PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL HIGH-LEVEL OPEN DEBATE ON "PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY THROUGH MULTILATERALISM AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES"

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Thank you, Mr. President, Your Excellency Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Deputy Prime Minister, and Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan,

1. Sierra Leone commends the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for convening this timely and significant high-level open debate. This discussion reinforces one of the core purposes and principles of the United Nations, the promotion of international peace and security through international cooperation and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as enshrined in Chapter VI, Articles 33 to 38 of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. We also express appreciation to the **Secretary-General, H.E. António Guterres**, for his insightful briefing.

3. As a country that endured the horrors of conflict and now enjoys the dividends of peace, Sierra Leone speaks from experience. Our transition from civil war to stability was made possible through regional and multilateral cooperation, including action and the good offices of the United Nations, the pivotal role of ECOWAS and the African Union, supporting inclusive national dialogue and ownership. The journey started with a leadership decision to mediate amidst brutality

and resentment. It is now a journey testifies to the promise of the Charter, that with political will and international solidarity, peace is possible, sustainable, and transformative.

4. Our commitment to multilateralism is unwavering. As an elected member of this Council and a nation that has gained from the Peacebuilding Commission's support, we continue to promote inclusive dialogue, reconciliation, justice, and national ownership of peace processes. Our foreign policy and global engagement are inspired by the UN Charter, as well as the **Bandung Principles**, the **African Union Constitutive** framework, and the enduring **principle of solidarity** among nations.

Mr. President,

5. 80 years ago, the United Nations emerged from the ashes of global war with a solemn promise to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Over eight decades, multilateralism has helped prevent conflicts, resolve disputes, and foster development. However, persistent inequalities, geopolitical tensions, and new global challenges, from climate insecurity to technological disruption, demand that we renew and reinforce our collective commitment.

In this regard, Sierra Leone wishes to highlight four key points:

6. **First**, the Security Council must move from rhetoric to action. Principles must be backed by practice. Chapter VI of the Charter offers an extensive toolkit for peaceful dispute settlement, including negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, the good offices of the Secretary-General, and judicial settlement. These tools are not mere aspirations. They are binding instruments of action. Among them, **judicial settlement plays a vital role**, and we reaffirm the **importance of the International Court of Justice (ICJ)** in this respect. As the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the ICJ provides a peaceful and legally binding mechanism for resolving inter-State disputes and upholding international law.

7. Sierra Leone also encourages strengthened engagement between the Council and regional organizations. Our experience in West Africa, with ECOWAS, the African Union, and the Mano River Union, has demonstrated that proximity, legitimacy, and shared values enable more agile and context-specific responses. This regional-global complementarity is central to the African Peace and Security

Architecture and aligns with the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity.

8. **Second**, the Security Council must improve its follow-up and implementation of adopted resolutions. This means proactive monitoring, regular briefings by Special Envoys and mediators, and avoiding selective engagement based on geopolitical interests. We must overcome challenges of non-compliance, weak enforcement, and Council divisions. Durable peace requires consistency, credibility, and a principled approach.

9. Additionally, the Council and the broader UN system must also address root causes such as marginalization and non-inclusion of minorities, governance gaps, and competition over resources, which often lie at the heart of disputes.

10. **Third**, the Secretary-General should be fully empowered to act early and decisively. We support the use of **Article 99** in instances where emerging crises threaten international peace and security. The good offices of the Secretary-General must be actively used to facilitate dialogue and de-escalation as was exhibited last week on the Cyprus question. We call for enhanced cooperation between the Secretary-

General and regional leaders. Regional diplomacy and quiet backchannel engagement often lay the groundwork for official mediation.

11. We also underscore the need for **adequate and sustained funding** for the DPPA's (Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs) mediation work and the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers which remains a valuable tool.

12. **Fourth**, and finally, we must shift from reactive crisis management to proactive conflict prevention. Preventive diplomacy should be institutionalized through consent driven horizon scanning, early warning briefings, and partnerships with regional organizations and civil society. The **Pact for the Future**, particularly Actions 13 through 18, offers a blueprint for building just, inclusive, and peaceful societies. It reaffirms the necessity of dialogue, mutual understanding, and the peaceful settlement of disputes among States. Sierra Leone is committed to supporting the implementation of these actions in both word and deed.

13. Our post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, hybrid accountability

mechanisms, and community-based reconciliation, have provided a model of restorative justice. We now share these lessons through South–South cooperation, peer exchanges, and mediation training.

14. Previously on the Security Council's agenda and now a member of the Council, Sierra Leone is both a witness to the power of multilateralism and an advocate for its future. We reiterate our belief in the enduring relevance of the **Bandung Principles**, including mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference, equality, and peaceful co-existence. These values, shared across the developing world, remain central to the global peace and security architecture.

15. Let us not wait for the outbreak of conflict before we act. Let us use the tools of diplomacy, solidarity, and justice. We must remain committed to upholding the principles of the Charter, advance the rule of law, and strengthen multilateralism as the cornerstone of a more peaceful, equitable, and secure world.

I thank you.