

Mr. Moustafa (Egypt) (spoke in Arabic): I would first like to thank China, as President of the Security Council for the month of July, for choosing the subject of enhancing African capacities in the area of peace and security for today's open debate. It demonstrates China's commitment to strengthening peace and security efforts in Africa. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union for their comprehensive briefings on the evolution of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) in the various areas related to peace and security.

The past few months have seen a number of developments with regard to the strengthening of peace and security in Africa. In January, the African Union Summit adopted a road map reaffirming its decision on practical steps to silence the guns by 2020, whose effects can be measured and which divides the burden of the tasks involved between the African Union and regional organizations. The month of April saw the signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which the Secretary-General and the Commissioner discussed this morning in their briefings. To that we can add the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/454) pursuant to resolution 2320 (2016), on options for providing support to African Union peace support operations. From now on, the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union constitutes one of the pillars of the two organizations in their efforts to deal with the challenges facing our continent of Africa, based on Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and with regard to the specific characteristics of each of the parties concerned.

In the past few years we have seen joint efforts meet with success in such peacekeeping operations as the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and through United Nations support to the African Union Mission in Somalia. Through its Office to the African Union, the United Nations has also helped to strengthen the AU Commission's human and institutional capacities, in a demonstration of the increased awareness in both organizations of the importance of new, innovative working methods in dealing with today's challenges to peace and security in Africa, which demand that the cooperation arrangements between the two be restructured. As the challenges continue to evolve in unconventional ways, taking the form of transnational organized crime, terrorism, piracy and trafficking in small arms and light weapons, those challenges, whose effects are not limited to our continent, are driving increased efforts for cooperation and joint action between Africa and its partners. Success in combating such challenges is also closely linked to factors such as the strengthening of institutional and human capacities in the African Union and regional organizations, with the goal of achieving our shared objective of achieving peace and security on the continent and ensuring that the principle of African solutions to African problems can become a reality.

The efforts that have been agreed on with a view to implementing the concept of sustaining peace and incorporating it into the work of both the United Nations and the

African Union require that we sharpen our focus on the prevention of conflicts and on early warning and the peaceful settlement of disputes. That aspect is a major component of Africa's peace and security architecture, through its Panel of the Wise and the Continental Early Warning System. We hope that cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union will win the support it needs to help strengthen African capacities in this area so as to implement the concept of sustaining peace.

Tackling the real, underlying causes of conflicts is the simplest and least difficult way to settle them, in both human and economic terms, because economic development is so closely tied to respect for human rights, to strengthening good governance and to preventing conflicts. We can also not ignore its importance as a route to resolving conflicts on our continent through a comprehensive vision based on all the activities that I have just mentioned. Post-conflict reconstruction and development is one of the chief pathways enabling us to strengthen peace and security in our States by ensuring that countries emerging from conflict do not relapse into a vicious circle of violence. We must support efforts to build institutions in those countries, so that they can provide basic services, as the representative of Japan so eloquently said. We must support national reconciliation efforts, particularly those made through national and conventional mechanisms. The African Union has launched the African Solidarity Initiative, which is currently being fine-tuned to create an African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development in Cairo. We would like to see the United Nations play an active role in support of that initiative through assistance in setting it up and in supporting efforts to establish the Centre.

The African Union has played a decisive role alongside regional groups in recent years aimed at strengthening peacekeeping operations on the African continent, in particular peace operations and efforts to fight terrorism, as well as action taken in dangerous circumstances that do not correspond to the conventional criteria for United Nations peacekeeping operations. I welcome the role played in that connection by the African Union as well as by regional groups. Their actions have been effective in tackling the challenges, the repercussions of which are not limited to the continent but spread to other parts of the world.

It is clear that efforts to build the foundations for peace and security on the African continent will be successful only with the support of the African Union and regional groups aimed at carrying out those tasks, whether in the Lake Chad region, the Sahel, Somalia or elsewhere.

At African Union summits in recent years, ambitious resolutions have been adopted to strengthen self-sufficiency in reinforcing African peace and security operations and to strengthen the Peace Fund as a component of the African Peace and Security Architecture. I would like to remind the Council of the importance of resolution 2320 (2016), as well as to direct the Council's attention to alternatives set out in the report of the Secretary General (S/2017/454) on supporting African peacekeeping operations and on the principle of using assessed contributions with a view to financing peacekeeping operations in Africa in a sustainable, flexible and predictable way.

I would also like to refer to the role of women and young people in peace and security efforts in Africa. We must strengthen the contributions of those two groups in order to achieve peace and security on the continent.

I once again thank the Chinese presidency of the Council for having given us this opportunity to have an exchange on this subject.