At the outset, I would like to express our thanks to Under-Secretary Jan Egeland as well as the President of the Economic & Social Council, Ambassador Marjatta Rasi, for their participation in today’s debate. We are grateful for their insightful statements.

2. Jan Egeland mentioned twenty current crises affecting millions of people. Most of these are complex crises and most of them are within the purview of the Security Council.

3. Evolving a comprehensive, integrated and coherent response to these crises remains a formidable challenge for the international community. In the United Nations, we have an institution best suited to generate responses in a timely, effective and coherent manner.

4. At the policy level, the first priority must always be preventive diplomatic action. A credible early warning capacity based on impartial and accurate analysis of situations remains an essential requirement and I am glad that our colleague from the United Kingdom spoke on this point. If this analysis points in the direction of a potential conflict, then the United Nations system must act promptly and with cohesion to prevent it. As somebody has quipped, prevention is better than a Security Council resolution. There are several means at our disposal – ranging from the Secretary-General’s good offices, the initiative that can be taken by the General Assembly and the mechanism prescribed in Article 34 of Chapter VI of the Charter – all these can be usefully employed to address situations the continuance of which could endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.

5. There is, however, greater need for a calibrated policy response, with the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the UN system as a whole working in synergy, within their respective roles and mandates. We think that Brazil’s idea of a “conflict avoidance action” deserves further consideration.

6. In the event of an outbreak of a conflict, the Security Council’s role becomes clear and preeminent. The Council has evolved many instruments for conflict management. Its standard operating procedures are clear – one, to halt the fighting and two, to disengage the conflicting parties if necessary through the interposition of a peacekeeping force. Peacekeeping missions help contain conflict, save lives, and create space for peacemaking. It is no accident that 8 of our 15 peacekeeping operations are complex in nature. Speedy action to adopt resolutions, establishing peacekeeping operations and to appoint SRSGs is critical to the success of these efforts in the initial phase.

7. The quality of the Council’s engagement – whether direct or indirect – is of crucial significance. Of late, the Council’s missions to regions of crisis have become
an important tool to gain a better understanding of ground realities and to find ways of containing conflict and promoting peace processes. The Council’s interaction with regional and sub-regional organizations, consistent with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter, are also increasing. Cooperation with ECOWAS has shown that this partnership is and can be always mutually beneficial. It was instrumental in helping to stabilize conflict situations before the deployment of the United Nations Peacekeeping operations in Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire. Cooperation with the newly established Peace and Security Council of the African Union should also develop along similar lines.

8. But the Council must go beyond conflict management in addressing complex crises. While peacekeeping missions working within their mandates can help in different ways, they are not a panacea to the whole range of complex issues and underlying causes. Sierra Leone is a relevant example. Therefore, the Council must pay greater attention to resolving conflicts. Chapter VI of the Charter contains a whole inventory of measures that the Council could employ in the pursuit of this objective.

9. There has to be a clear recognition that durable peace can be established only when the underlying causes of conflict are effectively addressed. The root causes of conflicts are many and diverse. They are political, social, economic, historical and cultural in nature. However, in the long list of root causes, poverty and underdevelopment seem to be omnipresent. A look at the issues on the agenda of the Council reveals that the theatre of nearly all the conflict situations that we are dealing with is the developing world – a striking observation indeed but not a startling one. The inter-linkage between peace and development is now well recognized. This was also at the heart of the Millennium Summit, which took a number of far-reaching and important decisions concerning the dual objectives of peace and development.

10. The international community’s approach to complex crises must take into account this vital inter-linkage between peace and development. Again, at the policy level, strategic coherence is a pre-requisite. This entails enhanced coordination within the UN system. Apart from the purview of the Security Council, complex crises, because of their multidimensional character, also involve, in varying degrees, the areas of responsibility of other principal organs of the UN – the General Assembly and the ECOSOC. It is therefore crucial for the United Nations to bring synergy in its work through cooperation, coordination and complementarity in the work of its principal organs.

11. Peace-building is now seen as a crucial component of any strategy for sustainable peace and development. In post-conflict situations -- such as in Guinea Bissau and Burundi -- peace-building has elicited cooperation and coordination between the Security Council and ECOSOC. We have heard of this from Ambassador Razi. Peace-building in most complex crises is also not possible without the active involvement and support of the Bretton Woods Institutions.

12. Intra-organ coordination must be accompanied by closer coordination between the Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes. By deepening system-wide coordination, we would ensure timely, effective and coherent responses to the crises that often test the will and the capacity of our Organization.
13. Several proposals have been advanced to promote coherence in response to multifarious challenges. Recently, the President of Mozambique and the Prime Minister of Portugal proposed the creation of a new commission to promote peace and development, mandated by and in conjunction with, the Security Council and the ECOSOC. Pakistan itself has proposed the establishment of “ad hoc composite committees” of the three principal organs of the United Nations – the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the ECOSOC – to effectively address complex crises and emergencies, including in Africa. The Pakistan delegation is informally circulating today a non-paper outlining our proposal for the creation of ad-hoc composite committees. We hope that this proposal and similar initiatives will be considered by the Security Council, the ECOSOC and the General Assembly and be taken into account in the context of the proposals for institutional reform of the UN system.

14. One theme which was underlined by Under Secretary-General Egeland in his remarks is relevant throughout the system - the requirement for adequate and full funding of the actions required to prevent, manage and ameliorate conflicts and to restore peace and stability. Peacekeeping does indeed cost 3.5 billion ($) today and it may increase further but we must not loose perspective. The United Nations and its family of organizations is not only the only available instrument for dealing with complex crises - it is also the most cost effective. Much more needs to be done to project and propagate this simple truth. We agree with those that all these issues which we have considered will come together and should be considered at the auspicious occasion of the 60th anniversary of the United Nations.