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Official Records

President: Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann (Nicaragua)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 107, 44 and 112

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolutions (A/63/L.22, A/63/L.25 and A/63/L.27)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolutions (A/63/L.28 and L.29)

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General (A/63/125)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/63/140 and Add.1)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In connection with agenda item 44, members will recall that the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/63/83 was discussed at the 36th plenary meeting, on 3 November 2008. Members will also recall that, at the same meeting, the Assembly took action on draft resolution A/63/L.15.

Under agenda item 112, the Assembly has before it a report of the Secretary-General, document A/63/125, and two notes by the Secretary-General: documents A/63/140, transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, and document A/63/140/Add.1.

I now call on the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who will introduce draft resolution A/63/L.22.

Mr. Valero (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has submitted draft resolution A/63/L.22, entitled "The world financial and economic crisis and its consequences", because it is concerned by the profound impact of the financial crisis on the world economy and, in particular, its effects on developing countries and the attainment of internationally agreed development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.

After extensive meetings with a wide range of countries, a new draft resolution was drawn up, the text of which was circulated informally for the first time among all delegations on 5 November. The draft resolution was submitted to the Secretariat on 6 November and officially circulated in all official languages on 11 and 12 November under the title "The world financial and economic crisis and its consequences" contained in document A/63/L.22. It was placed under item 107 of the General Assembly's agenda, entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit".

This draft resolution is sponsored by a significant number of countries, as follows: Algeria, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Haiti, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Solomon Islands, Jamaica, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Saint

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Vincent and the Grenadines, the Seychelles, the Sudan, Syria, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago.

I am speaking in this General Assembly on behalf of all of the sponsoring countries, whom I thank for the constructive spirit that they demonstrated with their contributions and which made possible an enhanced draft resolution that reflects the concerns of all countries regarding the current financial crisis.

The need for a United Nations summit on the financial crisis is undeniable; that has been recognized by numerous world leaders. In this regard, I would like to recall that during the eighteenth Ibero-American Summit, held in San Salvador from 29 to 30 October, a special communiqué concerning the world economic environment was adopted. In it, all heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Spain and Portugal, agreed to “carry out consultations to examine the opportunity to convene with urgency a meeting of heads of States and Government, in the context of the United Nations, given the gravity of the financial crisis”. In the United Nations, we have held consultations on the draft resolution with the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Group of 77 and China, and we have had discussions with the representative of France in its role as presidency of the European Union, as well as with representatives from numerous Member States.

Informal consultations also took place where Member States had the opportunity to express their points of view. In addition, meetings were requested with countries belonging to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Group of African States, the Group of Arab States, the Forum of Small States and the Group of Asian States, in order to get their comments and suggestions so as to produce a fully inclusive draft resolution.

This draft resolution is intended to promote a necessary debate that broaches, in a responsible manner, the unprecedented financial and economic crisis that is affecting all countries. This draft resolution draws attention to the impact that the crisis is having on the poorest and most vulnerable in the world.

The financial crisis, which began in the United States of America, has spread throughout all regions of the world, and its effects are devastating. The growth of gross domestic product in developed countries has

stopped or been reduced. The economic recession that has affected some countries also has a negative impact on emerging economies and the poorest countries. The increase in unemployment, the drop in commodity prices, the reduced demand for exported goods and the drop in remittances, among other factors, are drawing millions more people into the grip of poverty, hunger and suffering.

This crisis shows no respect for borders. The States represented in the United Nations must responsibly address the implications of this crisis and propose alternatives to achieve an international economic and financial system that is fair and humane and benefits all the peoples of the world.

The United Nations is the most authoritative and representative world body to consider a global crisis of this nature. The solution to this crisis must be the result of contributions from each of the 192 countries belonging to this Organization. None should be excluded from this historic debate.

The draft resolution we are introducing today calls for

“... a comprehensive review of the international financial system, including the functioning of the international financial institutions, particularly the Bretton Woods institutions, with a view to articulating a policy framework for transforming the international financial system into an equitable, inclusive, democratic and development-oriented system that reflects the interests of all Member States”. (A/63/L.22, para. 1)

The draft resolution requests that during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, the President of the General Assembly, Father Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, should “... in close consultations with Member States ... finalize the organizational arrangements for the United Nations Summit” (para. 2). This process, in accordance with the draft resolution, must include a high-level meeting within the Economic and Social Council.

The Doha Review Conference proposes to examine the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and reaffirm the commitments reached in matters of official development assistance, among other matters. This meeting will be uniquely important in tackling financing for development at a time when it

might be affected by the world financial and economic crisis.

We hope that the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development, organized by His Highness the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, will be an auspicious one that brings us closer to a more dignified and fair world.

The summit that this draft resolution proposes seeks, for its part, to approach in a comprehensive manner the multidimensional consequences of the financial and economic crisis. As our draft resolution maintains, it is a matter of historic dialogue between world heads of State and Government to articulate

“... a policy framework for transforming the international financial system into an equitable, inclusive, democratic and development-oriented system that reflects the interests of all Member States.” (*para. 1*)

The Doha Conference and the summit to consider the financial crisis deal with issues that have their own unique features, but they are both initiatives aimed at strengthening the role and authority of the United Nations in the international context.

In the extensive consultations carried out by the sponsors, we can affirm that our draft resolution has broad-ranging support and that a majority of countries are prepared to back it. Some delegations, however, have requested more time to consider the draft. Therefore and in order to achieve a broad consensus, the sponsors have decided to wait a few days to take action on it. We hope that the Assembly will adopt this draft resolution by consensus and that it will become a proposal for all the Member States.

Allow me to say a few words as representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, where the Bolivarian revolution continues to make progress.

The President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez Frías, on 25 October 2008, in the city of Maracaibo, called upon the United Nations to convene a summit of Presidents to discuss the world financial crisis and its effects on the countries in the region.

In this framework, President Hugo Chávez Frías has also called on the countries that make up the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas: Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as all

countries of the countries of the Caribbean Community, the Dominican Republic and the countries that make up Petrocaribe, to examine the measures to be taken in order to jointly address the effects of the financial crisis. This is a regional initiative, the results of which will enhance the agenda of the world summit we are proposing.

We believe that, in the process of preparing for the summit, intergovernmental meetings, events and initiatives, including participating experts, intellectuals and social movements, must also be held. In this respect, we welcome your initiative, Sir, to convene an expert group to support this initiative.

The world’s conscience must be mobilized to create a model for life founded on justice, freedom, equality and solidarity among human beings. Venezuela trusts that the summit will be an historic meeting at which a fairer, more humane international financial system that is fully committed to development and the needs of the poorest people will be created.

Allow me to conclude by saying that the humanist values of equality, solidarity and social justice await a new dawn.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland to introduce draft resolutions A/63/L.25 and A/63/L.27.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland): I will speak first on draft resolution A/63/L.27, entitled “Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence”, and subsequently on draft resolution A/63/L.25, entitled “Legal empowerment of the poor and eradication of poverty”.

Armed violence affects all societies to different degrees, whether they are at war, in a post-conflict situation, or suffer from everyday forms of criminal or political violence.

In recent years, more than 740,000 people have died directly or indirectly from armed violence every year, due to both conflict and criminal violence. More tragically, 490,000 people die every year in non-conflict settings from a violent death, according to the report entitled “Global Burden of Armed Violence”, published this year by the Small Arms Survey.

In non-conflict settings, the economic cost of armed violence in the world in terms of lost

productivity due to violent deaths is \$95 billion a year and could reach as high as \$163 billion. This represents the equivalent of 0.14 per cent of the annual global gross domestic product. Armed violence, therefore, constitutes a serious obstacle to development and could undermine the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Likewise, there is widespread recognition that social and economic development can have a positive impact on the reduction of armed violence. With this in mind, the Government of Switzerland hosted a summit on armed violence and development in Geneva in June 2006. At the conclusion of the summit, 42 States from all the regions of the world adopted the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which has been circulated as a United Nations document (A/63/494).

In 2007 and 2008, the Geneva Declaration and the interrelation that it establishes between the reduction and prevention of armed violence and development were discussed in four regional meetings for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia-Pacific as well as Central and South-Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. As a result, the Geneva Declaration has been endorsed by 102 countries from all regions of the world.

Today, Switzerland, on behalf of the sponsors, is honoured to introduce draft resolution A/63/L.27, "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence", in which some of the core values of the 2006 Geneva Declaration are reflected. The draft resolution has been carefully crafted by a core group of 13 States that lead the implementation of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The text of the draft resolution has been broadly consulted.

The core group members, representing the major regions of the world, are Brazil, Finland, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Kingdom. Switzerland acts as the core group's coordinator. We thank all the sponsors for their support. As of the beginning of the meeting this morning, 53 countries have sponsored the draft resolution. We would also like to underline that the list of sponsors is still open.

The draft resolution, "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed

violence", reflects a careful balance of its twin objectives to reduce armed violence for better development and to propose development strategies that lead to a reduction of armed violence. The balance is reflected in both the preambular and operative paragraphs of the draft resolution.

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution refers to such United Nations documents as the Millennium Declaration, the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the annual resolution of the General Assembly entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development".

In its operative paragraphs, the draft resolution stresses the need for a coherent and integrated approach to prevent armed violence with a view to achieving sustainable peace and development. By requesting the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the interrelation between armed violence and development, the draft resolution aims at bringing together the views and experiences of Member States on this important issue. On the basis of the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, the way forward will be carefully considered.

The aforementioned core group on the draft resolution organized meetings open to all delegations in which the membership as a whole had the opportunity to provide input with regard to the draft presented today. It was only late last week that the core group was informed that some delegations within the Arab Group had raised concerns with regard to some of the formulations in the preamble. In a letter to all sponsors on Friday afternoon, I informed them of the proposed changes and asked them to agree in silent procedure. None of the sponsors objected. In order to accommodate concerns and further broaden support for the draft resolution, the following small revisions are proposed.

In the fourth preambular paragraph, "Acknowledging the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development" should read "Taking note of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development". The fifth preambular paragraph, "Reaffirming that development, peace, security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing" should read "Reaffirming that development, peace and

security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing”, with a footnote added stating: “See resolution 60/1”. I understand that the revision is being circulated in writing to all delegations in the Hall as I speak.

The challenges of addressing the interrelation between armed violence and development should not be underestimated. By taking up those challenges and by seeking the views of Member States on how to address the interrelation between armed violence and development, the draft resolution can allow for the consideration of that important issue, which in turn will be a contribution towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The support today of all Member States for the draft resolution, as orally amended, is highly appreciated.

While I have the floor, please allow me also to introduce draft resolution A/63/L.25, entitled “Legal empowerment of the poor and eradication of poverty”.

Even as we are well into the twenty-first century, half of the world’s population still lives in makeshift shelters in squatter settlements. We all know that when people’s rights over their land and homes are insecure, they cannot leverage those assets. Nearly all of the almost 500 million working poor, who earn less than \$1 a day, labour in the unofficial economy. Informal work accounts for over half of total employment in developing countries, and for as much as 90 per cent in some South Asian and African countries.

Worldwide, approximately 40 per cent of children in developing countries are not registered by their fifth birthday and, in the least developed countries, that number can be as high as 71 per cent.

While theoretically they may have access to justice, the poorest bear the brunt of the insufficient number of judges, the backlog of cases in courts and the unaffordable cost of accessing the formal legal system.

In July 2007, during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, our ministers recognized that the empowerment of the poor is essential for the effective eradication of poverty and hunger. In doing so, Member States reflected on an ongoing debate about the role of the poor in the development process, recognizing that the poor are essential actors in any meaningful effort to eradicate poverty. The poor should

not only be associated with the development process, but empowered to influence and drive it.

The legal empowerment of the poor is crucial to eradicating poverty. Secure property rights boost business investment and farmers plough more back into their land. The introduction of effective property rights, managed by functioning institutions, helps developing countries to progress.

It is necessary to eliminate the negative aspects of informality, while at the same time ensuring that opportunities for livelihood and entrepreneurship are not destroyed and promoting the protection of workers and economic units in the informal economy and their incorporation into the mainstream economy.

After several years of dialogue among experts and the exchange of experience at the regional level, Guatemala, Switzerland and 14 other countries — Benin, Brazil, Canada, Finland, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Spain and the United Republic of Tanzania — wish to bring the issue to a more formal and multilateral level by introducing this draft resolution in the General Assembly today. We are convinced that all Member States have valuable experience and insight to contribute to this important issue.

The preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution set the issue squarely within the multilaterally agreed policy framework for development and eradication of poverty, with which we are all familiar, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus. While that framework and the responsibilities ascribed to individual countries, as well as the international community, are taken as a basis, the legal empowerment of the poor is presented as an essential element of an effective approach to the eradication of poverty and hunger.

A significant input to the discussion on the role of the poor in the development process is the report of the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, which was launched in 2005 to study the interaction between the poor and their national institutions and the extent to which the poor actually benefit from those institutions. In its report “Making the Law Work for Everyone”, published in July 2008 with the support of the United Nations Development Programme, the Commission drew preliminary conclusions based on 22 national consultation processes and the work of five technical groups.

The draft resolution takes note of that report as a contribution to the ongoing discussion of empowerment of the poor. The draft resolution then requests the Secretary-General to report on that important subject matter, bearing in mind not only the report of the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, but also the experience of the United Nations and of Member States. The Secretary-General is requested to present his findings to the General Assembly under the agenda item entitled “Eradication of poverty and other development issues”.

While the draft resolution is largely procedural, this week the sponsors will convene informal consultations with the aim of having it adopted by consensus under agenda item 107 at a meeting of the General Assembly on 24 November.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce resolution A/63/L.28.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand.

Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In Oslo in March 2007, the ministers for foreign affairs of the aforementioned countries drew attention to the urgent need to broaden the scope of foreign policy as traditionally understood. The ministers launched an initiative to use diplomacy to promote global health. They pointed to the fact that investment in health is fundamental to economic growth and development and that threats to health might compromise a country’s stability and security. Health needs a stronger strategic focus on the international agenda.

In their agenda for action, the seven foreign ministers identified a number of areas where policy positions adopted can make a significant difference to the prospect for global health. In strengthening the capacity for global health, key issues are capacity for preparedness, the control of emerging infectious disease and the human resources for health, including the shortage and misdistribution of trained health workers. In facing the threats to global health, health protection before, during and after conflict is a key issue, along with handling natural disasters and other

emergencies and responding to HIV/AIDS. As we seek to make globalization work for all, health is intrinsically linked to development and combating poverty, trade policies and agreements and improved governance.

The initiative was launched here in New York last year and sparked great interest among a large group of foreign ministers gathered for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. We are grateful for the support the initiative has enjoyed from the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the World Health Organization.

We recently enjoyed a very fruitful debate on globalization and health in the Second Committee. There will be several high-level events highlighting global health issues in the months ahead. The Economic and Social Council annual ministerial review next summer will highlight the issues of global health and the necessity to enhance coordination within the United Nations system.

Indeed, the draft resolution being presented here today is carried by a strong current of growing political awareness. There are health-related initiatives being taken in a number of other international bodies, as well as in national and regional contexts.

But the challenges are daunting as well. It is incumbent upon us all, as diplomats and foreign policy operatives, to do our utmost to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At present, progress towards the health-related MDGs is lagging behind. We need sustained political will to change this situation and give the highest priority to saving the lives of women and children, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa.

Including global health and foreign policy in the General Assembly’s agenda next year and being able to raise awareness of these issues on the basis of a comprehensive report and recommended action from the Secretary-General will be a good starting point for taking up our common responsibility in these fields.

I have the honour to present to the members of the General Assembly, on behalf of all the sponsors, draft resolution A/63/L.28, entitled “Global health and foreign policy” for their consideration and adoption as a plenary item under agenda item 44. In addition to the sponsors listed in document A/63/L.28 — Andorra, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the Central African

Republic, Chile, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania — the following delegations have also sponsored the draft resolution: Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia and Sweden.

We invite all interested delegations to join the sponsorship in this very important effort on global health and foreign policy.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to introduce draft resolution A/63/L.29.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): Further to the letter sent on behalf of the United Republic of Tanzania and Norway, as contained in document A/63/538, I have the honour to introduce on behalf of those two countries, as well as the sponsors, under agenda item 44, the draft resolution contained in document A/63/L.29, entitled “International Labour Organization Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization”.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration was unanimously adopted at the ninety-seventh session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva this past June 2008. It builds upon the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization by reaffirming ILO’s values and role in addressing social justice in the present context of globalization.

The Declaration comes at a time when some 2 billion people continue to seek out a living on less than \$2 per day. Recent reports indicate that an additional 100 million people may be pushed below this threshold by the current financial and economic crisis. Against this backdrop, it is important to ensure that there is a strong social dimension to globalization whereby the benefits rather than the negative consequences are felt by all.

The ILO Declaration provides a means of addressing implementation of the decent work agenda at the country level and highlights the importance of creating more and better jobs. It institutionalizes the concept of decent work and stresses inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive objectives based

on employment creation, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work. The Declaration deepens the ILO’s obligation to develop programmes which help facilitate full employment and social justice.

In order to effectively tackle the compounding economic and social challenges of the world, it is important for us, as Government representatives here at United Nations Headquarters, to espouse the decisions taken by our respective Governments at different forums to maintain policy coherence.

Since 1999 when the decent work agenda was originally presented, various conferences and summits have taken place to underscore its importance. The 2005 World Summit was the first affirmation by heads of State and Government at the United Nations in support of a fair globalization and of making the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all a central objective of our relevant national and international policies, as well as our national development strategies.

Other meetings — such as the 2004 African Union summit in Ouagadougou, the 2005 Summit of the Americas in Argentina, the 2005 Council of the European Union (EU), the 2008 EU/Asia-Europe Forum Summit, various summits of the Group of Eight, the Declaration recently adopted at the High-level Meeting on Africa’s Development Needs and others — have all reaffirmed the importance of well-designed economic and social policies towards the fulfilment of decent work for all. The ILO Declaration builds upon and enriches the decisions taken at these and other major conferences and summits and adds to the work undertaken by the broader United Nations system on the wider issues of social justice.

The draft resolution before the General Assembly acknowledges the important adoption of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. It reaffirms in its preambular paragraphs the interrelated issues and decisions taken in various resolutions, and underscores the importance of forging decent work possibilities, particularly in view of the present financial and economic crisis. The operative paragraphs call for the continued promotion of the decent work agenda by the United Nations system through the use of the Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work, and further calls upon Member States to consider expanding the use of the Toolkit at the national level in order to help identify

appropriate and conducive areas for promoting decent work possibilities throughout the various ministries.

I should add that the United Republic of Tanzania has been working to apply the Toolkit at the national level, and we are finding it to be an extremely useful tool for bringing together our various ministries to coherently address employment challenges.

The operative section also recognizes the inclusive and cross-cutting principles contained in the ILO Declaration and thereby requests the Secretary-General to consider the Declaration when reporting on related items in the economic and social fields.

Through our unanimous adoption of the document, each of our Governments has signed on to share in the ambitions and objectives contained in the ILO Declaration. The United Republic of Tanzania, Norway and all the other sponsors believe that the present draft resolution would help facilitate policy coherence throughout the broader United Nations system in the areas of promoting decent work, fair globalization and social justice. The Declaration elevates the decent work agenda to a new and more profound level in this twenty-first century. We would like to call upon all Member States to review the present draft resolution and we would welcome further joint support through more sponsorships.

Mr. Topdar (India): We welcome the opportunity to participate in this joint debate on the various agenda items relating to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. We thank the Secretary-General for his report on these issues.

United Nations conferences and summits held since the 1990s have generated an unprecedented global consensus on a shared vision of development. However, what is of concern is the lack of similar consensus in the matter of implementing that vision. Implementation remains hampered, first, by a continuing lack of adequate resources and, further, by the absence of an enabling international environment. I do not need to repeat facts to highlight the lack of resources, such as the continuing fall in official development assistance flows or the net outflow of resources from developing to developed countries. The ongoing financial crisis, which did not originate in developing countries but is impairing their

development efforts, is just one illustration of the lack of an enabling international environment.

The 2005 World Summit embraced a broader concept of internationally agreed development goals, not just limited to the Millennium Development Goals. Those can be reached only through the implementation of the broader set of commitments undertaken at the major United Nations conferences and summits. Further, the different goals and targets adopted at these conferences and summits can be achieved only if they are pursued together in an integrated manner.

In this regard, we have repeatedly emphasized the importance of development-oriented international economic, financial and trade policies to assist developing countries in their development initiatives. Globalization, with its enhancement of the flow of capital and goods without sufficient attention to its adverse impacts, has made the need for such pro-development policies imperative and most urgent. This has been amply demonstrated by the current financial crisis, coupled with the food crisis and higher risks to energy security.

To ensure that international policies are pro-development, the concerns of developing countries must be effectively taken on board in the formulation and implementation of those policies. Unfortunately, current institutional structures do not permit this, even though developing countries are those most affected.

We are heartened by the near-global consensus on the need for an urgent and fundamental reform of the international financial and economic architecture. Such reform must enhance the voice and participation of developing countries in the decision-making and norm-setting processes. In order to make this process as inclusive as possible, the United Nations, with its unique position and legitimacy, should play a key role.

Trade must assist countries in their development efforts. An early development-oriented outcome of the Doha Development Round of trade negotiations that does not sacrifice the livelihood concerns of millions of poor and marginal farmers is of paramount importance. We also need to accelerate the implementation of the development mandate of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. We must ensure that rewards for innovators are balanced with benefits for humankind, in particular in areas such as public health, sharing the benefits of the uses of genetic resources and affordable

environment-friendly technologies that are crucial for addressing climate change and other related issues.

The Economic and Social Council has a crucial role to play in fostering a comprehensive development agenda for the United Nations through an integrated and coordinated implementation of commitments. The Council has an acknowledged role as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development. The strengthening of the Economic and Social Council in 2006 and the incorporation of new elements in its functioning, were useful steps in this regard. We highlight in particular the importance of the new mandate given to the Council in 2006 to undertake the regular and periodic review and assessment of international economic and development policies and their impact on development. We must enhance the capacities of the Economic and Social Council in order to enable it to effectively implement this mandate, including carrying out periodic reviews of the policies of international financial institutions from a development perspective.

It is satisfying that the annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council has become an important event to review efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and learn through the sharing of experiences. The review must have an added focus on evaluating the implementation of the global partnership for development. The Development Cooperation Forum, which held its first session earlier this year, must consolidate its unique role in overseeing trends in international development cooperation. The Council should also continue to discuss topical and emerging issues and provide policy inputs and guidance. Only through such an integrated approach can the development agenda be maintained at the core of United Nations efforts.

Strengthening the United Nations system without the comprehensive reform of the Security Council is inconceivable. The reform of the Security Council must include an expansion in the permanent and non-permanent categories and an improvement in its working methods. Let us recall that at the 2005 World Summit we pledged early reform of the Security Council, identifying it as an essential element of our overall efforts to reform the United Nations. The continued delay in reforming the Security Council illustrates the fundamental deficiency in implementing decisions that have been adopted.

Consultations in the Open-ended Working Group have outlived their utility. We are happy that there has been unanimous recognition of this fact, and in decision 62/557, adopted on 15 September 2008, the General Assembly agreed to commence intergovernmental negotiations in informal plenary, based on proposals of Member States, within a defined time frame. We fully support the decision of the President of the General Assembly to commence these negotiations on 21 November 2008. This is entirely in line with decision 62/557, and we look forward to the negotiating process producing concrete results.

The United Nations system also cannot be strengthened without revitalizing the General Assembly. This must be not simply a technical process concerned with the agenda and the technical means employed, but also a political process in which the General Assembly takes important political decisions on comprehensively reforming the Security Council, on issues of peace under certain circumstances, on having an actual say in the election of the Secretary-General, and so forth. An important part of such reform would be to increase the accountability of the Secretariat to the Member States and the efficiency of the Secretariat itself.

Before concluding, I wish to highlight the fact that we are now in the process of negotiating the outcome document of the Doha International Conference on Financing for Development. It is important that we do not perpetuate an endless cycle of commitments without implementation, and the Doha outcome document will focus appropriately on means of implementation.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to express my thanks to my colleague, the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, for introducing draft resolution A/63/L.22 on the financial crisis and its consequences, which represents a unique opportunity for the “G 192” — the 192 Members of the United Nations — to achieve the essential global participation in political, economic and financial decision-making. As a sponsor of the draft resolution, my country associates itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela.

For decades, the developing countries have seen demands and exhortations of every sort imposed upon us, particularly with regard to good governance.

However, today we are meeting to discuss a crisis arising from nothing but the bad management of a few. At a conservative estimate, this has cost more than \$3 trillion. The mantra of the free market and the theory that it should function without Government regulation has been contradicted by the massive intervention of Government bodies to staunch the financial crisis, at the request of the very proponents of the system. Ironically, it now turns out that State intervention and market regulation are the answer.

The implosion of the capitalist system, with its disastrous consequences spreading like wildfire throughout the world, are undeniable reasons that the answer to — or better yet, replacement of — this moribund model should henceforth be on an equally global scale. There must be a global and comprehensive response sustained by the principle of human primacy over the production of goods. To that end, the future social, economic and cultural integration of nations and peoples must become a global objective.

To the delegation of Nicaragua, it is clear that, unfortunately, we are among those who have had neither a voice nor a vote in decisions on economic, financial and trade policies, yet are bearing the heavy cost of a crisis not of our making. Hundreds of millions of people living in poverty are paying that price with their lives.

The draft resolution before us proposes what rightly should always have obtained, given that we, more than 130 developing countries accounting for two thirds of the members of the General Assembly, provide 75 per cent of global economic growth.

The facts clearly demonstrate the inability of the system and institutions created 60 years ago to lead the world in the twenty-first century; neither can a small group of countries claim to do so, be they “G” plus any other number. The values of democracy are universal and applicable in all spheres, including with respect to formulating economic and financial policies. Democratization is an imperative for the development of the nations of the world, so that at last all of us may enjoy the advantages of economic, social and cultural development.

Lastly, I appeal to Member States to support the draft resolution, as only with the support of the G192, within the framework of the United Nations and on an equal footing, can we work to create a new order, with

institutions and economic and financial policies that will not just put an end to this crisis, but ensure that it will not happen again. Only thus shall we demolish the model postulated on the domination of some over others.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Eight years after its adoption, implementing the Millennium Declaration remains an uncontested priority of the international agenda.

Implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), increasingly urgent challenges in development financing, combating the negative impact of climate change and issues such as the food crisis and the tremendous problems in the area of global health are justifiably the focus of United Nations attention.

Russia supports the work of the Organization in those areas, since specific steps to advance sustainable socio-economic developments throughout the world are also needed to counter threats to peace and security effectively.

The political momentum needed at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations to implement the MDGs has not only not faded but has been strengthened, as borne out by the high-level event of the General Assembly on 25 October. In the global economic and financial crisis, achieving progress in the implementation of the MDGs will require reinvigorated efforts by the international community. The United Nations must play a leading political and organizing role. In that regard, Russia supports the idea of holding a United Nations summit in 2010 on implementing the internationally agreed development goals, and we are grateful to the President of the General Assembly for initiating the consultative preparatory process for that event.

The MDGs remain steadfastly the focus of the international development agenda. Attention to them must only grow as we approach 2015. Similarly, today’s debate in the General Assembly confirms the diverse ways to ensure development and increased well-being throughout the world. We are confident that during the upcoming consultations we will reach consensus on all the parameters for holding the summit, including its thematic scope.

Regarding the theme of financing for development, we are pinning our hopes on the success of the Doha Conference and its final adoption of a

politically comprehensive and practical document that reflects the approaches of all Member States. We believe that all countries interested in strengthening the role of the United Nations in global affairs will demonstrate, during the final stages of the negotiating process on the outcome document, political will, a sober and pragmatic approach and the ability to concentrate on the most important aspects, as well as flexibility and willingness to compromise.

We agree that health issues are completely justifiably occupying an increasingly prominent place in the United Nations. Russia supports greater attention to health on the Organization's agenda and for the President of the General Assembly to include it among his priorities. In so doing, we advocate that it receive coordinated, consistent and unified consideration within the various areas of the United Nations involving the United Nations Organization and its specialized agencies, with an effective division of labour among them and under the coordination of the Economic and Social Council.

The United Nations agencies must also make further efforts with regard to food security. Effectively countering the food crisis is a joint responsibility, requiring agreed and decisive action by the whole international community that is comprehensive and includes both short- and long-term measures, to be implemented with close international coordination. We welcome the efforts already made in that regard within the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

The United Nations must not remain on the sidelines in dealing with the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis. We need a considered and balanced approach on a consensus basis on the format and specific parameters of the Organization's involvement in future work in that area.

At this time, it is important not only to handle critical issues and to minimize the negative impact of the crisis, but also to make maximum use of new opportunities from a long-term perspective. The crisis has confirmed the need to reorganize the entire international financial architecture to ensure its openness and fairness, as well as its effectiveness and legitimacy. Reform of the international financial system — an issue made more urgent by the crisis — is being and will be discussed in very different formats. Naturally, attention is chiefly fixed on the outcome of the recent Group of Twenty summit, which is to play

an important part in coordinating international economic cooperation.

At the same time, we see a key role for the United Nations, with its unique legitimacy and unifying capability, in ensuring agreement and consistency in the operation of a reformed international financial system for development. From the United Nations we can expect a strong political gesture and specific steps, linking reform efforts with general development challenges.

In that regard, we support Venezuela's initiative to convene a high-level meeting during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the international financial system, which is in line with strengthening multilateralism and solving fundamental economic problems. The successful implementation of that initiative will require the broadest support of Member States, reflected in a balanced consensus resolution agreed during open-ended consultations. We are confident that during those consultations we will take due account of the conclusions of the Group of Twenty summit and the Doha Conference on Financing for Development. It is also very important that today's draft resolution (A/63/L.29) call for a substantive role for the Economic and Social Council in preparing the relevant recommendations for the General Assembly.

The challenges of the United Nations in following up the outcomes of the Millennium Summit are not fully captured by the above-mentioned areas. Further conflicts in world politics, owing to worsening regional crises, the terrorist threat, the risk of the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the standstill in disarmament, are threatening international stability and require an appropriate response.

Recognizing the need to strengthen joint initiatives in global politics — there being no alternative but to solve our problems through multilateral diplomacy — should help reinforce the fundamental role of the United Nations as the sole mechanism for maintaining international peace and global security and helping to promote collective regulation of international relations in dealing with problems holding us back from sustainable socio-economic development and implementation of the MDGs. That is fully in line with the political provisions of the Millennium Summit.

Mrs. Núñez Mordocho (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Expressions of concern over the current global financial and economic crisis and the damage it causes to financial, commercial and economic international relations, particularly its negative impact on underdeveloped economies, are heard daily everywhere. Almost all world leaders are forced to make reference to the subject in their public statements.

Undoubtedly, that crisis is a direct consequence of the current international economic order, governed by neoliberal globalization that up to now has favoured the most powerful countries, which are at the core of the world monetary and financial system, and has had considerable effect on Third World countries. The principles of deregulation and many of the recent financial developments to date have been based on the false hypothesis that market forces balance. However, the obvious chaotic situation that we are facing is clear proof that that theory is not viable, which our countries have been warning for many years.

No one can deny that financial globalization is today threatening mankind's actual wealth. Besides, the vulnerable dollar, the financial imbalances and the economic recession in the United States belie the myth of the soundness and reliability of current international financial institutions and seriously question the foundations of the present day capitalist system. The economic crisis continues its inexorable progress, despite the desperate bailout plans designed by the most intransigent detractors of State intervention in economic affairs. Nonetheless, even amid the seriousness of the situation, the attempts to perpetuate the current order of things continue proliferating in meetings and closed-door discussions among the most powerful countries, which are only attempting to make cosmetic alterations to the international financial system, hoping to keep it under their absolute control and to continue marginalizing the vast majority of world nations from participating in global economic and financial decision-making.

The scandalous lack of democracy and transparency in the international financial system and its main institutions is more evident than ever. What we need today is a profound reform of the system with the participation of all nations of the world as equals and that will place the interests of developing countries finally at the core of the new international economic order we are fighting for.

For that reason our country is honoured to sponsor, along with an important number of nations, draft resolution A/63/L.22, tabled by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and entitled "The world financial and economic crisis and its consequences". Its main objective is to convene a United Nations summit to review those matters, particularly the work of the Bretton Woods institutions, which have been discredited in the eyes of the world.

We hope that the aforementioned draft resolution will be able to count on the support of the overwhelming majority of the Member States of this Organization, so as to start with the inclusive, transparent and democratic process so necessary today, concerning world financial and economic operations.

We commit ourselves to working steadfastly to achieve that purpose, from now until that summit is held. It will undoubtedly constitute an unprecedented event in the history of the United Nations. We take the opportunity to call upon all nations to join in the far-reaching initiative.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): It is my honour to speak in my national capacity. My country wishes to make the following brief remarks with regard to draft resolution A/63/L.27 tabled by Switzerland, entitled "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence". France, like all European Union States, enthusiastically supported the declarations adopted in Geneva in June 2006 and September 2008, which are the basis of Switzerland's draft resolution. We continue to fully support the relevance of the declarations.

At the same time, we very much regret the addition of a preambular paragraph in the draft resolution that does not figure in any of the Geneva declarations and which refers to a symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development. We challenge that link as being presented too systematically, because in reality it is a complex relation. My country continues to have reservations on an overly simplistic presentation of that difficult issue.

At the same time, we do not wish to withdraw our support of the Swiss initiative because of that one issue, because the general thrust of the draft resolution has not been changed. As a result, France will associate itself with the consensus for adopting the Swiss draft resolution (A/63/L.27).

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Argentine Republic is addressing the General Assembly to express its firm support for the draft resolution submitted by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, entitled “The world financial and economic crisis and its consequences” (A/63/L.22). The initiative from Caracas to urgently convene a world summit to examine the reasons, significance and alternatives with regard to the current situation is a symbolic appeal from the developing countries, which seek explanations and alternative solutions to the existing market-based philosophy with regard to bringing about integration in global society.

It is clear that the recent bailout measures for the banking systems adopted by the authorities of the central economies are based on that same epistemological paradigm, namely a formula that assigns the market a monopoly when it comes to the allocation of resources and undermines the role that could be played by Governments. We must look at the fundamental causes of the current financial disaster in order to achieve a new international financial system based on sensible and fair policies that protect production and seek economic development and social inclusion.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): It is our honour to sponsor the resolution entitled, “The world financial and economic crisis and its consequences” (A/63/L.22). We are convinced that the initiative comes at an opportune time, allowing the United Nations to react to the international financial crisis, whose multidimensional consequences have a global impact. The global nature of the crisis and its consequences require global responses through inclusive decision-making mechanisms.

My delegation thus takes note of the conclusions reached at the summit of the Group of Twenty on 15 and 16 November 2008, where it was decided that a response to the crisis could only be multilateral and collective. From my delegation’s viewpoint, draft resolution A/63/L.22 fully meets those concerns. In fact, the United Nations offers a universal and legitimate framework to assess the impact of the financial crisis and to allow all countries to participate in seeking appropriate solutions.

The convening of a summit by the United Nations to assess the current financial crisis would undoubtedly contribute to a more in-depth analysis on the

underlying reasons for the crisis and assist in creating a political framework that will allow us to convert the international financial system into a system that is fair, democratic, non-exclusive and one that takes the interests of all Member States into account.

My delegation also believes that the draft resolution is a complementary initiative to the ongoing process for the Follow-up Conference on Financing for Development, which will be held soon in Doha, and the ongoing process of the Group of Twenty, which will start meeting again in the spring.

We are absolutely convinced that the proposal summit will allow us to improve the quality of relations between the United Nations and the financial institutions and make them more operational.

Finally, Algeria hopes that the General Assembly will adopt this draft resolution by consensus, given its constructive scope and inclusive nature.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items.

I should like to inform members that the sponsors of draft resolutions A/63/L.22, A/63/L.25, A/63/L.28 and A/63/L.29 have asked for decisions on those texts to be deferred until a later date to be announced.

We will now take a decision on draft resolution A/63/L.27, as orally revised. Before giving the floor to the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of position, I should like to remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Smolik (United States of America): The United States fully supports implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and offers many assistance programmes in this regard. In addition to our own export control activities, we assist other States in fully implementing the Programme of Action, in areas such as export controls, brokering regulations, destruction of excess weapons and stockpile security.

The United States also places a high priority on promoting human rights, countering the causes of conflict and supporting post-conflict initiatives. However, the United States does not believe that

additional legally binding instruments on small arms and light weapons or associated issues, as called for by the Geneva Declaration, are required to make an impact on these issues, which are important to us all, nor are such legally binding instruments likely to be successful in accomplishing their desired goals. The United States prefers to focus on concrete actions that address the underlying problems, rather than expending limited resources on negotiating additional instruments.

The Programme of Action's strength is in its implementation by participating States, not in additional associated legally binding instruments. While the United States supports working in partnership with other stakeholders in reducing armed violence and illicit weapons proliferation, we cannot support the Geneva Declaration as a whole. Although the United States does not intend to break consensus, it cannot support the draft resolution.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/63/L.27, entitled "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence", as orally revised. The following additional countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Bulgaria, Denmark, Haiti, Jordan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. [Subsequently, the delegation of Turkey informed the Secretariat that it had sponsored the draft resolution in error.]

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/63/L.27, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/63/L.27, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 63/23).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, I would remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): In a spirit of accommodation, the Pakistan delegation decided to go along with the consensus on the draft resolution entitled, "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence" (A/63/L.27). However, that should not be construed as our endorsement of the Geneva Declaration. In 2006,

Pakistan participated in the consultations to negotiate the text of the Geneva Declaration. At that time, we proposed certain amendments that were not accepted and therefore we had no choice but not to attend the summit on 7 June 2006. Prior to the regional meeting in Bangkok in May 2008, we participated in informal consultations in Geneva, but, again, our views were not accommodated. During the informal consultations held in New York earlier this month, we were presented with a virtual fait accompli.

However, it is heartening to see that the sponsors of the resolution have demonstrated flexibility by replacing "acknowledging" the Geneva Declaration with "taking note" of it in the fourth preambular paragraph. Similarly, the change in the fifth preambular paragraph is welcome. However, we are convinced that the eighth preambular paragraph is unnecessary. The terms, goals, targets and measurable indicators are vague and open to convenient interpretation. Similarly, we should not declare something to be a complement to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were decided at the level of heads of State and Government. It is also ironic that even the goals and indicators for MDGs agreed at the summit level have not yet been developed, especially for MDG 8. So, instead of creating another road map, we should set our priorities right and do first things first.

Mr. Aly (Egypt): I am taking the floor to explain Egypt's position on draft resolution A/63/L.27. The delegation of Egypt joined the consensus on A/63/L.27 in keeping with its conviction that addressing armed violence and promoting development represent areas where the United Nations should play a central role. We express our appreciation to the sponsors of the draft resolution for addressing our key concerns regarding the earlier draft.

While the fifth preambular paragraph of the resolution reaffirms the Millennium Summit's identification of development, peace and security and human rights — the main three pillars of the work of the United Nations — as interrelated and mutually reinforcing, Egypt wishes to stress that any reference to the Charter of the United Nations should begin by the reaffirmation of the principles of the United Nations, particularly those emphasized in the Millennium Declaration. That includes the United Nations principles reflected in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Declaration, reaffirming the importance of, inter alia, non-interference in the internal affairs of States,

the territorial integrity of States, the right to self-determination, the right to self-defence, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the promotion of friendly relations among States. Objectively speaking, it would also have been helpful to highlight the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict and the crucial role of multilateralism in addressing challenges related to conflict and armed violence, including, in particular, through the implementation of relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

On the other hand, we welcome the reference made in the draft resolution to the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms, since the Programme represents a consensual, well-balanced basis for addressing the impact of illicit arms transfers on armed violence in the context of conflict.

Acknowledging the procedural nature of this draft resolution and the importance of the report that draft requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, which might shed greater light on the wide range of views on the interrelationship between armed violence and development, Egypt decided to join the consensus on the draft resolution.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 44, 107 and 112.

Programme of work

The Acting President: Before proceeding further, I would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/63/4/Rev.2, which contains the Assembly's programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings for the period from 18 November to 16 December 2008 and which was distributed to delegations this morning. As mentioned in that document, the specific meeting focused on development under agenda item 107, "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit", originally scheduled for Monday, 24 November, has been postponed until Monday, 15 December 2008, in order to better reflect ongoing developments, including the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for

Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Doha from 29 November. I would like to remind members that the lists of speakers on the items listed in document A/INF/63/4/Rev.2 are open.

I would also like to make a few announcements concerning the programme of work of the General Assembly. Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 45, "Culture of peace", at its 46th to 50th plenary meetings, on 12 and 13 November 2008. May I also recall that the Assembly took action on draft resolution A/63/L.24/Rev.1 at the 50th plenary meeting, on 13 November 2008. However, at the request of the sponsors, action on draft resolution A/63/L.23 was postponed until a later date to be announced.

I would now like to remind members of the programme of work of the plenary for tomorrow morning, Tuesday, 18 November 2008. The Assembly will take up, as the first item, the report of the Second Committee on agenda item 48, "Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the preparation of the 2008 Review Conference". As the second item, the Assembly will resume its consideration of sub-item (1) of agenda item 114, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union", in order to take action on draft resolution A/63/L.26. Thereafter, the Assembly will proceed to consider agenda item 102, "Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations", as the third item; and agenda item 9, "Report of the Security Council", jointly with agenda item 111, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", as the fourth item. Members are requested to consult the *Journal of the United Nations* for further details.

Before we conclude the meeting, I would like to remind delegations that His Excellency Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, President of Bolivia, will address the General Assembly at 12.30 p.m.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.