



General Assembly

Seventieth session

82nd plenary meeting
 Wednesday, 23 December 2015, 4 p.m.
 New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

Agenda item 15 (continued)

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 resolution (A/70/L.37)

The President: Members will recall that, in a joint debate, the Assembly considered agenda items 15, 116 and 123 at its 52nd plenary meeting, on 13 November 2015 (see A/70/PV.52). The sponsors of draft resolution A/70/L.7/Rev.1 — adopted as resolution 70/110 and entitled “The impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon” — have requested that the proposal be reconsidered in accordance with rule 81 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, which reads as follows:

“When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of the members present at voting, so decides.”

May I take it that the Assembly agrees to reconsider resolution 70/110?

It was so decided.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/70/L.37.

Mr. Nyembe (South Africa): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce

draft resolution A/70/L.37, entitled “The impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon”.

The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to all delegations for their constructive contributions, which have led to the finalization of the text before the Assembly. This is an affirmation of the support that the United Nations membership has towards those countries affected by the impact of the El Niño phenomenon. The draft resolution reaffirms the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels with the aim to prevent, mitigate, and repair damage resulting from the El Niño phenomenon. Allow me to highlight some paragraphs that are important in this draft resolution.

The draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to include in his report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, under the sub-item entitled “Disaster risk reduction” of the item entitled “Sustainable development”, a section addressing the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the 2015-2016 El Niño phenomenon. That is in addition to the section requested in its resolution 69/218, of 19 December 2014.

Furthermore, the draft resolution decides to convene a meeting of the plenary of the General Assembly during its seventy-first session to discuss action-oriented recommendations regarding the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the 2015-2016 El Niño phenomenon.

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Lastly, the draft resolution invites the Economic and Social Council to devote sufficient time during its 2016 session to address the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the 2015-2016 El Niño phenomenon, building upon the expertise from the United Nations regional commissions, specialized agencies and the relevant bodies of the United Nations system.

I commend draft resolution A/70/L.37 to the General Assembly for adoption by consensus.

The President: In the light of the decision taken earlier at this meeting, we shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/70/L.37.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/70/L.37. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt it?

Draft resolution A/70/L.37 was adopted (resolution 70/110).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 15.

Agenda item 114 (continued)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(e) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

Note by the Secretary-General (A/70/107)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 50th plenary meeting, on 9 November 2015, the Assembly took note of the appointments of Ghana and Liberia as members of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2016.

Members will also recall that one seat from among the Group of Asia-Pacific States, one seat from among the Group of Eastern European States, two seats from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and one seat from among the Group of Western European and other States, for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2016, remain vacant. On recommendation by the Chairs of the Asia-Pacific States and the Eastern European States, I have appointed Hungary and the Islamic Republic of Iran as members of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2016. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of those appointments?

It was so decided.

The President: With regard to the remaining two seats for the Latin American and Caribbean States and the one seat from the Western European and other States, I urge those Groups to submit their candidatures as soon as possible.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 114.

Agenda items 126 to 128 (continued)

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Letter from the President of the Security Council (A/70/661)

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Letter from the Secretary-General (A/70/547)

Letter from the President of the Security Council (A/70/661)

International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

Draft resolution (A/70/L.39)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 31st plenary meeting, on 13 October 2015, the General Assembly concluded its consideration of agenda item 128. In order for the Assembly to take action expeditiously on the draft resolution before it, it will be necessary to reopen the consideration of that item. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen its consideration of agenda item 128?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/70/L.39. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt it?

Draft resolution A/70/L.39 was adopted (resolution 70/227).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 126 to 128.

I shall now suspend the meeting, in view of the fact that the Fifth Committee has not yet completed its work. The plenary will resume following the adjournment of the meeting of the Fifth Committee, in order to take up the pending items before the Assembly, including the proposals from the Fifth Committee, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), the Third Committee and the Sixth Committee, whose considerations were postponed due to budgetary implications.

The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 8.20 p.m.

Agenda item 11

Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS

Draft resolution (A/70/L.38)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/647)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on a draft resolution entitled “Organization of the 2016 High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS”, issued as document A/70/L.38. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/70/647. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/70/L.38. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt it?

Draft resolution A/70/L.38 was adopted (resolution 70/228)

The President: I shall now give the floor to representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote or position on the resolutions and the decision just adopted.

Mrs. Norman Chalet (United States of America): The United States would like to add its thanks to the Ambassadors of Zambia and Switzerland for their efforts in facilitating the discussions on the modalities for the 2016 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS. We also

thank the President of the General Assembly, his Chef de Cabinet and staff and the many other delegations that worked tirelessly to negotiate resolution 70/228.

The United States is pleased to join the consensus on this resolution and strongly supports this critical high-level meeting, which will review the progress achieved thus far and provide recommendations to help us meet the goal of seeing an end to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Throughout the negotiations on the resolution, we underscored the importance of the participation of civil society in the high-level meeting and its panels. Civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders play an essential role on issues relating to HIV/AIDS, especially as key implementation partners. For that reason, the high-level meeting and its panels should be open to all concerned parties, including those that do not have consultative status in the Economic and Social Council. Their expertise and participation are essential to the success of the meeting and to the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS.

In that context, we would like to underscore our belief in the importance of fairness and transparency in compiling lists of NGOs for participation in the high-level meeting and other United Nations summits and high-level meetings. Any concerns that a Member State may have about an NGO’s potential participation in the high-level meeting need to be addressed openly and transparently, not behind closed doors.

Mr. Vachon (Canada): Canada considers the 2016 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS to be an important event for the engagement of leaders in order to accelerate a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS. We would like to thank the President of the General Assembly, the co-Chairs — Zambia and Switzerland — and colleagues for the hard work in achieving consensus so that the high-level meeting modalities could be adopted in due course.

Canada recognizes and values the role played by non-governmental organizations in advocacy, awareness-raising and programme implementation in the fight against HIV/AIDS, including in the most affected countries. Member States will continue to rely on civil-society representatives, among others, from various backgrounds, to address the persistent

challenges and gaps related to HIV/AIDS. In that regard, their participation in the high-level meeting is of paramount importance.

Given the important role of civil society in our collective work on HIV/AIDS, Canada is deeply concerned with the increasing trend towards limiting the participation of civil-society representatives in United Nations events. In that regard, Canada wishes to underline the great importance that we attach to the principles of transparency and due process at the United Nations, including with respect to the process for determining the inclusion of civil-society representatives at United Nations meetings. Resolution 70/228 provides for the consideration of the list of civil-society participants on a no-objection basis. It is our understanding that, should any Member State choose to object to the participation of individual civil-society representatives, the objecting Member State will inform the President of the General Assembly, in a transparent manner, of the rationale for any objection, who will in turn advise the General Assembly. It is in that spirit that Canada joined the consensus on the resolution.

Canada furthermore wishes to note that there have been numerous contentious negotiations surrounding the process of accrediting civil-society representatives to recent United Nations and General Assembly proceedings and high-level meetings. Going forward, it is Canada's view that the United Nations should consider a predictable and consistent approach to the modalities for the participation at high-level meetings of civil-society representatives without accredited status in the Economic and Social Council. Canada urges the Secretariat and Member States to consider further steps in that regard. It is in all of our interests that we regularize that process in a fair, appropriate, inclusive and transparent manner.

Canada asks that its explanation of position be included in the record of this meeting.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union to make a statement.

Mr. De Preter (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

We would like to extend our thanks and deep appreciation to Ambassador Kasese-Bota of the

Permanent Mission of Zambia and to Ambassador Lauber of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland for their tireless efforts to facilitate the discussions on resolution 70/228 and for their work in conducting the process of consultations in an open and transparent manner, which culminated today in the adoption of the resolution.

First of all, the EU and its member States want to unambiguously reaffirm their commitment to the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS to be held next June. We wish to stress the importance that we attach to the fight against HIV/AIDS. We have already achieved much through our joint determination, but we need to do even more and cannot let up in our efforts. The high-level event will provide us with an opportunity to attract high-level political attention to ensure that all the necessary means will be devoted to ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

The EU and its member States were deeply disappointed with the reluctance shown by some Member States in the context of negotiations on this modalities resolution to ensure the full transparency and participation of civil-society representatives at the high-level meeting and to allow relevant non-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to participate. We are deeply concerned about the increasing trend towards limiting civil-society participation in United Nations events in an arbitrary way. We firmly believe that maintaining a genuine, open dialogue with relevant civil-society groups should be a priority for the United Nations and its membership, including in the context of high-level meetings such as the upcoming discussion on HIV/AIDS.

For that reason, throughout the consultations on this resolution, we consistently defended the position that the process of admitting NGOs to participate in the high-level meeting should be completely transparent and allow for the full involvement of the General Assembly. We have proposed similar approaches for other processes within the United Nations. We hope that Member States will adopt a more constructive approach in future discussions on civil-society participation in United Nations events, and that the EU and its member States will remain strongly committed to ensuring that an improved, more open and transparent process for the selection of NGOs to participate in specific United Nations meetings will be used.

We believe that a vigorous and independent civil society is essential to the functioning of democracy and the implementation of human rights. We see effective engagement with civil society as a cornerstone of successful human rights policies and attach the greatest importance to the voice of civil society. We will continue to stay actively engaged in debates on HIV/AIDS and look forward to successful and transparent negotiations on the political declaration and to fully inclusive discussions during the high-level meeting.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 11.

Agenda item 28 (continued)

Social development

Report of the Third Committee (A/70/481)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/643)

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution IV, recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 40 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution IV is contained in document A/70/643. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution IV, entitled "Persons with albinism". The Third Committee adopted it. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 70/229).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 28?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 53 (continued)

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/70/495)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/637)

The President: The Assembly will take action on draft resolution II, recommended by the Committee in paragraph 16 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of

the draft resolution is contained in document A/70/637. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution II, entitled "Matters relating to activities under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in 2016". The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted it without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 70/230).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 63 (continued)

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/70/505)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/641)

The President: The Assembly will take action on draft resolution VII, recommended by the Committee in paragraph 32 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution VII is contained in document A/70/641. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution VII, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican

Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Israel, Morocco

Abstaining:

Central African Republic, France, Liechtenstein, Mauritania

Draft resolution VII was adopted by 140 votes to 4, with 4 abstentions (resolution 70/231).

[Subsequently, the delegations of China, Colombia, Egypt, Liechtenstein, Mauritania and Viet Nam informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of the United States of America had intended to vote against.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 63?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 69 (continued)

Rights of indigenous people

Report of the Third Committee (A/70/486)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/644)

The President: The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 13 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/70/644. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Third Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/232).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 69?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 72 (continued)

Promotion and protection of human rights

(c) Human rights situations and report of special rapporteurs and representatives

Report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.3)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/640)

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolutions II and IV, recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 30 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolutions II and IV is contained in documents A/70/640 and A/70/638, respectively. For the time being, the texts of the reports are contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions II and IV, one by one.

We will first take a decision on draft resolution II, entitled "Situation of human rights in Myanmar". The Third Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 70/233).

The President: I call on the representative of China, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Chu Guang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Our delegation would like to make a statement on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. We have maintained a constant position and, therefore, China was not able to participate in the consensus on resolution 70/233.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution IV, entitled "Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic".

I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mrs. Vadiati (Islamic Republic of Iran): Apart from the politically motivated nature of draft resolution IV, which is totally unacceptable on its own terms, it contains provisions that are definitely irrelevant and unprecedented for inclusion in a human rights resolution. Such provisions run counter to the basic principles of international law and divert the General Assembly and its relevant Committee from their proper course.

The content of paragraph 14 is particularly abhorrent, as it condemns the two forces that are part of the regular armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran deployed in Syria on an exclusively advisory basis at the formal invitation of the Government to support its legitimate fight against the terrorist onslaught in Syria. Moreover, that paragraph denies the right of Member States to establish peace and order on their territory, including by requesting assistance. It also takes an adverse and unwarranted position on the actions by a regular army of a sovereign Member State. That paragraph, together with paragraph 16, lumps together — falsely and in a sinister manner — and labels and condemns exactly those people who are fighting Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and their affiliates.

The paragraphs blur the borders between the terrorists and those who fight them, create confusion regarding the United Nations-designated terrorist groups and reward violent extremism and terrorists, as well as their supporters, who during the past several years have nurtured them with takfiri ideologies and provided them with financial and logistical resources. The unfounded accusation levelled in those two paragraphs amount to revenge against those who have

so far been the most effective force on the ground against terrorism and violent extremism — a force that, if not for its genuine and resolute fight, more of the Middle East would have fallen under the black flag of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham/Da'esh. It is unfortunate that the malfunctioning of the United Nations human rights mechanism is providing an opportunity to abuse the system and have such an absurd draft resolution adopted.

In conclusion, the incongruous accusations and condemnations raised in the draft resolution poison the hope created by the Vienna negotiations process to find a way out of the current impasse. It is particularly regrettable that, in the wake of the recent upsurge in barbaric terrorist attacks in different parts of the world, which should have brought all of us closer together in a united front against terrorism and extremism, the draft resolution aims to sow discord in the international anti-terror fight. However, let me assure those who initiated the draft resolution that it will not dissuade us from our resolute fight against violent extremism, as we are determined to clear our environment of those who sow terror and violence in our neighbourhood and export it to the entire world.

The President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand,

the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Algeria, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Abstaining:

Angola, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Central African Republic, Congo, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Greece, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe

The draft resolution was adopted by 104 votes to 13, with 37 abstentions (resolution 70/234).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Canada and Somalia informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Belarus had intended to vote against; and the delegations of the Niger and Viet Nam had intended to abstain.]

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote following the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Qassem Agha (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We reiterate the principled position of our country and of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) with regard to not dealing with draft resolutions that target specific NAM member States individually but not other countries.

My delegation wishes to express its deep sadness at the fact that some delegations, including, regrettably, some members of NAM, are repeatedly trying to exploit the work of the Third Committee and of the General Assembly in order to advance their interventionist

political goals, which runs counter to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law. That is an insult to the role of the Human Rights Council and distances the General Assembly from achieving its fundamental goals.

It is indeed strange that some countries that are without either a constitution or a parliament, and that do not even respect the rights of women, children and the elderly, are talking about human rights in Syria. That is a farce, and it should not be accepted by the United Nations. What the Saudi and Qatari regimes are doing to the people of Syria — killing them, financing terrorism and trafficking and exploiting Syrian blood and distorting the image of Islam — gives the wrong impression, as is mentioned in the report. The fact that they send droves of members of Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist groups is well known to all countries.

In conclusion, I would like to address the representatives of the Saudi and Qatari regimes and say that the Syrian people will neither forgive nor forget.

Mr. Al Musharakh (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): The United Arab Emirates was one of the sponsors of resolution 70/234, entitled "Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic", based on our conviction that the tragedy of the brotherly Arab people of Syria should be put to an end. For the past five years, the Syrian people have been systematically subjected to the worst forms of human rights violations, including indiscriminate killings and detentions, the deliberate targeting of civilians, sexual violence and the use of prohibited chemical weapons against civilians, as well as other violations. Despite previous international resolutions that called for putting an end to such violations and for holding perpetrators accountable, the regime continues to commit crimes against humanity, in flagrant contravention of human rights law and international humanitarian law.

More than 60 countries sponsored resolution 70/234, which shows to what extent the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic has deteriorated. The resolution calls on the international community to reject those violations and to protect the human rights of the brotherly Syrian people. We wish to thank all the countries that voted in favour of the resolution.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of

sub-item (c) of agenda item 72 and of agenda item 72 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 79 (continued)

Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft resolution (A/70/L.22)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/645)

The President: The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/70/645. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 79 and its sub-items (a) and (b) at its 68th and 69th plenary meetings, on 8 December 2015.

I now call on the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mrs. Salas Pellicer (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to speak in explanation of vote before the vote on draft resolution A/70/L.22, submitted under agenda item 79, entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”.

We would first like to thank the facilitator of the draft resolution, Ambassador Eden Charles of Trinidad and Tobago, as well as Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director of the Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, and Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs of the Office of Legal Affairs.

I should point out that Venezuela is not a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) or to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. That is why the standards mentioned in those instruments, which include some that could be considered to be customary law, cannot be applied to my country unless we recognize them explicitly. Given the importance of the sustainable management of biodiversity and resources beyond national jurisdictions, my country

believes that this national issue should be regulated by a specific international instrument that is separate from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Convention on Biodiversity. It should prioritize the precautionary principle and the need to preserve the rights of humankind as a whole.

Venezuela hopes that future decisions on this issue, including negotiations on a future multilateral instrument, will be conducted in an inclusive and participatory spirit. In Venezuela’s view, UNCLOS should not be the only legal framework governing activities related to the oceans and seas, nor can it be considered a universal instrument.

Although the text of the draft resolution has positive aspects, we should note the inclusion of elements that compelled Venezuela to express reservations regarding the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Convention on Sustainable Development on issues such as those related to marine biodiversity. Similarly, my country has expressed reservations about Goal 14 (c) of the Sustainable Development Goals included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). We believe that the process of updating the Convention’s terms should be reviewed, as new situations have arisen that the current text does not address adequately, and for which it is in some cases even counterproductive. That has affected the evolution of a mechanism that should cover the most important current issues relating to the oceans and seas in a balanced, equitable and inclusive way.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela will therefore abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/70/L.22.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/70/L.22, entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Pollard (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/70/L.22, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Australia, Barbados, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Lithuania, Luxembourg,

Maldives, Mexico, Nauru, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Romania, Samoa, Slovakia, Sweden and the United States of America.

The President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Turkey

Abstaining:

Central African Republic, El Salvador, Mali, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Draft resolution A/70/L.22 was adopted by 143 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions (resolution 70/235).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Qatar and Viet Nam informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Colombia had intended to abstain.]

The President: Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote following the voting, I should like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Erciyes (Turkey): Turkey voted against resolution 70/235, entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea". I would like to recall here that the reasons that have prevented Turkey from becoming a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remain valid. Turkey supports international efforts to establish a regime for the sea that is based on the principle of equity and is acceptable to all States. In our opinion, however, the Convention does not provide sufficient safeguards for special geographical situations and, as a consequence, does not take into consideration conflicting interests and sensitivities arising from special circumstances.

Furthermore, the Convention does not allow States to register reservations to its articles. Although we agree with the Convention in its general intent and with most of its provisions, we are unable to become a party to it owing to those prominent shortcomings. That being the case, we cannot support a resolution that calls on States to become parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and to harmonize their national legislation with its provisions.

Mr. Celarie Landaverde (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am honoured both for myself and on behalf of my delegation to address the plenary today on resolution 70/235, on "Oceans and the law of the sea". I hope that our work will be rewarded with good results.

The Republic of El Salvador is aware of the importance of the oceans, particularly their exploitation within the framework of sustainable development, which is essential if we are to ensure food security for every human being on our planet in an organized way. We also realize that there are regulatory gaps in areas that include sustainable fisheries, transport and the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity — issues where significant progress has

been made but for which more still needs to be done. The Republic of El Salvador is not a State party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and we believe that measures, agreements and resolutions that are agreed on among States or that emanate from the General Assembly should take the standards of general international law into account. That means that such measures, agreements or resolutions, except those that the States in question recognize explicitly, do not create obligations for States that are not party to the Convention without their consent.

El Salvador encourages all States to continue their efforts relating to the use, conservation and protection of the oceans and seas with the aim of ensuring a good quality of life for future generations. That can be achieved through the cooperation — bilateral, regional or global — of all countries of the world, which will help us to strengthen international peace and security and friendly relations among all nations, in accordance with the principles of justice and equal rights, as enshrined in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The issue of the oceans and seas should also be seen as a harbinger of a truly important issue for the international community, that of the living and non-living resources on the seabed, which are part of the shared heritage of humankind, the products of which should be distributed in a genuinely fair and equitable way to the true benefit of every country in the world, especially developing nations.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 79?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 83 (continued)

Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixty-seventh session

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/70/509)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/642)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 10 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme

budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/70/642. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/236).

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 83?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 92 (continued)

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Report of the First Committee (A/70/455)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/639)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/70/639. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The First Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/237).

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 92?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 97 (continued)

General and complete disarmament

Report of the First Committee (A/70/460)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/646)

The President: The General Assembly will take action on a draft decision recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 95 of its report. The report of the

Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the amendment to the draft decision is contained in document A/70/646. For the time being, the text of the report is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.17.

We will first consider the draft amendment to the draft resolution, as contained in document A/70/L.26.

I call on the representative of Japan, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before the Assembly takes a decision.

Mr. Minami (Japan): I would like to explain Japan's vote on the draft decision concerning the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Japan will vote in favour of the draft decision as amended. However, we feel it is regrettable that its programme budget implications have been generated by the draft amendment that will be proposed after the draft decision's adoption by the First Committee. The First Committee adopted the original draft decision on the understanding that it would not entail any programme budget implications. However, that understanding has regrettably been superseded by the proposed draft amendment. Japan would therefore like to call on all Member States to avoid such situations in future.

The President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on the draft amendment to the draft decision, as contained in document A/70/L.26. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt it?

Draft amendment A/70/L.26 was adopted.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 95 of its report, which is entitled "Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament", as just amended.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire,

Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Central African Republic, France, Israel, Netherlands, United States of America

The draft decision, as amended, was adopted by 149 votes to none, with 5 abstentions (decision 70/551).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Switzerland informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of the United Kingdom had intended to abstain.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 97?

It was so decided.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 131 to 134, 138, 141 and 144 to 147.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Gert Auväärt of Estonia, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Fifth Committee before the Assembly.

Mr. Auväärt (Estonia), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: Given that many of us have not really slept during the last 48 hours, I will try to be as brief as possible.

I have the honour today to introduce to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee. The Fifth Committee met from 8 October to 21 December 2015 and held 23 plenary meetings and numerous rounds of informal consultations.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that several Fifth Committee reports have already been considered by the General Assembly, at its 29th, 52nd and 75th plenary meetings, held on the following agenda items: agenda item 138, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", specifically on Article 19; agenda item 114, "Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments"; agenda item 135, "Programme planning"; agenda item 137, "Pattern of conferences"; agenda item 142, "Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services"; agenda item 132, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations"; agenda item 143, "Administration of justice at the United Nations"; and agenda item 160, "Financing the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali".

I shall now present additional reports of the Fifth Committee on the following items.

On agenda 131, "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 7 of its report contained in document A/70/624, the adoption of a draft resolution adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 133, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 10 of its report

contained in document A/70/631, the adoption of two draft resolutions adopted by the Committee without a vote. In paragraph 11 of the same report, the Committee recommends the adoption of a draft decision.

On agenda items 144, entitled "Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994", 145, entitled "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991", and 146, entitled "Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals", the Committee, in paragraph 6 of the respective reports contained in documents A/70/632 to A/70/634, recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the related draft resolutions adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 141, entitled "United Nations common system", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/70/635, the adoption of one draft resolution that was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 138, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/70/416/Add.1, the adoption of a draft resolution adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 147, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/70/636, the adoption of a draft resolution adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 134, entitled "Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017", in paragraphs 37 to 42 of document A/70/648, the Committee considered five draft resolutions. In draft resolution I, the Committee adopted the draft resolution "Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the

biennium 2016-2017” without a vote. In draft resolution II, on “Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017”, a recorded vote was requested on an oral amendment to section 20 of draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.19. The Committee voted not to include the oral amendment in the draft resolution. The Committee subsequently adopted the draft resolution, as a whole, without a vote. The Committee adopted draft resolution III, entitled “Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017”, draft resolution IV, entitled “Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2016-2017”, and draft resolution V, entitled “Working Capital Fund for the biennium 2016-2017” without a vote. The Committee also recommended the adoption of 11 statements on programme budget implications. The relevant reports of the Committee are issued in documents A/70/637 to A/70/647.

On agenda item 132, “Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations”, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 5 of its report contained in document A/70/649, the adoption of the draft decision “Questions deferred for future consideration”, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank delegations, especially the coordinators and budget chairs, the Secretariat, my fellow Bureau members and the Chair for their efficient work. I wish members happy holidays.

The President: I thank the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee.

Before proceeding further, I would like to emphasize that, as the Fifth Committee has just finished its work, most of the reports are available in English only. It is my understanding that all of the reports will be issued in all official languages as soon as possible. I thank representatives for their understanding.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee

and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind delegations that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

“When the same draft resolution is considered in a main committee and in a plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in the plenary meeting, unless that delegation’s vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee.”

May I further remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance. That means that where recorded votes were taken, we will do the same. I should also hope that we will proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Committee.

Agenda item 131

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/624)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/238).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 131.

Agenda item 133

Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/631)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee

in paragraph 10 of its report and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 11 of the same report.

We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I and II and on the draft decision, one by one.

We first turn to draft resolution I, entitled “Capital master plan”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.9.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 70/239).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled “Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.10.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 70/240 A-B).

The President: We now turn to paragraph 11 of the report to take action on the draft decision entitled “United Nations Office for Partnerships”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft decision, as recommended by the Fifth Committee?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 70/552).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 133.

Agenda item 144

Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/632)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the

text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.11.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/241).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 144.

Agenda item 145

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/633)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.12.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/242).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 145.

Agenda item 146

Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/634)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.13.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/243).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 146.

Agenda item 141

United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/635)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.14.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/244).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 141.

Agenda item 138 (continued)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/416/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.15.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/245).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 138.

Agenda item 147

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/636)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee

in paragraph 6 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.16.

We will now take action on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/246).

The President: I would like to confirm the understanding reached in the Fifth Committee that, on an exceptional basis for the 2016-2018 scale period only, three countries in Level B — the Bahamas, Bahrain and Oman — will be afforded discounts of 7.5 per cent to their assessment rates, and that in 2018 only, Saudi Arabia will be afforded a discount of 7.5 per cent to its assessment rate, and that those discounts shall be borne on a pro rata basis by the permanent members of the Security Council.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 147.

Agenda item 134

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016 to 2017

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/648)

The President: The Assembly has before it five draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 43 of its report.

We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to V, one by one.

Draft resolution I is entitled “Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.18.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 70/247).

The President: We now turn to draft resolution II, entitled “Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.19.

I now call on the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Sánchez Azcuy (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): In order to reiterate the long-standing position of my delegation, I should like to refer to section XX of draft resolution II, entitled “Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council”.

No intergovernmental agreement has been negotiated by Member States with regard to the definition of the concept of “responsibility to protect”. My delegation therefore firmly believes that the budget estimates and the related narrative presented in connection with the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect should be eliminated and should be taken into account only once the General Assembly has taken a decision on that concept, its implementation, scope and other related matters.

I therefore reiterate the request of the Cuban delegation to amend section XX of draft resolution II to include the following two preambular paragraphs, which I will now read.

“Recalling that the General Assembly has not taken a decision on the concept of the responsibility to protect, its scope, its implications or its possible forms of implementation,

“Noting that the estimates of cluster I include narratives, functions, expected outcomes, success indicators, results and other information related to the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect, decides to eliminate all references to actions and results related to the responsibility to protect as expressed in the strategic framework and related narratives of the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and requests the Secretary-General to issue a corrigendum to his report”.

We request support for the amendment I have just introduced.

The President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote or position.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg): I have the honour to deliver this explanation of vote on behalf of the States members of the European Union on the amendment to section XX of draft resolution II, which have just been introduced by the representative of Cuba.

The mandate of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide was approved by Security Council resolution 1366 (2001). It is our responsibility to ensure that the Office is adequately funded in order for it to be able to effectively implement its mandate and all the functions related to it. The paragraphs of the resolution currently under consideration would, however, greatly reduce the capacity of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide to implement its mandate. Those paragraphs would, in particular, hamper the Office in carrying out its mandate in close collaboration with other United Nations entities, in particular with the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, who focuses on developing the conceptual, political and operational aspects of the responsibility to protect.

For that reason, we will vote against the amendment that has just been introduced. We call on other delegations to do likewise.

Mr. Yazdani (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation has asked for the floor to explain its vote on the proposed amendment introduced by the delegation of Cuba on section XX of draft resolution II.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always supported the activities of the United Nations within its mandates and based on its rules and regulations, in particular the Charter of the United Nations. In accordance with the Charter, the General Assembly occupies a central position as the chief deliberative policymaking and only universally representative body of the United Nations. It is therefore worth mentioning that there is no consensual agreement among Member States in the General Assembly on the concept of the responsibility to protect or its scope, implications or possible ways of implementation.

In conclusion, although the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the expeditious, effective and immediate response of the United Nations in the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, in the view of my delegation, there is no intergovernmental consensus on the concept of the responsibility to protect. It is therefore not acceptable to my delegation that the limited financial resources of the Organization be allocated to a post for which there are no agreed terms of reference for its functions owing to the absence of an agreed definition with regard to the responsibility to protect.

For those reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of the amendment proposed by the delegation of Cuba.

Mr. Jiménez (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation has asked for the floor to explain its position with regard to the amendment proposed by the representative of Cuba with regard to draft resolution II on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council.

Any definition of the responsibility to protect must be based on a clear recognition of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Since 2012, the resources for the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect have been completely combined with those of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide. My delegation is firmly in favour of that Special Adviser, in line with my Government's permanent principled position against genocide.

Nevertheless, the budget estimates and the related narrative presented for the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect must be eliminated and should be considered only once the General Assembly takes decisions on the concept, its execution, the scope of application and other related matters. For that reason, my delegation will support the amendment made to the text by Cuba, and we would urge the other members to do the same.

Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I asked for the floor in order to explain our position on the amendment proposed by Cuba on part XX of draft resolution II.

Insofar as there is no existing consensus on the concept of the responsibility to protect, its field application and the way it should be implemented, the concept runs counter to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those of non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States and respect for State sovereignty and territorial integrity. Those would be violations of the Charter, and therefore we support Cuba's proposal.

The President: We shall first consider the oral amendment to part XX of draft resolution II. A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the representative of Cuba on a point of order.

Mr. Sánchez Azcué (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am very sorry to have to raise a point of order but, pursuant to rule 89 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, when a motion is introduced two delegations must speak in favour and two against. My delegation has heard only one delegation speak against Cuba's proposal. I would suggest that we hear from the Secretariat as to whether this is understood as acceptance of the Cuban proposal, without necessarily having to move to a vote. While we wait for the clarification, I would ask, Mr. President, that you delay the voting and that this matter be clarified immediately, that is, whether it is appropriate to proceed to a vote when the number of speakers established under rule 89 have not spoken against my delegation's proposal.

The President: The understanding of the President is that this is not a proposal. This is an amendment and we can continue with the voting.

I call on the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Sánchez Azcué (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again, my apologies. but according to rule 89, it says that

“[a] representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment should be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to two speakers in favour and two speakers against.”

The rule continues from there, but I think that that is the point that my delegation would like to highlight. Once again, I reiterate the request of my delegation that the Secretariat clarify the situation wherein only one delegation has spoken against the proposal, or rather, the amendment of my delegation.

The President: I want to read out rule 90 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, on voting on amendments.

“When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the General Assembly shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment

necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of the proposal.”

That means that the understanding of the Secretariat and of the President of the rules of procedure is that we are entitled to move to the vote, which we are just in the process of taking. I will take the permission to go on with the voting on the amendment.

I understand that the representative of Cuba still does not agree with the President. I now call on him.

Mr. Sánchez Azcuy (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is not that I disagree with you, Mr. President. That is not the case at all. I am simply directing a question to the Secretariat on a matter of substantive order. You have kindly replied, Mr. President, based on rule 90, which my delegation greatly appreciates. But my question was related to rule 89, because only one delegation spoke against the motion made by Cuba. Once again, I am very grateful for your patience and your explanation of rule 90, but I would ask you, very respectfully, to clear up the question that my delegation has regarding rule 89 and the fact that only one delegation has spoken against the amendment proposed by my delegation. I once again reiterate the thanks of my delegation, and I am sorry, Sir, for having delayed your efficient management of the meeting.

The President: Yes, I must say that I find this discussion to be very strange. As Member States know, the President of the General Assembly is voted in for only one year; so it is difficult to know all the difficult interpretations. I wish to ask if there are any other Member States that, together with Cuba, challenge my interpretation of the rules of procedure. If that is not the case, we will proceed with the voting, and then the Assembly can vote in another President next year.

A recorded vote has been requested on the oral amendment to section XX of draft resolution II.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Pakistan,

Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guyana, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zambia

The oral amendment to section XX of draft resolution II was rejected by 74 votes to 12, with 58 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Congo informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution II as a whole. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 70/248).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled “Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.20. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 70/249 A-C).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled “Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2016-2017”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.21. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 70/250).

The President: Draft resolution V is entitled “Working Capital Fund for the biennium 2016-2017”, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.22. The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution V. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution V was adopted (resolution 70/251).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Yazdani (Islamic Republic of Iran): I wish to speak in explanation of vote on resolution 70/248.

My delegation wishes to disassociate itself from section XX of the resolution, with regard to the allocation of budgetary resources to the Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran. As my delegation clearly stated at the time of the establishment of the Panel, we firmly believe that the Security Council’s sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran are unlawful and target the civilian population. The sanctions are based on unfounded, baseless allegations and are derived from the political motivations of some countries, as confirmed by the consensual decision of the International Atomic Energy Agency on 15 December 2015. My delegation therefore rejects the funding of the Panel on the same basis.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that, after the agreement between Iran and permanent members of the Security Council and Germany, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Security Council, in its adoption by consensus of resolution 2231 (2015),

decided to terminate the provisions of all previous resolutions on Iran’s peaceful nuclear programme, including resolution 1929 (2010).

I would therefore like to emphasize that, under the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran will be automatically dissolved and all the resources associated with the engagement of and support to the experts on the Panel, including any United Nations staff resources assigned to support the members of the Panel, will be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. Tuy (Cambodia): I am pleased to be making a statement of position on section IV of resolution 70/248, “Subvention to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia”, adopted under agenda item 134, on the supplement to the voluntary financial commitments to the Chambers for 2016. On behalf of the Government of Cambodia, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General for his efforts to secure funding for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

I would like to note that, since the establishment of the Chambers, the Royal Government of Cambodia and the United Nations have now collaborated for nine years in order to bring to trial the top Khmer Rouge leaders most responsible for crimes committed between 1975 and 1979. We understand that justice must be done not only for the families of the victims but for the entire population of Cambodia, which had to deal with the hardships of the Khmer Rouge regime. The proceedings in the Chambers are lengthy, and funding them is a demanding task. To date, the top Khmer Rouge leaders have been charged with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The essential aims of the Court are as follows: first, that it is important, not only for Cambodia but for many other countries as well, that we tell succeeding generations that such events must not be repeated, for they resulted only in the massacre of our own people and in the hardships we have had to endure in the wake of the crimes — a culture of peace is our best hope today — secondly, that the Khmer Rouge leaders will have no impunity for their crimes not matter how much time has elapsed since they were committed; thirdly, that, along with the sense of justice that the trials in the Chambers can bring the survivors, we must cherish the principles of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence; and fourthly, that the judgements of the Chambers

will serve an academic purpose for the study of interested researchers and students, both national and international.

Efforts have been made this year to continue the Courts' proceedings, and a joint statement on the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia was therefore recently issued in Phnom Penh, on 17 November, reflecting the outcome of a meeting between Mr. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister-in-Charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers, the Chair of the Royal Government Task Force on the Khmer Rouge Trials and Mr. Stephen Mathias, Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs of the United Nations. My delegation also welcomes the joint statement made on 8 December by Mr. Sok An and Ambassador David Scheffer, Special Expert of the Secretary-General on United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials, in which they noted that the ECCC continues to make steady progress in discharging its caseload, including the Trial Chamber's current examination of the facts relating to charges of genocide in its case number 002/02.

The joint statement emphasizes that the Court is in urgent need of further contributions to meet its financial needs and adds that Cambodia supports the Secretary-General's request for a subvention for the international component of the budget. The Special Expert also expressed his commitment to working with the Cambodian Government in seeking contributions to support the national component. Over the next two years, the ECCC's national component will amount to \$13.01 million, with \$6.64 million and \$6.37 million allocated to covering its practical workload requirements for 2016 and 2017, respectively.

I would like to note here that, for the past two years, the Royal Government of Cambodia has increased its support so as to cover 50 per cent of the national staff's salaries, in addition to the substantial operating costs that it has funded since the ECCC's inception, in 2006. As of today, Cambodia has contributed a total of approximately \$30.6 million, \$18.5 million of that in cash and \$12.1 million in kind, making it the second-largest contributor to the ECCC after Japan. Furthermore, the Government remains committed for 2016, having renewed its commitment to contributing a total of \$4.15 million, \$2.5 million of which covers six months of national staff salaries and \$1.65 million of which goes to operating costs, equivalent to 62.5 per

cent of the national component of the Court's proposed budget for 2016.

Both the national and international funding components of the Chambers are vital to the ECCC's ability to complete its important mandate without interrupting the judicial proceedings. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to ask our principal donors to support us by coming forward to fill the gap in national staff salaries by providing the funding for another six months, and in particular to ask the European Union to consider providing the €3.4 million of its unallocated funds earmarked for both national and international components for 2016.

I would like to conclude by welcoming today's adoption of section IV of resolution 70/248, on the subvention to the ECCC for 2016. We are firmly committed to working closely with the United Nations and all stakeholders in order to ensure that the ECCC succeeds in achieving its mandate in a sustainable manner and achieving its goals.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 132

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/70/649)

The President: The Assembly will take action on a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. For the time being, the text of the draft decision is contained in document A/C.5/70/L.24.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision, entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 70/533).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 132.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations and Chair of the Fifth Committee, for his

extraordinary leadership and patient guidance of the work of the Committee. I also thank the members of the Bureau and the Secretary of the Committee for a job well done, and all the delegations for their hard work and spirit of consensus and compromise in the final negotiations.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it for this meeting.

Mr. Mamabolo (South Africa): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Seventy years ago, the establishment of the United Nations provided an opportunity to foster peace, build democracy and create a just society on a global scale. The Organization has also been a pathway to independence for many members of our Group. Throughout the seventieth session we should reflect on the history and development of the United Nations and its achievements and challenges, particularly when it comes to addressing the interests and needs of developing countries.

The future of developing countries lies in a strong and robust multilateral system, and the Group of 77 and China pays particular attention to crafting international economic policies and relations and to narrowing the gap between developing and developed countries. In the past year, we have built a global consensus on a number of issues that are critical for the developing world, including the Addis Ababa Action Plan and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), as well as the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In the context of the Fifth Committee, we look forward to engaging constructively on how to ensure that the United Nations system can be adequately resourced to support these ambitious agendas and mainstream them across all the pillars of the United Nations as part of a revitalized global partnership.

As we adopted the reports of all the Main Committees, including the Fifth Committee, and in particular the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, I have been pleased to see our work reflect our collective commitment to improving the efficient and effective functioning of the United Nations. As a result of our intensive negotiations over the past few months, we have adopted a budget of \$5.4 billion that is focused on enhancing the ability of the United Nations to deliver on its mandates more effectively and

efficiently. We have adopted a common system package that is fit for purpose. The Group of 77 and China would particularly like to focus attention on the development pillar of the United Nations in all its aspects. I would like to reflect on one of my favourite quotes attributed to my former President, Nelson Mandela: "It always seems impossible, until it is done." In that regard, I welcome the successful and, for the first time in 13 years, timely conclusion of these difficult and complex negotiations by our capable experts. I sincerely hope that this positive and constructive spirit will continue in future years.

I would like to take this moment to thank you, Mr. President, for your kind support as our experts negotiated during this session. We have been fortunate to have a man of your stature at the helm, with a deep understanding of financial matters. The Group's thanks also go to the Secretary-General, the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee on Administrative Budgetary Questions and the Board of Auditors for their expert analysis and advice. I would like to express the Group's sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai of Nepal, Chair of the Fifth Committee, for his able leadership throughout the process. I would also like to convey my appreciation to the secretariat of the Group of 77 for their dedicated support throughout our chairship, and a special word of thanks to the members of the Group of 77 and China for their support, as well as to all our partners for their constructive engagement in working for a better world for all.

To quote my former President Nelson Mandela again, "[A]fter climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb." As we bid the Assembly farewell as Chair of the Group of 77 and China, we are happy that this year has ended on another good note, and we encourage all delegations to continue to reach out to each other and strive to find common solutions to global problems.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China would like to wish everyone happy holidays and to reiterate its commitment to returning in the new year, under the able leadership of the Kingdom of Thailand, in order to engage constructively in the resumed seventieth session with the same tenacity, zeal and vigour that we have shown so far. I would like to wish Mr. Virachai Plasai, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations, and his team all the best.

Mr. Mukerji (India): I would like to express my delegation's pleasure in the adoption of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. I would like to reiterate the principles we have always advocated, which are that adequate resources should be allocated to fulfilling the mandates generated by the collective membership, and that resources for programmatic and substantive components should outweigh those allocated to posts. We are also of the view that the United Nations should allocate and respond to emergencies such as Ebola, as we did last year, and natural disasters. We are satisfied that the methodology of the scale of assessments has been preserved in both the regular budget and the peacekeeping budget, despite the intense last-minute negotiations.

This outcome has been made possible by the constructive engagement of all Member States and the leadership shown by my colleagues Ambassador Bhattarai of Nepal, Chair of the Fifth Committee, and Ambassador Mamabolo of South Africa, Chair of the Group of 77 and China. There can be no more fitting tribute to Ambassador Mamabolo's chairship of the Group of 77 and China for the momentous year that is just ending.

Since this will be my last statement in the United Nations in my capacity as Permanent Representative of India, I take my leave of all those here in the hope that we will be able to be fit for purpose and implement all the outcomes we have negotiated, including not only those from this year but also that of 2005 relating to speedy reform of the Security Council.

The President: I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I would like to thank the General Assembly for adopting the programme budget for the 2016 and 2017 biennium by consensus. The hard work, unwavering commitment and flexible cooperation of all have contributed to reaching that agreement. I applaud the Member States for this collective achievement. Our Secretariat staff were proud to support them in their successful efforts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Ambassador Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Chair of the Fifth Committee, for his skilful leadership of the Committee. I would also particularly like to thank you, Mr. President, for your strong commitment and leadership in directing this difficult process.

The budget the Assembly has just approved reflects the difficult global financial reality we have faced for a number of years. Funding continues to shrink, while demands on the United Nations grow. Through it all, we are doing everything possible to fulfil the mandates the Members give us. We are guided by two pressing obligations, of which the first is our duty to respond to the needs of the world's people and the second our responsibility to make the most of the resources we are entrusted with. Through creativity, hard work and diligence, we are rising to the challenge.

The Assembly has wisely decided to add resources to strengthen the very important pillar of development. I commend its decision to support the follow-up and review of our efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (see resolution 70/1) and carry out the agenda on financing for development. The Assembly has also decided to reduce resources under public information and common support services to an even greater degree than the efficiencies I had identified. That presents some challenges, especially at this critical juncture. We are carrying out the important initiatives the Assembly has approved, including Umoja, mobility and the development of a global service delivery model. Nevertheless, we remain committed to exerting our best efforts to deliver on these transformational initiatives and all the other mandates we have been given.

After the budget has been set, the Organization's financial health depends on contributions from all Member States. We now have a revised scale of assessments for sharing the costs of the regular budget and peacekeeping operations. I applaud the consensus decisions on those matters.

Today's resolution on the common system (resolution 70/244) reflects the wishes of the Member States. It also takes account of the views that we have communicated through my Chief Executives Board for Coordination. The staff federations were also heard throughout the process. I am pleased that the new system is more simple and streamlined. It will allow organizations to further recognize the performance of staff. I thank the Member States, the International Civil Service Commission and all those involved in achieving a consensus.

As we know, this is the last regular budget to be adopted during my tenure as Secretary-General. I am deeply grateful for our fruitful collaboration over these nine years. From my first day in office, I pledged to

bring greater transparency and accountability to the United Nations. That is my personal work ethic and also the most efficient way to do business. High standards of professionalism inspire our staff and reassure our partners. Openness benefits everyone.

I also arrived here with a vision for modernizing our Secretariat and making it truly global. Member States saw the value in that approach, approving a mobility framework that will make the best possible use of our greatest asset, the United Nations staff. I am also grateful for their support to Umoja, which is already improving our capacity to manage global operations. Together, we are creating a stronger United Nations for a better world.

At this time in a budget year, delegations are usually still negotiating in conference rooms. This time they worked through the night and reached agreement earlier than in past years. I know that many of those here may be sleep-deprived right now. They definitely deserve a holiday. There were enormous challenges on the global agenda in 2015. At the same time, we can be proud of major accomplishments, especially the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Those and other advances proved that multilateralism works. Today's consensus action is a strong sign of our ability to work together. We need that spirit of global solidarity more than ever. In 2016, we will act on our plans for a healthier and more peaceful planet where all people can live in dignity.

Finally, I wish all those here and their families a happy and healthy new year.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Statement by the President

The President: I totally agree with the Secretary-General that the adoption on time of the budget and the conclusion of the work of the Fifth Committee have brought us to the end of what has been a remarkable year for multilateralism and consensus. I feel it is appropriate to once again thank the Chair of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, for his extraordinary leadership of the Committee's work, and to express my appreciation for the spirit in which all delegations have worked.

From a wider perspective, we should be proud of the incredible breakthroughs that our Organization has achieved in 2015. In particular, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change were excellent outcomes from ground-breaking multilateral processes.

Throughout his nine years in office, the Secretary-General has been instrumental in building momentum and support for action on climate and sustainable development. I have greatly enjoyed working with him in the past four months. During that time, I have seen at first hand the leadership and energy he has demonstrated on so many global challenges. I can say that I had no doubts in nominating him as man of the year for a Danish television programme on international affairs that will be shown this Christmas.

In 2016 we will be kick-starting the implementation of those agreements, but the new year must also be about reaching lasting peace for ongoing conflicts, reviewing the global humanitarian system and addressing the current refugee crisis. It is my sincere hope that in the coming year the United Nations and the international community will show the same spirit of cooperation and consensus that we have seen in 2015. I wish everyone happy holidays and a well-deserved rest.

Programme of work

The President: With regard to the programme of work of the General Assembly, apart from organizational matters and items that may have to be considered by operation of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, and bearing in mind that consideration and action have already been taken by the Assembly on a majority of items thus far, I should like to inform members that the following items on the agenda remain open for consideration during the seventieth session of the General Assembly: agenda items 4 to 7, 9, 11, 13 to 16, 18, 18 (d), 20, 20 (d), 20 (g), 21, 23, 23 (a), 30 to 36, 40, 41, 43 to 49, 56, 57, 66 (a) and (b), 67, 73 (a) to (d), 74, 79, 79 (a), 91, 107, 109, 110, 112 (a) and (b), 113 (a) to (c), 114 (e) to (g) and 115 to 166.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of those agenda items that remain open for consideration during the seventieth session of the Assembly?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.30 p.m.