Mr. Pedersen (Norway):

I am honoured to make this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

We thank Senegal for initiating this important debate. Asymmetrical threats, including those posed by terrorism and organized crime, are a reality of contemporary conflicts. The perpetrators of such violence are spoilers of peace. Of the 11 countries most affected by terrorism, 7 currently host United Nations peace operations. The Nordic countries fully subscribe to the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) in its report (see S/2015/446) that United Nations missions are not suited to conduct counter-terrorism operations. However, where asymmetrical threats are present, United Nations missions must adapt to deal with those challenges. Allow me to make five brief points.

First, all missions must be provided with the necessary capabilities to fulfil their mandate and ensure the safety of United Nations personnel. The HIPPO report calls for a comprehensive quality reform in United Nations operations, including through adequate medical supplies and support. The Nordic countries are pleased that the United Nations has initiated important improvements in that spirit, but much more needs to be done.

Some innovative developments indicate that we are heading in the right direction. In the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the Nordic countries, together with other partners, have pioneered the use of intelligence through the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU). ASIFU helps the Mission to better monitor potential perpetrators of asymmetrical violence, thereby strengthening its ability to prevent and respond to attacks. Based on that experience, the Nordic countries recommend that the United Nations further develop its technological and analytical tools to better understand, prevent and respond to radicalization and asymmetrical violence.

Secondly, even in challenging security environments, United Nations missions must continue to reach out to local communities. Where necessary, United Nations missions must be ready to act decisively and without hesitation to protect civilians.

Thirdly, the United Nations should deepen its partnership with regional organizations, the African Union (AU) in particular. The AU has gained rich experience from dealing with asymmetrical conflict environments, such as in Somalia. We believe that a deepened partnership and exchange of best practices would benefit all parties, including in planning and conducting operations.

Fourthly, we must ensure that all United Nations personnel operating in complex security environments have the adequate training and equipment to carry out their tasks. We must

invest in leadership at all levels. Where necessary, the United Nations should facilitate and provide assistance to capacity-building and training towards that end.

My fifth and final point is that we must address the root causes of conflict and invest more in prevention, often taking the regional perspective into account. Priority should be given to stopping illicit financial flows and the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters, as well as to improving development policies, strengthening fragile States, involving women and offering young people education and job opportunities.

Together with all relevant stakeholders, within and outside the United Nations family, we must be willing to engage for the long haul in order to prepare the ground for genuine political solutions and to sustain peace.