

**Mr. Alfano (Italy):**

Allow me to commend the Swedish presidency for organizing today's debate. My gratitude also goes to the Secretary-General for his ambitious programme of action. As we begin the year, I look forward to an open, productive and fruitful working relationship in the Security Council.

This is Italy's first open debate since its election to the Council. We are sharing our mandate with our Dutch partners in the best spirit of European unity and solidarity. As a Mediterranean country, Italy brings to the Council its natural disposition to build bridges to draw together all sides.

We believe that inclusiveness is key to effective multilateralism and to addressing our common challenges. In Libya and Iraq, we must work together and spare no effort to achieve reconciliation and support for legitimate institutions. In Syria, we need a greater investment in inclusive dialogue among all the parties. Italy also attaches great importance to the successful outcome of the Cyprus settlement talks. I commend the brilliant efforts of the Secretary-General in this regard. In addition, let us not forget tensions in Africa, such as those seen today in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Unquestionably, if we truly want peace, conflict prevention and diplomacy must prevail over military solutions. We must preserve the primacy of political will over the misery of military might. The principles and the framework to achieve this shift already exist; we do not need to reinvent them. Allow me, however, to recall a few of these principles.

Conflict prevention and the primacy of political solutions are at the heart of two crucial United Nations reviews — one on the peacekeeping and peacebuilding architecture, the other on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The sustaining peace agenda stresses the need for a holistic approach covering the pillars of security, human rights and development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also places great emphasis on the strong link between peace and development. What is now needed more than ever is a common effort to move from vision to action. I therefore want to stress three important objectives for our collective efforts, taking full advantage of the Secretary-General's peace agenda.

Our first objective should be comprehensive reform that adapts the United Nations peace system to the new global challenges. Such reform requires an integrated approach to peace and the development of a United Nations machinery that is fit for the new purpose, which might entail a revision of the Secretariat structure or a new distribution of roles and responsibilities. The Secretary-General should not hesitate in his functions to bring emerging crises to the Council's attention before they escalate. Reform must also address strengthening local ownership and partnerships with regional and subregional

organizations, such as the European Union and the African Union.

Secondly, we need to encourage the effective use of early-warning indicators of violence, radicalization, extremism and assaults on human rights, religion and culture. Terrorism attacks our fundamental values and spreads fear. We must not be fearful because people in fear are not free. Fighting terror and fear means fighting for our freedom.

Thirdly, we must be focused on the root causes of instability. I will offer just a few examples as an input to the debate. Climate change is a growing root cause of conflict. We have made progress in shaping a global response, in Paris and in Marrakech, but it is now time to deliver. Ending hunger and achieving food security is another critical area, especially owing to its connection to disruptive South-South and South-North migrations. Large movements of people can be both an outcome and a root cause of conflict. However, if well managed, they can become an opportunity for peace, growth and development. These issues, along with many others, also appear in the programme of the Italian presidency of the Group of Seven.

In conclusion, we are determined to build peace for tomorrow. That is not just the motto of our year in the Security Council; it also describes the resolve that will drive our actions. We will work to build consensus together with the Secretary-General, our partners in the Council and the broader membership.