

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*):

Allow me at the outset, on behalf of our Head of State and Government, His Excellency Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, to express my delegation's most sincere congratulations on Sweden's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, a task that it is carrying in a manner that reflects its skill and great leadership qualities.

With a view to formulating more concise observations on the issue before us, I will focus on Africa, where, in the context of conflict prevention and sustainable peace, we would make a critical note that the United Nations must recognize the need for and implement a Security Council reform that acknowledges, inter alia, the claim made by the African Union in keeping with the Ezulwini consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

Peace and security are necessary conditions for development, growth and stability. In pursuit of its national interests, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea strives for peace and freedom and remains firmly committed to supporting the Security Council in its primary role of the maintenance of international peace and security.

Since becoming a Member of the United Nations on 12 November 1968, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has not had the opportunity to serve as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. We are striving now to achieve that goal under the principle of equitable geographical rotation, which underpins the legitimacy of United Nations decision-making.

However, my country, as a Member State, promotes the principles of the Security Council of peace and unity through diplomatic cooperation and the use of peaceful dialogue so as to mitigate the causes and consequences of conflicts and threats to world peace.

The security challenges facing humankind today are not exclusive to a given State, region or continent. The rise in inter-State conflict and violence has become a global phenomenon as conflicts have become more complex and multidimensional.

To ensure that the mandate of the Security Council is carried out in a cooperative manner, as my country's Permanent Representative I have held more than 100 bilateral meetings with my fellow ambassadors and concerned stakeholders to inform them about Equatorial Guinea, in particular its role in the Central African subregion and Africa at large.

In pursuit of international cooperation, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has also worked with intergovernmental organizations, such as the African Union and its organs, civil-society organizations, the Equatorial Guinean Child Aid Committee and others, in order to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). My Government

is now working tirelessly to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and many other initiatives that promote peaceful pluralism.

Equatorial Guinea's Horizon 2020 initiative, a national socioeconomic development framework, demonstrates our commitment to implementing conflict prevention and sustainable peace through economic empowerment. Our commitment to the initiative has yielded commendable results — we achieved five of the eight MDGs.

The commitment of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to sustainable peace and security is evident in its policy of multilateralism and collective responsibility, and is bolstered by our participation in, and support from, intergovernmental organizations and working groups.

Through those programmes, we continue to build consensus and avenues for partnership through meetings, conferences and events on social, economic, political, health and environmental issues. We have hosted African Union Summits, the Africa Cup of Nations, the International Conference on Africa's Fight against Ebola, the UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Security Programme meeting, the Southern Africa Summit, the Africa-South America Summit, the Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, the Africa-Arab World Summit and many other events.

According to the 2016 *Global Peace Index* report, the state of peace in the world is abysmal and is at risk. The report concluded that the world has become somewhat less peaceful, as compared to previous years. Violence is the consequence of human conditions, and its psychosocial effects are pervasive. Daily, we read the headlines and witness the effects of complex and multidimensional conflicts — images of violence, destruction and humanitarian crises that arise from the precarious state of security. Men, women and children are at risk as the result of decisions taken by internal and external political actors and institutions.

Conflict resolution requires integrated approaches to addressing the root causes and drivers of inter-State violence. In Africa, statistics tell us that through partnerships with subregional, regional and intergovernmental organizations, such as the United Nations and its organs, African States can create responsible public institutions capable of achieving inclusive development and sustainable peace.

Research shows that two thirds of the Security Council's activities in recent years have been focused on violence and conflict in Africa. However, Africa is not fully represented in the governing bodies of the United Nations and its organs, in particular the Security Council. There are currently nine United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. It is

therefore inconceivable and unjustifiable that Africa, which has 54 Member States in the United Nations and whose problems account for more than 70 per cent of the issues handled annually by the Security Council, does not yet have a single permanent seat on the Council.

The failure to include African States when dealing with issues relating to their affairs and security creates sociopolitical and humanitarian conditions that keep African States and institutions dependent on insufficient and unstable foreign aid. Member States must resist the temptation to mould other parts of the world in their own image.

Moreover, the Security Council must recognize that longevity in leadership depends on the model of democratization. It can contribute to the maintenance of peace and does not necessarily mean a non-democratic Government. In the case of Equatorial Guinea, the longevity of our leader has been a key factor for our unity, morale and strength, and for the development of key infrastructure and sustainable peace. Multilaterally, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, under the leadership of President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, continues to play a vital role in resolving conflicts in the region with a view to ensuring peace and stability in Africa. Accordingly, in the *Global Peace Index* report, Equatorial Guinea is among the 10 most peaceful countries of Africa. In addition, our literacy rate is one of the highest in Africa, at 93 per cent and, as a result of sound investments, my country can boast one of the highest gross domestic products per capita in Africa.

In conclusion, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea strives to promote comprehensive structures for the maintenance of international peace and security through diplomacy and compromise. The virtuous qualities and values of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea rest on the pillars of hard work, dynamism and innovation. In our view, the effectiveness of the United Nations needs to be enhanced. In that regard, we recommend that the Security Council improve the monitoring and coordination of responses among Member States in order to minimize the impact of conflicts and continue to promote peace and the maintenance of peace and security worldwide.

I once again congratulate the new members of the Security Council and hope that their efforts will bring the world lasting peace in 2017.