did not engage in any counter-terrorist operation or direct combat. There is no single registered event in which the peacekeepers had to use their weapons during the mission in Kazakhstan.

On 11 January, the President of Kazakhstan announced that the CSTO peacekeepers' mission had been successfully completed. Their withdrawal started on 13 January and, by 19 January, the CSTO peacekeeping contingent had been completely withdrawn from Kazakhstan. By that time, the situation in my country was under control and the plot to seize power through violent armed riots had failed.

During those tragic days in January, Kazakhstan experienced the most dramatic events in its 30-year-long history of independence. The results of the ongoing investigation will be shared with the international community in due time. But we also witnessed first-hand the relevance and effectiveness of the CSTO as a recognized regional security organization. It has proven to be a well-functioning collective mechanism for ensuring the stability and security of its member States, while strictly adhering to the rules and norms of the Treaty.

Therefore, the Republic of Kazakhstan advocates comprehensive and close cooperation between the United Nations and regional structures, like the CSTO, that are ready to make a significant contribution to strengthening global and regional security.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kyrgyzstan.

**Mrs. Kasymalieva** (Kyrgyzstan): At the outset, let me first welcome Deputy Foreign Minister of

the Russian Federation, Mr. Sergei Vershinin, and acknowledge the Russian presidency of the Council for the month of February. We would like to express our appreciation for the convening of today's debate on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Kyrgyzstan also welcomes the participation of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and CSTO Secretary-General Stanislav Zas.

The CSTO is a regional international organization that seeks to coordinate military and military-technical cooperation among its member States and to counter current challenges and threats. It is also symbolic that this year is an anniversary for the organization, marking 30 years since the Collective Security Treaty was signed and 20 years since the organization itself was established.

A lot of work has been done over the years. The organization has had great opportunities to create conditions for ensuring the national security of all CSTO member States. Kyrgyzstan, as a member of the CSTO, has a shared interest with the CSTO in its development and effectiveness in responding to possible crisis situations that affect it, which is also in the interest of each member State. We must consolidate our efforts and consistently strengthen the development of regional cooperation in all aspects of the CSTO's mandate.

The international situation continues to deteriorate, remaining poorly predictable. That requires the collective approach and efforts of all parties concerned, based on the universally recognized principles and norms of international law.

Today, as Afghanistan is faced with different kinds of challenges, the situation in that country is characterized by the consolidation of the difficult socioeconomic challenges in the country.

Kyrgyzstan, as a country traditionally friendly with Afghanistan and located in the same region, is interested in a stable and prosperous Afghanistan, has always made efforts to establish peace in that country and sincerely seeks to provide all possible assistance to the Afghan people. We were among the first countries to deliver humanitarian aid by plane to Kabul, as well as by land transport to the ethnic Kyrgyz of the Little and Great Pamir valleys, in Badakhshan province, Afghanistan. It is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of ethnic Kyrgyz living in the Little and

Great Pamirs and a safe corridor for the delivery of humanitarian aid to them.

The events that took place in Kazakhstan showed the presence of so-called sleeper cells of international terrorist organizations in the Central Asian countries, which can intensify their activities in the presence of any conflict situation, both within the States and in the border areas.

The initiative of Kazakhstan to activate the mechanisms of the collective security system of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) with respect to the situation in Kazakhstan confirmed the collective opinion of the CSTO member States on the existing challenges and threats to security. The fundamental principles of the establishment and functioning of the Organization, its foreign policy and military components made it possible, given their accumulated potential, to respond in a timely manner to the appeal of Kazakhstan.

Today, we can state that the Collective Security Treaty Organization has become one of the key international organizations in the field of security in Eurasia. At the same time, we can say with confidence that, during this period, the CSTO has become an influential structure that has gained authority in the region and in the international arena. It is clear that, to solve the tasks facing the international community in countering challenges and threats to security, it is necessary to consolidate the capabilities and efforts of all countries and international and regional organizations.

Since the CSTO was created, cooperation with international and regional organizations and associations has been expanding, primarily with its closest partners — the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States — and contacts with the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have been developing.

In conclusion, Kyrgyzstan, as an active member of the CSTO, is interested in developing the potential of the Organization. I am confident that, through joint efforts, we will be able to strengthen the cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO in order to maintain regional and international security.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Belarus.

**Mr. Rybakov** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): On the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of the Collective Security Treaty and the twentieth anniversary of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) itself, we consider the discussion of the topic of cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO to be very relevant.

In recent years, the CSTO has made significant and difficult strides to transform from an inherently defensive alliance into a multifunctional security organization with effective tools and collective mechanisms to combat a wide range of modern threats and challenges.

As a regional organization within the meaning of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the CSTO makes a significant contribution to ensuring security and stability in the European and Eurasian areas. The principles of the United Nations, including the right to collective self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter, form the basis of the CSTO. We view developing cooperation between the two organizations in areas of mutual interest as a natural and logical process.

Belarus welcomes the positive and proven practice of the regular delivery of statements on behalf of the CSTO on United Nations agenda items, as well as the dissemination of the CSTO's statements as official documents — not only of the General Assembly, but also of the Security Council.

We believe that it is important to continue the practice of preparing periodic reports of the Secretary-General on cooperation with regional and other organizations, as well as the General Assembly's practice of adopting relevant resolutions on a biennial basis. In our view, the fact that the work on such resolutions often takes on a political hue only confirms that the CSTO is a strong organization, whose significance some States would rather ignore.

Practical cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO is based on a Joint Declaration on cooperation between the two Secretariats dated 18 March 2010 and a number of memorandums of understanding between the CSTO Secretariat and the relevant structures and departments of the United Nations Secretariat. We are pleased that the ad-hoc communication in the organizations is shifting to systematic cooperation.

Belarus is in favour of the development of practical cooperation between the CSTO and the relevant United Nations structures in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security.

As part of the CSTO's work in that connection, special emphasis is being placed on the situation in Afghanistan, which is just outside the Organization's borders. Belarus will continue to support the initiatives of the CSTO partners within the United Nations to foster security in Afghanistan and the bordering regions and to neutralize the threats and challenges linked to terrorism and extremism. In that context, the establishment of systematic cooperation between the CSTO Secretariat and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism is of particular importance. The basis for that cooperation can be found in the relevant memorandum dated 9 November 2018.

One promising area is peacekeeping. In 2011, Belarus put forward an initiative to develop cooperation between the CSTO and the United Nations in this area. As such, my country places great value on the ongoing dialogue between the two organizations on this topic.

The collective peacekeeping forces of the CSTO were activated for the first time in January in Kazakhstan upon the request of the President of the country, in full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty. The member States of the CSTO and international experts, including United Nations representatives, commended the timeliness and promptness of the decision to conduct a peacekeeping operation. At the recent extraordinary session of the CSTO Collective Security Council, Mr. Lukashenko, President of the Republic of Belarus, noted that the actions of the collective forces made it possible to disrupt the plans of clients and executors of the provoked conflict in the country and to normalize the situation, as well as to demonstrate the viability and potential of the Organization.

The high potential of the CSTO in the field of peacekeeping can be extremely useful to the United Nations peacekeeping system, where there is a large shortage of specialists, equipment and infrastructure. We believe that the dispatch of mobile hospitals, military medics or demining units, as well as equipment and infrastructure, is a potential avenue of participation of the CSTO in United Nations peacekeeping within the mandates of the Security Council.

There are also other areas of joint work that are not directly linked to the activities of the Security Council but are important from the point of view of preventive diplomacy. International information security is particularly pertinent given the sharp increase in the frequency of security incidents in the area of information and communications technologies. These incidents are not only becoming more disruptive and diverse, but are also significantly undermining trust between countries.

As a candidate for non-permanent membership of the Security Council for 2024-2025, Belarus confirms its readiness to promote all joint initiatives of the United Nations and the CSTO for the cause of international peace and security.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Tajikistan.

**Mr. Hikmat** (Tajikistan): I congratulate the Russian Federation on presiding over the Security Council and thank it for having organized today's debate on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization". I wish to thank also Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Mr. Stanislav Zas, Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), for their comprehensive briefings.

In today's environment of growing international tensions and emerging new conflict zones, the activities of regional organizations in many respects complement the efforts of the United Nations. The CSTO has an important role to play in that area.

One of the fundamental principles of the foreign policy of all CSTO member States is their recognition of the central role of the United Nations in the system of international relations. Cooperation with the United Nations and international organizations operating in the field of security is an important direction of the work of the CSTO aimed at ensuring reliable peace and security in the region within the framework of its responsibility. That principle is enshrined in the CSTO Charter.

The registration of the CSTO Charter with the United Nations Secretariat and its being granted observer status in the General Assembly laid the legal basis for the interaction between the United Nations and the CSTO. The 2010 Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO defined the long-term goal of the relationship, which

is to make a substantial contribution to addressing the emerging challenges and threats encountered by the international community.

Central Asia is one of the regions of CSTO collective security. In that regard, potential security threats make it necessary to bring cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO to a qualitatively new level. An analysis of the development of the military-political situation in Central Asia confirms its adverse impact on the existing collective security system. That adverse impact is primarily related to the situation in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the challenges and threats emanating from the territory of that country are increasing day by day. Of particular concern to us is the threat coming from drug trafficking. With the Taliban takeover, opium production in Afghanistan increased by 6,800 tons, equal to 320 tons of pure heroin. For comparison, in the first seven months of 2021 the relevant authorities of Tajikistan seized 484 kilograms of drugs, whereas in the last four months of Taliban rule alone, the seizure amounted to around 3 tons. That is almost six times as much.

In that context, we deem it necessary to develop mechanisms for interaction between the CSTO and the United Nations in countering drug trafficking. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime should be actively involved in that work as well.

Cooperation within the multilateral framework of the United Nations, the CSTO, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States could also strengthen regional anti-drug security in Central Asia, with the goal of eradicating drug trafficking, the non-medical consumption of drugs and smuggling in the CSTO area and beyond.

The activities of terrorists and extremist organizations and transnational crime are a serious challenge to the international community. That issue is also at the centre of the attention of the United Nations. Since early September 2021, there has been an increase in the number of terrorist groups in the provinces of

Afghanistan bordering Tajikistan, with additional militant forces and military equipment being pulled together. In the north-eastern provinces of Afghanistan, there are more than 40 camps and terrorist training centres with more than 6,000 fighters.

Guided by the need to counter a potential threat, the CSTO member States conducted eight large-scale military drills in 2021 alone, of which five took place in Tajikistan, near the Tajik-Afghan border.

Given the current situation in Afghanistan, the possibilities of strengthening the southern borders of the organization are being discussed within the framework of the CSTO.

In that regard, it is appropriate to recall the timely proposal of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon, to create a security belt around Afghanistan. It is necessary to involve the United Nations and its entities and other international and regional organizations in the implementation of that initiative.

The recent events that took place in Kazakhstan in early January and the involvement of the CSTO peacekeeping forces in eliminating the threat of a terrorist attack demonstrated the organization's capacity to quickly respond to an emerging security threat on the territory of one of its members.

Those are all additional reasons to bring the issue of integrating CSTO peacekeeping forces into United Nations peacekeeping operations to a new, practical level. Our hope is that the institution of a CSTO Special Envoy for Peacekeeping Activities, established in 2021 as a result of the CSTO summit in Dushanbe, in cooperation with the United Nations, will contribute to the intensification of activities in that field.

In conclusion, let me wish the Russian Federation a successful presidency of the Security Council this month.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*