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*As delivered.*

STATEMENT BY

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**DURING THE SESSION OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE  
ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE  
STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANISATION**

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***TOPIC: “MEANS FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES  
(USE OF GOOD OFFICES)”***

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THURSDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 2024,  
NEW YORK

**Mr. Chairman,**

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, let me begin by congratulating you and the other members of the bureau for your election to steer us through this session and to assure you of Ghana's cooperation and support in your work.

2. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and would like to make these additional comments in our national capacity.

**Mr. Chairman,**

3. As a country that fully subscribes to the Charter obligation to be a peace-loving Member State, Ghana shares fully in the aspiration to effectuate all the pacific means for the settlement of disputes between and among States and welcomes this common commitment to explore how the use of good offices can be advanced for the realization of this aspiration. Indeed, where pacific methods for the settlement of disputes are used, the outcomes are more sustainable and contribute significantly to the *raison d'être* of this organization which is to maintain peace and stability/

4. In our national context, we have found this to be true as we have advanced non-adversarial ways to settle disputes, including through the enactment of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Act of 2010 (Act 798) for the settlement of disputes through arbitration, mediation and more importantly, customary arbitration. A case in point is the use of the good offices of a High-Level Panel of eminent Chiefs, led by the Asantehene, to settle a decades-long chieftaincy dispute in the Dagbon Traditional Area of the northern region of Ghana. Also, since 2005, Ghana's Magistral Courts have been offering Court-connected alternative dispute resolution

(ADR) for litigants to opt for an amicable settlement through mediation and this has proved quite effective.

4. Also, within our regional and sub-regional context, the AU and ECOWAS have demonstrated through their experience, useful perspectives on the subtopic on good offices as means for peaceful settlement of disputes based on the provisions of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, as per resolution A/RES/78/111.

**Mr. Chairman,**

5. At the regional level, the good offices of the AU Panel of the Wise, especially in preventing violent conflicts in Africa is an example worth considering as we discuss the subtopic. The Panel of the Wise has adopted different approaches for different contexts since its inception in 2007. This is to highlight the fact that good offices and good faith interventions should not have a one-size-fits-all approach to different conflict situations.

**Mr. Chairman,**

6. I wish to recall that in August 2010 in Cairo, the AU Panel of the Wise launched what has now become a key annual meeting with relevance to its work and that of the Commission overall under the theme: “The AU High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa”. It is worth noting that fourteen years down the lane, the retreat continues to bring together senior officials, Special Envoys and Representatives of the AU, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs), the United Nations, the European Union, the League of Arab States and others to discuss operational and strategic issues. Significantly, these gatherings have become pivotal for the work of the AU regarding preventive diplomacy and

mediation. What has now become known as the “Cairo Retreats” (which have since taken place in Abidjan, Arusha, Windhoek, and Sharm El Sheikh) also includes a closed one-day meeting between the Chairperson of the AU Commission and all AU Envoys, Mediators, and the Panel of the Wise to promote the exchange of experiences and strategic planning.

**Mr. Chairman,**

7. Also, at the subregional level, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the head of UNOWAS, supports dialogue processes in West African and Sahel countries. In our part of the world, disagreements by political and non-state actors over electoral processes, constitutional reforms, governance issues and other pertinent matters can cause protracted blockades, sharpen cleavages, create instability, and deflect attention from the development efforts, particularly, in developing countries.

8. Under such circumstances, the good offices of the SRSG have helped to promote dialogue among stakeholders and build consensus. To achieve the objective of peaceful settlement of disputes among parties, multiple but coherent good offices are used to unblock disagreements. It is in this context and, in the spirit of enhancing leverage that the SRSG teams up with ECOWAS and other regional partners, to galvanize energies to find peaceful solutions.

9. For instance, in the aftermath of the popular uprising in Burkina Faso in October 2014, the SRSG of UNOWAS represented the United Nations in a tri-partite follow-up and support group with the AU and ECOWAS to assist the democratic transition process, culminating in a peaceful, free, and fair election in November 2015. In Guinea, the SRSG spearheaded a national dialogue process that allowed the

holding of free parliamentary elections in 2013, and subsequent presidential elections in November 2015. In the run-up to the presidential elections in Benin in February 2016, the SRSG's engagement helped to solve, at the last minute, disagreements over the use of voter cards, allowing citizens to cast their ballots.

**Mr. Chairman,**

10. To demonstrate Ghana's commitment to the use of good offices, Ghana invited "The Elders" to participate in a programme of Ghana's Presidency of the Security Council in November 2022. The Elders used their good offices to share their rich experiences on the growing crisis of multilateralism and increasing existential threats to humanity, the importance of multilateralism and how to strengthen global support for upholding international law and reinforcing international norms and accountability among others.

11. In conclusion, my delegation, therefore, welcomes the subtopic and looks forward to a fruitful and concrete outcome in the deliberations of the session.

12. I Thank you.