

**Mr. Wilson** (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate. I also thank all our briefers for what they have just told us.

I want to underscore the United Kingdom's commitment to the links between the African Union and the Security Council. I said it in the informal session and I will say it here: when we cooperate, we make a real difference. The corollary of that, of course, is that when we do not cooperate, we both lose.

I want to focus my remarks on one particular example of this. Others have alluded to it, but I wanted to go into it in a little bit more detail, because it matters so much. The example I have in mind is the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in Somalia. We touched on this subject in our formal meeting yesterday, but our time was limited.

Last week, the Security Council saw at first hand how our two organizations work together in that country to make a real difference to the lives of ordinary Somalis after a quarter of a century of conflict. I must pay tribute to the men and women of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The AMISOM contribution to peace and security in the country and the sacrifices it has made cannot be overstated.

I also welcome the contribution of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). UNSOS logistical support has been crucial to AMISOM's successes against Al-Shabaab. Working together, they are providing space for the political process, allowing the Special Representative and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to carry out their vital tasks. We are now discussing how to reinforce this within the United Nations.

AMISOM continues to play a vital role in underpinning security in Somalia and keeping the pressure on Al-Shabaab. In doing so, they are giving the Somali national security forces crucial time to develop so that those forces can eventually take up the AMISOM mantle. That process now needs to accelerate, in step with Somali's political transition to a federal future. But it is also critically important that troop-contributing countries stay the course, with the full backing of the Security Council. Early withdrawal would put at risk the brave and significant investment that they and regional partners have made in Somalia.

We all know that the long-term responsibility for Somalia's security rests with its own security forces. To succeed, they need the assistance of the international community — assistance that can help them build an inclusive and integrated Somali national army and police force. Yet one of the most striking things from last week's visit was how slow, fragmented and uncoordinated this effort can be. The Federal Government must articulate clearly the needs and gaps in support in order for donors to be able to help to the best of

their ability. We need those who pledge assistance, training, equipment and funds to be transparent and coordinated in their approach as well. That is the only way to secure an effective, professional security force that can take on a greater share of responsibility for security in Somalia, and underpinning that effort must be sustainable financing for the Somali National Army. We must all encourage the efforts of the Federal Government towards greater transparency, and paying salaries on time is key to achieving that goal.

For all the gains of the past four years, it is clear that there is much more work to do. The year 2016 is critical for Somalia. It is a crucial milestone towards the democratic, representative future that Somalis so urgently and so desperately deserve. Just after the Council's visit to Somalia last week, the President took a vital step towards that future by approving the electoral model. I am pleased that the Council could welcome that through a press statement agreed yesterday. But that is just one step. Together, the United Nations and the African Union (AU) need to stay the course, so it is vital that the Council continue to support both AMISOM and UNSOS to help deliver the electoral process and security for all Somalis.

Let me close with one final, broader thought. Somalia shows what we can achieve when our two organizations work together and how important it is to continue to do so. But we know that there is so much more that can be done across Africa. Just think what we could achieve with even stronger cooperation on conflict analysis, on early warning and on mediation. Our efforts are heading in the right direction, but there is always room to do more. That means getting better at standing up, managing and eventually closing African Union-led peacekeeping operations, and as Hervé Ladsous said, it means moving AU missions to a more stable and sustainable financial footing. To do so, we need to see the AU deliver on its own commitment to contributing 25 per cent of AU mission costs by 2020, on which basis the United Nations would be able to regularize its own funding, which is in all our interests.

The work of Mr. Kaberuka, High Representative for the AU Peace Fund, on a road map for meeting that commitment is a very important step forward. We look forward to seeing concrete proposals for greater United Nations oversight of AU missions and greater accountability. Through those steps, not only will the finances of AU missions be regularized, but their performance and accountability will improve. That would make a substantial contribution to peace and security in Africa and would have a lasting benefit for so many people outside the Chamber.