

Mr. Löfven (Sweden): I want to thank Prime Minister Dessalegn for inviting us to this very important event. I thank Secretary-General Guterres for his leadership, including his inspiring intervention at the General Assembly yesterday (see A/72/PV.3) and in the Security Council today. I thank as well Chairperson Mahamat and Mr. Ramos-Horta for their briefings.

Few things inspire me more than the energy and enthusiasm, knowledge, will and determination of our younger generations. Zaida Catalán, a Swedish United Nations expert, had all of that. She dedicated her life to helping others. Earlier this year, at the age of 35, she and a fellow expert, Mr. Michael Sharp of the United States, were killed while on a United Nations mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Women and men from countries all over the world have made many sacrifices in the line of United Nations duty. Some have lost their lives. I would like to take this opportunity, here in the Security Council, to honour Zaida's memory and the memory of all those who have lost their lives in the service of peace. We also wish to offer our deepest sympathies to their families.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of our pledge to leave no one behind illustrates the potential of multilateral cooperation. The joint resolutions on sustaining peace, adopted by both the Council and the General Assembly, compel us to prevent and address violent conflict.

Those commitments must guide our work. We must do everything in our power to prevent outbreaks of violence, mass atrocities and armed conflict; to ensure that refugees do not risk their lives making unsafe journeys; to ensure that the current levels of humanitarian suffering — the worst humanitarian crisis since the creation of the United Nations — are never experienced again. That is because only people who feel safe and secure will have faith in the future and contribute to the advancement of their societies. Now more than ever, we need to come together for peaceful and sustainable development instead of going at the task alone and increasing tensions and divisions. Identifying, addressing and preventing the risk of conflict must be front and centre of all our efforts.

For seven decades, United Nations peacekeeping has been instrumental to promoting peace and providing the conditions necessary for political solutions. We need the political will, courage and ability to adapt peacekeeping so that it can remain relevant and adequately resourced and serve as a means to support political processes and solutions. That is because achieving and sustaining peace will always require political solutions, no matter how effective our missions are in themselves. Let me mention three dimensions that I believe need to underpin United Nations peacekeeping in the twenty first century.

First, we must address emerging threats and tackle the root causes of conflict. Drivers of conflicts are often transboundary and complex. Many of the crises that the world is facing have come about not because we failed to see them coming — on the contrary, the signs of exclusion, marginalization, human rights violations and political, social and economic inequality were there — but because we failed to respond early enough or quickly enough. However,

prevention means that not only must we choose to heed the warnings when they come, but that we must invest in peaceful societies in order to avoid the drivers of conflict emerging in the first place. We must address the toughest issues and find responses that may need to be unique to each setting, yet broad in scope. A renewed focus on preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace are the expressed priorities of the Secretary-General. We, the Security Council, should whole-heartedly support him in his endeavour.

Let us recognize the role of peacekeeping in that regard. More than 118,000 military, police and civilian personnel — Blue Berets and Blue Helmets — are currently serving in 16 peacekeeping operations, from Haiti in the West to Jammu and Kashmir in the East. We thank the women and men in peacekeeping missions for the work they do every day on our behalf. Peacekeeping and prevention can, should and must go hand in hand.

Secondly, we need stronger partnerships. Combining the efforts of the United Nations for peace with those of regional and subregional organizations is crucial for success. The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) is of particular importance. I commend the new partnership framework signed earlier this year. The African Union and its member States are assuming an ever-greater responsibility for peace and security. If we want that partnership to achieve its full potential, we must ensure sustainable and predictable financing, as well as clear and clever cooperation on the ground.

I would also like to highlight the importance of the European Union (EU) as a committed and contributing partner to the United Nations. The Treaty on European Union enshrines the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I hope that the partnership between the EU and the United Nations can be developed even further. I hope for the same with respect to the trilateral relationship between the EU, the AU and the United Nations.

Thirdly, United Nations peacekeeping should evolve on the basis of evidence and lessons learned. The experience we gain from our contributions can help to improve and develop United Nations missions in order to make them fit for purpose. Seventy years of peacekeeping have taught us about the need for the full, equal and active participation of women. Sweden constantly seeks to increase the number of women taking part. We have so much more to do. We have learned about the need for realistic, flexible and have learned about the need for realistic, flexible and properly sequenced mandates. The United Nations system is at its best when it works together as one in countries in conflict, using every tool available to ensure lasting peace.

With Sweden's largest current force contribution to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, we are seeking to develop our toolbox by focusing on intelligence. Intelligence and information are key to protecting United Nations peacekeepers and civilians alike, and they underpin informed and strategic decisions. We are learning to work smartly and to pool our resources. We have painfully learned that peacekeepers must do all they can in order to protect civilians under imminent threats. Additionally, we have learned that

there must be nothing but full adherence to the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations with respect to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Since 1948, more than 80,000 Swedish women and men — troops, police and civilians — have participated in United Nations peace operations, primarily in Africa but also in other parts of the world. They have worn their United Nations helmets in deserts, dirt, dust and danger. We see their Blue Berets in Cyprus and the Congo. That has come at a price. Yet our commitment to peacekeeping will not falter. It is not weakened despite the tragic loss of Zaida Catalán and many others. Rather, we owe it to them and to humankind to succeed.

I would like to conclude with the words of former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, a great leader who lost his life while serving us at the United Nations: “Only they who keep their eyes fixed on the far horizon will find the right road.”

We all know the right road to take. As national leaders and members of the Council, we must choose peace, invest in peace and deliver peace.