

Mr. Lambertini (Italy): I thank Egypt for organizing today's debate. It is extremely timely and relevant.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union, and wishes to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

Last week, we hosted in Rome the first-ever ministerial conference between Italy and Africa. With 36 ministers from African countries and 54 delegations, the conference aimed at renewing Italy's natural partnership with Africa. Being a natural bridge towards Africa, in Rome we proposed a sustainability compact between Italy and Africa and between Europe and Africa. The compact would address the following issues.

The sustainability of peace and security, first and foremost to avoid conflicts and relapse into conflicts and to achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa; socioeconomic sustainability to seize the immense opportunities the continent provides; and sustainability in managing migration, building upon the migration compact that Italy has proposed to the European Union to promote a strategic approach. In doing so, Italy is moved by the idea that the solution to today's challenges — terrorism, climate change, sustainable development, migration — can be found in Africa and with the contribution of our African partners. Italy is committed to finding common solutions because we share the same concerns and fate as our African partners.

Faced with such challenges, the United Nations should act as an enabler for peace and work towards a more effective multilateralism as the only viable solution to today's borderless challenges. In this context, the role of the African Union (AU) and a strengthened cooperation with the United Nations under Chapter VIII of the Charter are pivotal, as advocated by the three review processes carried out last year in the field of peace and security. A common theme of the reviews is the need for the United Nations to build stronger partnerships with regional and subregional actors.

Such a partnership is pivotal because it ensures a more solid platform for the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture. First and foremost, it promotes greater ownership through the principle of subsidiarity, actively involving in finding solutions those organizations and countries that better understand the root causes of the problems. Secondly, it underscores the importance of conflict prevention, early warning and preventive diplomacy by promoting a paradigm shift from the current focus on conflict management towards a more holistic approach that gives primacy to political solutions. Thirdly, it underpins the concept of sustaining peace, encompassing all cycles of conflict, which is key to long-term, stable and durable peace in Africa, a continent still hosting the vast majority of United Nations peacekeepers and at the centre of United Nations peacebuilding efforts. Moreover, it promotes a fine tuning between the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) and the African Agenda 2063. Their implementation is essential to addressing the root causes of conflicts and to promoting an holistic approach to peace and security.

Of course, the partnership between the United Nations and the AU needs to be effective and smooth in order to address matters of common interest in a pragmatic and cooperative fashion. The joint United Nations-AU framework for an enhanced partnership in peace and security can represent a blueprint for early and continuous engagement between the two organizations before, during and after conflicts, with a view to finding political solutions to crises. Among the ways to ensure an effective partnership, I wish to underscore the importance of securing predictable, sustainable and flexible resources for operations; promoting better coordination and interaction between tUnited Nations

and AU envoys; involving more women and youth in conflict-prevention and peacebuilding initiatives; cooperating in electoral assistance, in particular this year, when Africa will hold more than 20 elections; addressing the root causes and socioeconomic causes of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa; and focusing on capacity-building and institution-building to sustain peace.

In terms of the sustainable funding for African Union operations, let me recall the findings of the Prodi report of 2008 (see S/2008/813), which proposed concrete recommendations to address the issue. In that respect, we welcome the recent appointment of the former President of the African Development Bank, Mr. Donald Kaberuka, as the African Union High Representative to the Peace Fund. It is an important sign of the AU commitment to tackle financial challenges.

We believe in a stronger United Nations-AU relationship, because Italy works with the African Union and appreciates the value it can add. Our approach is based on finding political solutions by involving African partners, rather than military interventions. Last week in Vienna, we sought to do so in the case of Libya, by also inviting the African countries on the southern border of that country.

Italy is committed to support the structures and initiatives of the African Union Commission, in particular its Peace and Security Department. We will continue to offer such support within the partnerships established by the African Union with the European Union and the United Nations and by relying on bilateral instruments, such as the Italian-African Peace Facility, which has been operational since 2007 and represents a clear example of sustainable and predictable funding. Through the Facility, Italy has supported the African Union Mission in Somalia, the African Union High-level Implementation Panel for the Sudan, the African Union Panel of the Wise and the Tana High-level Forum

on Security in Africa. We will contribute to the further operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture and through new joint initiatives especially focused on the Horn of Africa. We reaffirm our willingness to continue to cooperate on African crisis scenarios and to promote effective cooperation among the AU, African subregional organizations and other international partners.