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Official Records

President: Mr. Thomson (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 114 (continued)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(c) Election of five members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission

The President: Members will recall that, in accordance with sub-paragraphs (a) to (e) of paragraph 4 of resolution 60/180, of 20 December 2005, the Organizational Committee shall comprise the following: seven members of the Security Council, including five permanent members; seven members of the Economic and Social Council, elected from regional groups; five top providers of assessed contributions to the United Nations budgets and of voluntary contributions to United Nations funds, programmes and agencies, including a standing peacebuilding fund; five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions; and seven additional members elected by the General Assembly, giving due consideration to representation from all regional groups in the overall composition of the Committee.

Members will also recall that at the 81st plenary meeting of its sixty-ninth session, the Assembly elected Colombia, Egypt, Kenya, Malaysia and Morocco as members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for a two-year term of office, beginning on 1 January 2015, and that at the 80th plenary meeting of its seventieth session, the Assembly elected El Salvador and Montenegro as members of

the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for a two-year term of office, beginning on 1 January 2016.

By a letter addressed to the President of the General Assembly dated 28 November 2016 (A/71/664), I was informed by the facilitator of the Group of the leading financial contributors that, as decided by the financial contributors, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Japan and Norway will serve a full two-year term from 2017 to 2018.

Also, by a letter addressed to the President of the General Assembly dated 8 November 2016 (A/71/610), I was informed by the facilitator of the troop-contributing countries of their decision that Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan and Rwanda will serve from the troop-contributing-countries category of membership for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2017 and ending on 31 December 2018.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to take note of documents A/71/664 and A/71/610?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of five members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission. By its resolution 60/261, of 8 May 2006, the Assembly decided that the members of the Organizational Committee shall serve for renewable terms of two years, as applicable. Accordingly, Colombia, Egypt, Kenya, Malaysia and Morocco are eligible for immediate re-election.

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Regarding candidatures for the five seats, I should like to inform members that for the African States, the Group has endorsed Egypt and Kenya; for the Asia-Pacific States, the Group has endorsed Indonesia; and for the Latin American and Caribbean States, the Group has endorsed Colombia and Mexico.

Members will recall that by its resolution 60/261, the General Assembly decided that the rules of procedure and established practice of the Assembly for the election of members of its subsidiary bodies shall apply to its election of members of the Committee. For this election, rules 92 and 94 shall be applicable. Accordingly, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

However, I should also like to recall paragraph 16 of decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to or is less than the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

It was so decided.

The President: Since the number of candidates endorsed by the Group of African States, the Group of Asia-Pacific States and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States is equal to the number of seats to be filled, may I take it that the General Assembly decides to elect Colombia, Egypt, Kenya, Indonesia and Mexico as members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for a two-year term of office, beginning on 1 January 2017?

It was so decided.

The President: I congratulate Colombia, Egypt, Kenya, Indonesia and Mexico on their election as members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 114?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 14

Culture of peace

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/407)

The President: I shall now make a brief statement.

Renowned poet Maya Angelou once said: “Hate — it has caused a lot of problems in this world, but it has not solved one yet.” It is a simple observation that goes to the heart of one of the most fundamental challenges the international community must address to build a culture of peace across our world. Racism, xenophobia, intolerance and other manifestations of hate drive many of today’s conflicts, motivate violent extremism and inspire acts of terrorism. Hate often lies behind the persecution and targeting of ethnic and religious minorities, migrants, refugees and other vulnerable and marginalized people. And far too often, hate is used as a tool by leaders seeking, for their own gains, to exploit the insecurity of people, the disunity of societies and the injustices of our world.

The scale of human suffering taking place around our world, the need to break the cycles of conflict, violence and disunity, and the call for us all to build sustainable peace, could not be clearer. Fostering a culture of peace requires dedicated attention to the promotion of intercultural understanding and the strengthening of interreligious dialogue. It must inspire people’s hope for the future and motivate them to unite for peace.

In that regard, I wish to commend the work that is being undertaken by United Nations agencies — including UNESCO and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations — to promote non-violence and mutual understanding. Their practical and innovative initiatives to promote peace education, raise awareness of cultural pluralism and support peace and reconciliation processes, are invaluable. Such targeted projects can have profound ramifications in helping to rebuild fragmented societies and should be scaled up and supported.

Building long-term, sustainable peace requires comprehensive approaches that bring together peace and security, human rights and sustainable development efforts. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a fundamental tool in this regard. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are premised on the fundamental recognition of the importance of peace as an outcome in itself — through SDG 16 — as well as a

cross-cutting priority necessary for the achievement of all 17 SDGs.

The need to take a comprehensive approach to building peace was also recognized in the sustaining peace resolutions adopted earlier this year (resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)). I am committed to deepening understanding at the United Nations, and among other relevant global stakeholders, of the importance of sustainable peace and the mutually reinforcing interlinkages between implementing the 2030 Agenda and sustaining peace. To this end, I will be convening a high-level informal dialogue on 24 January 2017, here at the United Nations, on the subject of “Building Sustainable Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace”. I encourage everyone to attend.

I would now like to briefly address the issue of global health and foreign policy. The recent global breakouts of Ebola and the Zika virus demonstrated all too clearly how quickly global health crises can cross national borders, divert limited health resources and wreak devastation on families, communities and entire regions. The impact of global pandemics stretches far beyond the health sector. They undermine socioeconomic development, weaken social cohesion and can ultimately threaten national and regional security. The World Bank has estimated the annual global cost of moderately severe to severe pandemics to be around \$570 billion, or 0.7 per cent of global gross domestic product.

Addressing global health is therefore not only a goal in itself of the 2030 Agenda. SDG 3 is a cross-cutting precondition for achieving the rest of the SDGs, including building peaceful and inclusive societies. In our efforts to address global health crises, a number of key steps must be pursued. First of all, we need to accelerate our progress in fighting malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis, Ebola and other communicable and non-communicable diseases, including by giving dedicated attention to addressing growing antimicrobial resistance.

Secondly, our responses to global health crises need to include specific mechanisms to ensure that the particular needs of women and girls, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, are not overlooked.

Thirdly, as agreed earlier this year at the high-level meetings on HIV and AIDS and on antimicrobial resistance, we need to better coordinate international action, sustain political will and ensure more predictable financing to improve global capacities to deal with health crises. Well-functioning and resilient national health systems that have the service delivery, finance, human resources, infrastructure and information- and supply-management systems to respond to the health needs of local and national populations are naturally essential. So, too, is achieving our ultimate aim of universal health coverage, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

In conclusion, I want to recognize the efforts of the Global Health and Foreign Policy group for bringing concerted attention to global health issues, including through draft resolution A/71/L.41, on global health and foreign policy, which is to be adopted today. Given the extent to which global health emergencies can arise without notice, threaten our communities, undermine our development and even destroy our futures, it is self-evident that we must do all we can to safeguard our societies from their impact.

Mr. Ismail (Brunei Darussalam): At the outset, I would like to extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the recent horrific attacks in Turkey and Egypt. By promoting a culture of peace, it is our hope that the hatred that fuels such violent acts can be diminished and eliminated.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Brunei Darussalam. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization in the area of promoting a culture of peace (A/71/407), which provides a comprehensive and detailed overview of its activities, achievements and challenges across a wide range of common interests and concerns to all.

With its rich heritage and culture, Southeast Asia is home to a diverse range of people who are well-known for their friendliness and peace-loving nature. The culture of peace has been instilled in us since the founding of ASEAN in 1967. Paragraph 2 of the Bangkok Declaration states that, among the aims and objectives of the formation of ASEAN is the promotion

of regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The notion of promoting peace and stability is further enshrined in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, which has greatly contributed to this endeavour over the past 40 years. We continue to be encouraged that, in addition to the 35 countries that have acceded to the Treaty, there is growing interest from others, which reflects their commitment to the purposes and principles contained in the Treaty, strengthening cooperation with ASEAN and contributing to peace and security in the region.

The adoption of the Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States on the Maintenance of Peace, Security, and Stability in the Region at the 49th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting held in Laos earlier this year reiterates ASEAN's shared commitment to continue upholding the United Nations Charter, the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, including the purposes and principles contained in the declaration on the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality and the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, which serve as the basic norms governing friendly relations and cooperation among States.

As we work together towards realizing the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the Association reaffirms its shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region and to the peaceful resolution of disputes without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law. In this regard, ASEAN will continue to play a central role in developing a rules-based regional architecture and reaffirms the important values of moderation, tolerance, non-violence and mutual understanding as well as respect for diversity and inclusiveness. In so doing, we have embarked on a holistic approach towards our region's community-building where we take into account global goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in our efforts to build an inclusive, people-centred ASEAN community.

Integral to that approach is the need to inculcate the values of peace and understanding in our children from a young age. That is why we have put in place

the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme, which provides a dedicated youth-volunteerism platform that will facilitate multidisciplinary, knowledge-driven and post-disaster recovery-projects across the region. The programme aims to promote the values of equality and mutual respect and strengthen mutual understanding through dialogue and interaction among our young people. It represents a facet of ASEAN's determination to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Today, we are facing divisive borderless threats that are clearly defined not by development status but by harmful extremist ideologies that have led to some major challenges to our security and capacity to prosper. ASEAN strongly condemns all acts of terror. Such attacks in our region and around the world not only serve as a grim reminder of our need to be vigilant in the fight against such threats, but also underline the importance of cultivating a culture of peace and tolerance and embracing mutual respect and understanding. We believe that peace among peoples and nations cannot be attained by individual efforts alone. ASEAN therefore engages in continuous dialogue with its external partners through the ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum Meeting on Confidence-building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy and through numerous activities related to non-traditional security, defence, humanitarian assistance and disaster management.

ASEAN commends the role of the United Nations in promoting the culture of peace through dialogue and negotiations, in enhancing tolerance, trust and mutual understanding, and in addressing all forms of political religious disputes and radicalism, including violent extremism. We therefore would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the valuable work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and UNESCO.

It is imperative to have a culture of peace if we are to achieve the global agenda goals and develop our priority areas. We will continue to explore complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as development is very much dependent on peace prevailing.

Mrs. Rodríguez Abascal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peace is not only the goal to be achieved but the ultimate objective to safeguard. Peace is achievable

only if it is a product of a set of values, approaches, traditions, behaviours and lifestyles of a culture of peace. The purpose of the United Nations — to save current and future generations from the scourge of war and to assert the respect for the dignity and value of a human being — calls for a culture of peace.

There can be no peace without the full respect for the sovereignty of States. There can be no peace without the respect for the self-determination of peoples and the territorial integrity of States. Complying with international law is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving a culture of peace.

How can we speak of a culture of peace when the very existence of nuclear weapons poses a grave threat not only to international peace and security but also to the survival of humankind on the planet? Cuba notes with concern that the deep divide that separates human society into rich and poor people and the ever-increasing disparity between the developed and developing worlds seriously threaten global prosperity, peace, security and stability. We are convinced that to safeguard and promote peace, State policies must focus on the elimination of the threat of war, particularly nuclear war; the commitment not to use or threaten to use force in international relations; and the peaceful settlement of international disputes, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report (A/71/407) and, in this regard, would note that his initiative on the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism fits within the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review. This initiative contributes to the Review process but must not replace the Strategy. It is clear that any decision on such a crucial issue can be reached only through the consensus of the States Members of the United Nations. In the creation and promotion of a culture of peace, we must denounce all terrorist actions, methods and practices, including State-sponsored terrorism, and we must take concrete steps to combat that scourge.

Despite the sustained international clamour to achieve and strengthen a culture of peace, phenomena such as intolerance and ethnic, religious or racial discrimination persist. Furthermore, unilateral coercive actions, the threat and use of force, the promotion of hidden agendas of regime change in developing countries, the development of new, more sophisticated weapons, the persistence of large nuclear arsenals,

and the violation of the principles of international law by some States, also thwart the real possibility of promoting a culture of peace.

Putting an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba would be a unified step forward towards peace and the peaceful settlement of conflicts. Manipulation and double standards in areas such as human rights, with the purpose of singling out developing countries and discrediting their legitimate Governments, does not contribute to the ideal of peace, nor does colonialism and the infringement upon people's right to self-determination and independence.

Cuba believes that education is the way to contribute to promoting a culture of peace, by integrating the study of diverse cultures and civilizations into our curricula — including languages, history and sociopolitical philosophy — and by sharing that knowledge and information. At the same time, we underscore the role of the media in disseminating human values and the need to contribute to the mutual respect of civilizations through ethical conduct.

Mr. El Haycen (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Finally, we reaffirm the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States' Declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, calling for the full application of the Declaration and the Plan of Action for a culture of peace, and we reiterate that peace is a fundamental prerequisite for the promotion and safeguarding of all rights for all people.

Ms. Taranatham (Thailand): The Kingdom of Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on this important subject (A/71/407).

Thailand is taking the floor today because we believe that sustained focus and effort are needed for a culture of peace to prevail and be manifest in everything we do and allow to happen. Peace depends on how we — the people — perceive the world and on what we want to make of the world. We therefore have the shared responsibility of promoting and sustaining peace, so that it becomes a culture and way of life without which we cannot live.

This year, Thailand has again co-sponsored all draft resolutions under agenda item 14, namely, “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace” (A/71/L.47) and “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace” (A/71/L.43) because we believe in sustained efforts aimed at effectively implementing the objectives set forth in these draft resolutions.

Let me also share Thailand’s perspective on this issue. First of all, we believe it is our shared duty to promote constructive dialogue and interactions between different cultures and religions because learning about different beliefs and values can help reduce our ignorance, build common ground and prevent mistrust and misunderstanding, which are often the cause of intolerance, conflict and violence. Dialogue may not bring instant results, but we need to constantly create opportunities for dialogue for peace to prevail.

Thailand is proud to have hosted the International Symposium on Interfaith Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence in Multicultural Societies, in collaboration with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, earlier this year, as a contribution to promoting more open dialogue among peoples of different faiths.

Secondly, we believe that education can cultivate and strengthen the culture of peace and that children and youth should be given the opportunity to develop their understanding of different cultures and religions as early as possible and to appreciate diversity in the societies where they live and beyond. In the case of Thailand, we are focusing on the immediate ASEAN region, with the aim of nurturing an ASEAN community that respects and embraces the diversity of cultures, religions and languages. Based on our belief, Thailand has supported curricula and activities in schools and universities that emphasize multicultural understanding, especially within ASEAN, and the concept of community-building.

Thirdly, we recognize the exceptionally powerful role of the media in creating and maintaining a culture of peace. Our perceptions and understanding are almost always a product of what we read, hear and see. We therefore must ensure that the media responsibly disseminates information that is conducive to peace and mutual understanding, counters hatred and prejudices and promotes mutual respect and tolerance among peoples of different backgrounds and identities.

In conclusion, Thailand would like to reiterate its commitment and continuous support for the promotion of a culture of peace. Maintaining a harmonious society and promoting the peaceful settlement of conflicts has always been part of our values and our national policy. We are proud to have played a role in building bridges among different religions, beliefs and cultures and wish to reaffirm our commitment to continuing that effort as well as our readiness to work with the international community towards this shared aspiration.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the topic (A/71/407) and also to express our appreciation for the efforts of Pakistan, the Philippines and Bangladesh as the main sponsors of draft resolutions A/71/L.47 and A/71/L.43, under the agenda item before us today.

As the quest for international peace and security forms the foundation of the United Nations, today’s agenda item, “Culture of peace”, is at the heart of the work of the Organization. At this juncture, a culture of peace is secondary to no other issue in terms of most urgency and relevance.

Just as peace is precious, it is also fragile. A broad range of threats, including occupation, aggression, terrorism, violent extremism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, intolerance, injustice, political rivalry, weapons of mass destruction — in particular nuclear weapons — poverty, inequality, underdevelopment or absence of development, water and resource crises and climate change can pose grave threats to peace — each in different ways and at different levels. What is happening today in many parts of the world, from the occupied Palestinian territory, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Libya and beyond, all reflects our failure to bring about a more peaceful world. At the same time, at the core of the culture of peace is hope for the common future of humankind and not giving up on our efforts in favour of solidarity. What the world needs at this time is a renewed commitment to peace by everyone.

The human tragedies of the past century have taught us many lessons on the importance of diversity, tolerance, human rights and fundamental freedoms, moderation, dialogue among cultures and coexistence. We need to move forward instead of backwards on these core values.

The recent setbacks imposed on us by such violent extremists as Da’esh, Jabhat Al-Nusra and

other terrorist groups in our region, clearly show that, however brutal and ruthless the forces of terrorism and violent extremism are, they have no hope of succeeding against the determination of nations. However, peace means more than the absence of war; indeed, for a culture of peace to flourish, we need to address the culture that spreads hatred and intolerance. Genuine peace can be fostered only by planting the seeds of wisdom, compassion, dialogue and respect for one another in the minds of all individuals.

Those who root their identity or power in confrontation, rejection and excommunication are inherently antagonistic to tolerance and peace. The whole world knows that an absurd mentality is nurturing the dark forces of terrorism. However, while resolute action against this cult of hatred is long overdue, what has prevented such action is the short-sighted political gains and vested interests of a few. To envision peace, it is imperative to abandon the mentality of intervention, world domination and cultural and military hegemony. If we want genuine peace once and for all, the centres of power should acknowledge that there can be no possible military solution to the world's complicated problems.

War and conflict have always imposed themselves in societies. However, the cost of war today has taken it away as an option. It is therefore imperative to make long-lasting peace a reality. To that end, the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the main proponent of a world against violence and extremism, once again invites all peace-loving nations to join forces for the cause of peace.

Ms. Al-Temimi (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to the efforts in preparing the rich and comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (A/71/407) presented under this agenda item. There is no doubt that the consecration of peace in societies and among peoples cannot be achieved without a favourable environment and the proper conditions. The role of the United Nations and its Member States in to create an environment that secures the unalienable rights of people and achieves the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

I would like to focus on the central role played by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in enhancing the culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations,

and affirm the importance of the continued support of Member States for the activities of the Alliance, which directly contribute to the promotion of a culture of peace, as indicated in the report before us. I would also like to affirm that Qatar was among the first States to support the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, and continues to provide all forms of support to the Alliance.

The adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and of the concept of promoting and enhancing a culture of peace is an important step on the way to achieving peace and justice for all nations. We in Qatar attach great importance to that objective, which we have long sought to achieve. Believing as it does in the value of promoting societies that enjoy peace and justice, Qatar has focused on the participation of all citizens, especially young people, who are responsible for securing a future of prosperity and peace. At the same time, Qatar works with a group of States within the Alliance to support Member States in their efforts to achieve Goal 16 by reporting the achievements and challenges faced by the State, with a view to encouraging them to continue their successes and in order to render counsel and guidance to them.

Like the United Nations, the State of Qatar also focuses on conflict prevention and mediation through the adoption of policies aimed at preventing armed conflict and resolving conflicts peacefully. At the request of the parties concerned and on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, Qatar has participated in mediation efforts grounded in the principle of dialogue as a key approach to resolving their conflict. That approach has yielded satisfactory results that have been welcomed by the international community in the context of international efforts to combat the terrorism and violent extremism that are threatening global peace and security. Qatar has adopted a cooperative approach to addressing the root causes of violent extremism through capacity-building that empowers communities, provides employment opportunities, enhances the economy, and encourages dialogue, tolerance and the renunciation of sectarian or racial discrimination.

In view of the grave effects of violent extremism on the minds of young people and children, Qatar, in cooperation with the President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, has initiated a substantive high-level debate on the protection of children and youth affected by violent extremism. On that occasion, the State of Qatar announced its support for a joint

project with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, with the aim of empowering young people in the Arab region and protecting them from terrorism.

Qatar attaches great importance to education as one of the most effective ways to foster peace for posterity. It has launched numerous educational initiatives nationally, regionally and internationally — especially in regions plagued by conflicts and wars, such as the most recent effort to train and educate Syrian refugees, as well as the World Innovation Summit for Education initiative. Those initiatives are all in the context of Qatar's commitment to achieving the Qatar National Vision 2030, which aspires to enhance cultural exchange among nations, support dialogue among civilizations and promote coexistence among States.

In addition to achieving international peace and security, the State has harnessed its resources to establish national institutions to propagate a culture of peace, promote acceptance of the other and combat terrorism and extremist violence, including the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue to build bridges of cooperation and understanding, and the establishment of the Islamic Hamad Bin Khalifa Civilisation Center in Copenhagen with the aim of supporting international efforts to promote peaceful coexistence among States.

Finally, I would like to affirm that Qatar is committed to efforts to promote dialogue among cultures and regions and a culture of peace in order to secure a better future for posterity, in our society and all over the world.

Ms. AlGharabally (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my thanks, on behalf of my country, to the Secretary-General and his team for today's introduction of the report under consideration (A/71/407), which provides a broad overview of the activities carried out by the main United Nations agencies working for a culture of lasting peace, dialogue and cooperation between religions and cultures.

We also welcome UNESCO's work to strengthen a culture of peace that promotes tolerance, facilitated by resolution 53/243, entitled "Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace", the condemnation of violence and the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures 2013-2022. We also note resolutions 70/19 and 70/20, which are inextricably linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Those resolutions call on all communities

to favour peace and justice, in line with Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Similarly, we express our thanks to the Member States that have submitted draft resolutions to enforce the principle of a culture of peace.

We live in a world where the culture of peace is threatened by conflicts and disputes not only among nations and communities, but also among individuals. There is increasingly appalling sectarian and religious extremism, violence and tension, and even intellectual conflicts. Indeed, we reject the opinions of others and we exclude them. We do not live in harmony with them. We must therefore try to understand the reasons behind intolerance and the rejection of others and their views, and the reasons why we resort to violence to express our opinions. We must also work together at the local, regional and international levels to turn the hatred and violence into a culture of dialogue and coexistence.

The world faces other threats: extremism and terrorism. No State or community is safe from those scourges, which pose a significant threat to the culture of peace and dialogue. That is why we must promote peace, tolerance, dialogue, understanding and collaboration among religions and cultures.

The Charter of the United Nations reads "We, the peoples", that is to say, we the different peoples who come from different environments, with cultures, civilizations and beliefs that are also unique. We all live in one world and together make up a global civilization of humankind. Thus, the State of Kuwait attaches great importance to the question of strengthening peace, especially today, as extremism and terrorism are on the rise, striking many countries and spreading chaos and fear in our societies. For example, in June 2015, we had a terrorist attack in my country that killed 27 people. The objective was to sow discord, but we worked together with all members of the community and we have stood firm in the face of criminal attacks. This despicable act does not terrorize us, but instead unites us to fight together against terrorism and extremism.

The State of Kuwait promotes tolerance and coexistence, consistent with the values and principles of its Constitution, which set forth the rights and obligations of all citizens without discrimination of any type — social, linguistic or religious. Kuwait's Constitution also establishes that justice and liberty are the pillars of the community. Thus, the Government of Kuwait decided to create a high level committee to

work on behalf of the community to combat extremism and radicalism. All of those efforts aim to promote the principle of national unity for the different factions.

Peace is a culture that we have seen in our community and society even before the existence of our modern State. We live in harmony with other cultures and religions, and our history provides many examples of rapprochement and openness. We have incorporated those values into a Constitution that guarantees the freedom of opinion, expression and religion. In terms of geography, Kuwait may be a small State, but we have citizens from different cultures and religions who live in security and stability, on the basis of mutual respect.

In conclusion, we affirm that the culture of peace depends on our efforts to strengthen and enforce principles such as respect for human rights, the freedom of opinion, equality and the fight against poverty and unemployment. The people must also work towards those objectives. For example, people who do not have the right to a decent life will never live in a culture of peace and non-violence. We therefore call for those rights to be respected so that we can work together for a world of tolerance and friendship for all.

Mr. Tuy (Cambodia): Before delivering my national statement, I wish to associate myself with the statement delivered today by the Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on a culture of peace.

I take good note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/71/407), which highlights global activities that promote a culture of peace. My delegation supports the idea that we should do more to prevent and mediate global crises rather than merely focus on conflict management.

It is important for the global community to embrace Sustainable Development Goal 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, while supporting effective Government institutions based on the rule of law. Promoting the participation of young men and women in international governance structures will help to grow more representative and inclusive societies. In the same vein, enhancing the participation of developing countries in global governance institutions will aid in the attainment of the universally accepted culture of peace.

Young people are the hope for a better world; they are the future of progress and our civilization's development. In that light, we can safeguard young people's future while promoting a global culture of peace only through adequate social, political and economic conditions worldwide. As such, it is important to note that no sustainable socioeconomic development can be successfully attained without first securing a safe and prosperous future for young people. This year, my Government has focused increasingly on young people as a driving force for maintaining our country's culture of peace. Thanks to Government policies, more and more young leaders hold high positions in both the executive and legislative branches of Cambodia.

It is unfortunate that today, armed conflicts continue to rage and claim the lives of both combatants and civilians, including children, in some parts of the world. Violent extremism, which continues to pose a threat to peace and security, has dimmed our hope. It is my view that some conflicts have resulted from people being left out, marginalized, excluded and malnourished. Hence, those people can easily fall into the trap of violent extremist groups, organized crime and terrorism. Those factors can stall development.

My delegation is deeply concerned by the intensity and spread of terrorist attacks, as well as the unabated recruitment of terrorist fighters. In promoting a culture of peace, the global community needs to work closely together to stop the spread of terrorism and counteract the violent narratives and distorted ideologies of terrorist organizations. In that context, counter-terrorism must take a comprehensive approach. In line with Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), the global community must focus on combating radicalization and terrorist recruitment by countering terrorist propaganda, and stopping terrorists' exploitation of social, Internet communication technologies used for incitement and the propagation of violent extremist messages.

It goes without saying that United Nations peacekeeping operations play an important role in ending global conflicts and establishing peacebuilding principles in many regions. However, the success of peacekeeping operations requires disciplined United Nations troops. Better coordination with the relevant agencies is necessary, as is the full cooperation of host countries. Moreover, peace is hard to achieve and even harder to maintain. Therefore, I believe that good governance and the rule of law are essential preconditions for stability. Without them, societies

cannot function, let alone flourish. All Governments need the stability and the predictability of good governance to advance. Such partnerships at all levels of Government and society will be essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In a wider context, my country believes that the culture of peace must be cherished in the hearts of all people, regardless of their religious beliefs. Confidence-building-measures and preventive diplomacy through multilateral and regional mechanisms must be enhanced. Likewise, mediating the interests of all social groups, whether they be poor or facing inequality and regardless of ethnicity, and attempting reconciliation in a step-by-step process at a variety of levels will bring about durable peace and security.

Ms. Konurbayeva (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan welcomes the report of the Secretary-General before us (A/71/407) and thanks the co-facilitators — the Permanent Representatives of Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Philippines — for their contribution in promoting two resolutions under agenda item 14, “Culture of peace”.

The Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace, in the context of sustainable development, takes on even greater meaning and significance in the light of increasingly protracted conflicts, violent extremism, gross violations of human rights, humanitarian crises and massive refugee flows. The many landmark global processes of 2015 require peaceful, inclusive societies and political, economic and social stability for their implementation in 2016 and hereafter. Hence, a synergistic plan of action, including the eight areas of the Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace, is a mandatory factor for the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 1, 4, 16, and 17. In partnership with all actors engaged, the roots of peace grow forth from the individual into an evolutionary shift for our world as basic human needs are fulfilled and poverty is eliminated as the primary Sustainable Development Goal.

We need to chart a new course for humankind, addressing these challenges by drawing on a broad range of basic social and human-centred environmental approaches drawn from education, science, culture and communications to minimize violence and extremism. Well-coordinated action is needed on the

part of the United Nations, its Member States, regional organizations and all other stakeholders to foster social cohesion and the democratic participation of all sectors, which include women, young people, ethnic and religious minorities, migrants, indigenous people, refugees and displaced persons. We must concentrate on building respect for human rights, pluralism and gender equality while stepping up our efforts to end all forms of xenophobia, racial discrimination and intolerance.

To use the wisdom and the influence of spiritual leaders to foster peace and stability, Kazakhstan triennially convenes a Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. Our cooperation with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and UNESCO strengthens implementation of the culture of peace. At the initiative of Kazakhstan, this year the General Assembly held the Religions for Peace forum, while the Religions against Terrorism conference, in which dozens of parliamentary and faith leaders from around the world came together to discuss how to fight violent extremism and the ideologies that nurture, was hosted in Astana.

Peace has become hostage to science and technology, which are misused to produce and proliferate radiological, chemical, biological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction. Kazakhstan stands for total disarmament and non-proliferation. A nuclear-free world, as envisaged in the recent *Manifesto: The World. The 21st century* of President Nazarbayev, is an ambitious but achievable goal. We call upon parliamentarians, politicians and faith leaders to endorse the concept of a global anti-nuclear movement. The trillions of dollars that are spent on lethal weaponry should be invested in sustainable development, which can help promote the culture of peace.

It is clearly time for a change in our consciousness, both individually and in governance. As Kazakhstan takes its seat on the Security Council on 1 January 2017, it will continue to pursue peace as it has done since its independence in 1991. We fully support the resolutions submitted for our consideration and action. Today, we celebrate 25 years of our sovereignty and pledge with strong resolve to join the international effort to promote a culture of peace in our country, across the regions and globally.

Mr. Scappini Ricciardi (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Paraguay thanks Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his detailed report on the

promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, contained in document A/71/407, which gives us the opportunity to hold this discussion on one of the main pillars of the Organization.

Paraguay would like a better life for all people, without distinction. The culture of peace, as defined by the United Nations, consists of

“values, attitudes and behaviours that... reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation” (*resolution 52/13, second preambular paragraph*)

among individuals, groups and States. The breadth of that definition, while showing us the correct path to peace, also points out to us that it is necessary to address the root causes of conflicts.

The promotion of development and the eradication of poverty and inequality are vital. Our efforts must therefore give priority to the pressing and long-term needs of the most vulnerable populations. We have already learned that peace is not only the absence of conflicts and that poverty and inequality undermine peace. We are going through a difficult situation in which thousands of human lives are lost daily and families are expelled from their homes, forcing entire populations to migrate. If we add to this tragedy the irreversible damage to the environment and the irreparable damage to cultural heritage — the impact of which, in many cases, will be difficult to reverse — the gravity of the situation appears insurmountable.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, States members of the United Nations have understood that their actions must be more concrete and prompt. We have been able to agree, overcoming differences and interests, on these valuable instruments that can and should contribute to overcoming some of the challenges facing humanity. We must not forget that with the 2030 Agenda we have made a commitment in favour of people, the planet and prosperity in order to strengthen universal peace and access to justice.

In this context, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals provide a pragmatic, broad and inclusive guide with clear targets which facilitate the implementation of the Goals by all countries. In the case of Paraguay,

through its national development plan, Paraguay 2030, 100 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals are being focused on and reached in accordance with our own priorities and challenges.

We must harness our creativity and renew our political will in order to provide effective and sustainable responses to the demands of a constantly changing world. The crisis of refugees and the realities faced by migrants, gender inequality, the deterioration of the environment and climate change, to name but a few challenges, require us to take further action urgently.

Paraguay believes that the multilateral system must promote and guarantee a culture of peace and trusts that it will do so by providing clear guidelines to countries that allow them to translate such guidelines into concrete actions. We should also bear in mind that education is one of the fundamental means of building a culture of peace. Since its re-election as a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO, Paraguay has been committed to the promotion of cultural diversity through the safeguarding of cultural heritage in its various forms and to the improvement of cultural expression. Understanding and accepting that diversity enriches our environment rather than divides us should contribute to the consolidation of comprehensive peace.

In order to contribute to a culture of peace, my country proposed to the General Assembly that 30 July be declared the International Day of Friendship. This proposal was adopted by consensus through resolution 65/275, in 2011. We believe that the universal value of friendship inspires peace initiatives, compels us to be tolerant and builds bridges between communities honouring cultural and religious diversity. It also contributes to the efforts made by the international community, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to promote dialogue among civilizations, solidarity, mutual understanding, reconciliation and peace.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that we have learned some lessons. We have overcome barriers and made progress on important issues, but much remains to be done. Let us learn from our mistakes, share good practices and accept diversity. Let us respect cultures, instil values and join forces, but first and foremost we should put humans and general well-being at the heart of our work in order to build a more just world for all humankind.

Mr. Islam (Bangladesh): First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report A/71/407, entitled “Promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”. The report provides an overview of the activities that have been carried out by the main United Nations entities working in the areas of culture of peace.

The world today faces too many problems of divisions and narrowness that disturb and derail our shared objective of attaining sustainable peace, stability and development. The number of displaced populations is at its highest since the Second World War. Thousands of migrants are being denied their rights and facing difficulties in their countries of origin, transit and destination. Many parts of the world are confronted with a culture of prejudice, inequality, discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia, jingoism and violence. It is therefore our abiding responsibility to consciously nurture and cultivate a culture of peace, nationally and internationally, at the United Nations and beyond.

The issue of culture of peace is very close to our heart. It must be our way of life. A culture of peace is an aspiration of all humankind, the essence of the Charter of the United Nations and an imperative in the current global context. Promoting and inculcating a mindset of a culture of peace is at the core of peaceful and mutually respectful coexistence and dialogue among different civilizations, cultures, religions, faiths and beliefs around the globe.

Since 1997, Bangladesh has been actively involved in bringing the resolution on the culture of peace to the General Assembly, and since 2001 in introducing this important resolution. Last year, resolution 70/20 received the strong support of Member States and was sponsored by around 100 countries.

The father of the nation of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, deeply ingrained a culture of peace into Bangladesh’s foreign policy fundamentals enunciated in this very Assembly 32 years ago. Friendship to all and malice towards none, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the renouncement of the use of force in international relations and a contribution to global peace and security have been his foreign policy mantras, which we are adhering to fully.

These ethos have inspired Bangladesh to be at the global forefront of promoting a culture of peace through its leadership role in United Nations peacekeeping

as one of the top troop-contributing countries. As a founding member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Bangladesh is mainstreaming a culture of peace, women’s empowerment and education for all into post-conflict peacebuilding mandates. Remaining true to its peace credentials, Bangladesh took the initiative in 2000 to inscribe Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security for the first time on the Council’s agenda. The present Government in Bangladesh, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is also committed to promoting peace not only at the national level, but also at the regional and international levels and maintaining a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization.

The high-level forum organized by the President of the General Assembly provided us with a unique opportunity to bring together Member States and stakeholders. The greater participation and increased interest, inclusive collaboration among Member States, international organizations and civil society, was evidenced this year at the forum, held on 1 September. We appreciate the sharing by the President of General Assembly of the summary of the deliberations during the day-long forum focusing on the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action with all Member States. This has been immensely useful.

We have concluded the negotiations on our flagship draft resolution A/71/L.47, entitled “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a culture of peace”. We thank Member States and their delegations for their active participation, understanding and support in the negotiation process this year. We hope that, as in past years, we will be able to adopt the draft resolution this year by consensus and with a greater number of sponsors.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the facilitators of the two draft resolutions on the culture of peace (A/71/L.43 and A/71/L.47) for their commitment and their renewed efforts year after year in the context of the facilitation process.

My delegation is pleased to co-sponsor once again draft resolution A/71/L.47, on a culture of peace, entitled “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace”. My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, and Mr. Nassir

Abdulaziz Al Nasser, High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, for their efforts to foster a culture of peace, dialogue and respect for differences.

As in previous years, my delegation is pleased to be participating in today's debate on the subject of a culture of peace. For Morocco, its importance goes without saying; our attachment to dialogue and religious tolerance is clear, for it is based not just on our ancestral secular values, which are genuine elements of our spiritual capital, but also on practices that are firmly rooted and continually renewed. Unfortunately, in the context of the world today, in recent years religious intolerance has grown and mutual incomprehension has taken hold, and we can only deplore the cessation of dialogue and the rise of extremism of every kind.

It was with a view to recalling religions' authentic values and the essence of their messages of peace, tolerance and solidarity that Morocco hosted a forum on "The rights of religious minorities in predominantly Muslim majority communities: legal framework and a call to action", held in Marrakech from 25 to 28 January. In our view, the protection of the rights of Muslims and non-Muslims, without distinction between them, is founded as much on a religious message as it is on our Constitution. In his address to the forum's participants, His Majesty King Mohammed VI recalled that we need those shared values, not only to inspire us with the ideal of tolerance that they convey, but also to supply the resources we need to rebuild humankind and our ability to mobilize so that we can enjoy a life free from war, greed and incitement to extremism and resentment, and in which humankind sees its suffering and crises melt away as a prelude to eliminating the risks of a clash of religions.

Morocco's approach to combating religious extremism is multidimensional, for one based purely on security is not enough. Religious extremism must be fought in depth by implementing concrete measures aimed as much at society's religious sectors, in the strict sense, as at its socioeconomic ones. In a firm belief in the need for a holistic approach, Morocco began reorganizing the country's religious realm in 2005 and is now involved in training imams; in the institution of the *mourchidates*, who help to transmit the message of religion to women and, if necessary, their children; in textbook reform and the launching of a television and radio channel that spreads the message of religion based on authentic and tolerant Islamic values. In addition, since March 2015, when the Mohammed VI

Institute for training imams opened in Rabat, almost 1,000 imams, national and international, have benefited from its instruction.

Thanks to its history and its civilization's heritage, Morocco is a country of tolerance, peace and openness, diversity and blending, of intercultural dialogue and harmonious coexistence between religions. King Mohammed VI, commander of the faithful, has emphasized the Kingdom's commitment to portraying a true image of Islam, one of tolerance and virtue that calls for universal peace and rejects extremism and discord.

Lastly, today cooperation among leaders of all religions is more vital than ever. It must be based on tolerance and respect but it must also strive to guarantee, through national laws, our rights and freedoms, and our right to peace above all, within our own societies and regional neighbourhoods, but also at a universal level.

Mrs. Bourhil (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to thank the President for convening today's debate on agenda item 14, on implementing the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report, entitled "Promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace" (A/71/407).

Today, we are seeing increasing fear in the face of radicalization and violent extremism in various parts of the world, fuelled by dangerous and fanatical ideologies, a lack of understanding and communication, by enormous differences in countries' levels of development and by poverty. All of this has resulted in various societies becoming cradles for the scourge of terrorism. That demands that we redouble our efforts at the international, bilateral and national levels to confront this dreadful phenomenon and to establish general stability, peace and security throughout the world.

In that context, Tunisia — which has always welcomed diverse civilizations and been a centre for intercultural and interreligious interaction, tolerance and dialogue — reaffirms its commitment to establishing peace, bringing peoples closer together, ensuring peaceful coexistence and promoting the concepts of tolerance and dialogue in the service of social stability. Tunisia has always supported the use of peaceful means for settling disputes. We instituted a national dialogue at an extremely difficult time, the

period of democratic transition that we have undergone in the past few years.

Thanks to that dialogue and to the establishment of an understanding among our various sectors, including civil society and other national forces, we have been able to tackle our national challenges and arrive at a consensus that has enabled us to transition towards democracy and a society that respects the law, human rights and the principles of justice and tolerance. For that reason, a group of Tunisians was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 in recognition of our national dialogue on peace, which sent the message that the world needs peace, tolerance and dialogue, particularly considering all the conflicts occurring around the world.

In order to emphasize the values of tolerance and acceptance of others, on 18 November, at the Bardo National Museum, Tunisia announced the Tunis Declaration against Terrorism and for Tolerance and Solidarity among Peoples, Cultures and Religions. The Declaration was drafted in collaboration with the Museum of Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean and in accordance with the principles of tolerance, coexistence between peoples of different religions and respect for others.

Today the international community, organizations, civil society, the private and public sectors and the media have an obligation to ensure the promotion of a culture of peace and understanding among peoples, religions and cultures, within the framework of the United Nations and its programmes, including those of UNESCO and the Alliance of Civilizations. Such bodies and mechanisms should be aimed at building peace and tackling violent extremism, intolerance and incitements to terrorism through wider development efforts that encompass young people and women. Those efforts should include preventive measures that help to promote counter-terrorism strategies.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my appreciation for the efforts to foster dialogue and tolerance around the world, in which Tunisia is a participant, based on the historic role it has played in the area.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

Agenda item 127 (*continued*)

Global health and foreign policy

Notes by the Secretary-General (A/71/601 and A/71/598)

Draft resolution (A/71/L.41)

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.41.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Network, which consists of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, Thailand and my own country, South Africa.

Ten years ago, our foreign ministers agreed to put health at the centre of foreign policy. United in the recognition that policy coherence is paramount in preventing and addressing health issues, they acknowledged the important role that foreign ministers have to play in global health, transcending the North-South divide. That led to the adoption of the Oslo Ministerial Declaration on “Global Health: a pressing foreign policy issue of our time”, which recognized that there are technical and political dimensions to the protection and promotion of global health and human security that belong not just to ministries of health and the World Health Organization but also require intergovernmental and inter-agency coordination, as well as collaboration with businesses and civil society.

The Network is premised on the understanding that health is one of our most important yet still widely neglected long-term foreign-policy issues. As such, investing in health is fundamental to economic growth and development. That understanding has guided our work in the General Assembly and our approach to global health challenges. With the support of our like-minded partners, we have witnessed the Assembly’s successful adoption of eight authoritative annual resolutions on health.

Today we have the honour to present our ninth draft resolution (A/71/L.41) on the theme of health employment and global health. The theme was inspired by the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, co-chaired by President Jacob Zuma of South Africa and President François Hollande of France. It follows up on resolution 70/183, on global

health and foreign policy, which in its nineteenth preambular paragraph recognized, among other things,

“that investing in new health workforce employment opportunities may also add broader socioeconomic value to the global economy and national economies and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda”.

In its operative paragraph 22, it further requested the Secretary-General to

“explore steps to meet the global shortfall of trained health workers, including the possibility of establishing a high-level commission on future health employment and economic growth”.

The Commission issued its report on 20 September, and it is our hope that its recommendations, which would require stronger action and cooperation with non-health sectors such as finance, education, labour, social welfare and research and development, will be taken on board by all Governments, civil society and business. The success of the Commission will not be measured by its report alone but by the extent to which cross-sectoral coordination takes place at the regional and global levels towards a substantially increased global health workforce. The report’s recommendations will remain mere proposals unless we actively advance them and help to bring them to the attention of all Member States.

My delegation had the privilege of presiding over the negotiation process for this year’s draft resolution, which was once again marked by vibrant yet constructive engagements. The flexibility shown by delegations again reaffirmed the commitment and dedication embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 3, regarding the health of our populations. Notwithstanding some divergent views, there was a shared understanding among Member States that twenty-first-century health challenges related to demographic, epidemiological and technological changes will require a health workforce geared towards health promotion, disease prevention, people-centred community-based health services and personalized long-term care.

We welcome the critical role played in this area by women and girls, who are a majority in the health and social sector workforce, and recognize that too much of their work is in the form of unpaid and informal care. We are also aware that such unpaid, informal care is

likely to continue to be performed in homes and within families in the future. In that context, we would like to recall the commitment we made in the 2030 Agenda to recognize and value unpaid care work and to promote shared responsibility for it within the household and the family.

We are pleased that Member States concur with the recommendations of the report, in particular that investments in the health sector should enhance women’s economic empowerment and participation in the health sector. Such investments could transform unpaid and informal care roles into decent work and promote opportunities for skills enhancement and measures to retain and promote women into leadership positions through policies and strategies that eliminate gender biases and inequality.

Several initiatives have flowed from past General Assembly resolutions on global health and foreign policy. Recent examples are the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises and the High-level Panel on Access to Medicines, as well as the United Nations high-level meetings on HIV and AIDS and on antimicrobial resistance. We look forward to the serious consideration by Member States of the recommendations of the reports, as well as the Political Declaration, in furtherance of achieving universal health coverage with emphasis on resilient health systems and access to medicine.

We are convinced that universal health coverage will not be achieved without access to innovative treatments for all. In this regard, we are of the view that the international community must continue to build on creative solutions to make this goal effective, such as the International Drug Purchase Facility, and we take note of the initiatives and discussions on this issue.

We welcome the decision of the General Assembly to hold a high-level meeting in 2018 on the fight against tuberculosis. South Africa is amongst those countries with a particularly strong interest in this issue, as we face a triple burden of antimicrobial resistance, namely: drug-resistant tuberculosis, drug-resistant HIV and antibiotic resistance. Tuberculosis remains the leading cause of death among patients living with HIV/AIDS. We are therefore confident that the outcome of the high-level meeting in 2018 will have a lasting impact in the fight against tuberculosis.

In conclusion, as our network approaches the next decade of its existence, we wish to reiterate our

unwavering commitment to continuing to advance global health issues in the broader United Nations framework and beyond, in particular by maintaining and utilizing the item “Global health and foreign policy” on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Mrs. Jariyadham (Thailand): I would like to first thank the representative of South Africa for introducing and presiding over the negotiations on draft resolution A/71/L.41.

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and my own country, Thailand.

ASEAN has worked closely with the international community on health issues, particularly since the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative was launched by the Oslo Ministerial Declaration in 2007. Indeed, ASEAN’s cooperation on health issues has been a crucial component of the group’s community-building efforts. The regular meetings of ASEAN health ministers, the ASEAN Strategic Framework on Health and Development and the Healthy ASEAN 2020 Vision are among examples of how ASEAN countries cooperate on health-related areas and put health at the centre of development.

This has been another year with remarkable progress towards closer international cooperation on global health. Although many challenges remain and more collaboration is needed, ASEAN welcomes the outcomes and recommendations at the various high-level and regional discussions. These platforms allow us to tackle common problems, such as HIV/AIDS, communicable diseases and antimicrobial resistance and to develop shared solutions, which requires both national commitment and international support.

ASEAN appreciates the reports of the High-Level Panel on Access to Medicines, the High-Level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises and the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, in which the importance of policy coherence and coordination between health and foreign policies are highlighted, along with the need to design an institutional environment and policy instruments that address health issues in a holistic manner.

As ASEAN strives for community-building, the well-being and standard of living of our peoples are the priority area for development. ASEAN’s evolving demographics and lifestyles are also affecting the development of the health-care sector. Economic growth and enhanced connectivity within ASEAN have also led to greater demand for quality and innovative health services. Therefore, a strong and dynamic health workforce is needed to ensure adequate and effective health systems for our populations. Let me share with the Assembly some of the ASEAN perspectives on global health and foreign policy.

First, dynamic health workforces are needed in the strengthening of local and regional health systems across our region. ASEAN recently endorsed the post-2015 health development agenda, which identifies clusters, goals and health priority issues, such as the promotion of healthy lifestyles, response to hazards and emerging threats, the strengthening of health systems and access to health care and food safety.

Secondly, ASEAN is aware that investment in the health-care sector workforce and institutions is crucial to regional preparedness and resilience in the face of public-health emergencies. During the ASEAN Health Ministers’ special video conference on the threat of Zika, held in September, ASEAN reaffirmed the primary importance of enhancing our preparedness and response to future outbreaks through active surveillance and experience-sharing. To fulfil this, we require an adequate number of trained health personnel.

Thirdly, we see the positive impacts that investing in a health workforce could have on economic growth and on the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. As health care is a universal need that is in constant demand, investing in the health economy can generate decent jobs in the health sector, which can benefit the entire economy. Investing in health employment therefore contributes not only to Sustainable Development Goal 3, on healthy lives and well-being for all, but also the achievement of other Goals, including Goal 8, on inclusive growth and decent work.

It is our belief that good health and the well-being of people are essential to all other forms of development. We call for more sharing of information with foreign and health policymakers and more capacity-building for health officials to understand the nexus and synergy between these two areas.

Lastly, ASEAN would like to reiterate its commitment to further collaborate and coordinate with the international community and all relevant United Nations agencies to ensure the highest attainable health standard for everyone.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Loeber (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

We welcome this year's draft resolution A/71/L.41 on health employment and economic growth. We would like to thank South Africa for its excellent facilitation and the Oslo Group in Geneva for providing a well-balanced draft for our negotiations.

Strong health systems are a precondition for sustainable development. Investment in health improves growth sustainability. Most returns on health interventions have the same characteristics as long-term investments. It is high time that we took this into account when we calculate gross domestic product and undertake macroeconomic analysis. Investing in health for growth is a priority for the EU and its member States, with the aim of securing healthy lives for all. It should not be viewed as a cost but rather as an investment in a critical area to promote poverty reduction and economic growth.

In the EU, we strive to guarantee equitable access to good-quality health care provided by well-trained health workers, wherever they live and whatever their status, to increase significantly the number of health workers trained by 2030, and to ensure their equitable distribution. The rising global demand and need for health workers over the next 15 years present a significant challenge. However, they also offer the opportunity to generate employment in areas where decent jobs are most needed.

We fully support the report of the Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, its 10 recommendations and the call for urgent action to invest in the health workforce, both now and in the future. These recommendations will serve to reinforce European and global actions to transform and scale up the education and training of our health workforce and ensure they are working in safe, appropriate working conditions. We also welcome the strong political message that there are many job opportunities in

the health sector at a time when unemployment is so high. Likewise, the report acknowledges the vital role of women in the health sector, particularly in unpaid care roles.

Through our global development programmes, and in cooperation with our international partners, we will continue to work towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and promoting education and training. We will invest in improving health security and in strengthening international health regulation cooperation, and we will put efforts towards achieving universal health coverage in countries worldwide.

With regard to the High-level Panel on Access to Medicines, the EU and its member States take note of the contribution provided by the final report of the Panel and of the subsequent message by the Secretary-General, which encourages all stakeholders to chart a way forward in appropriate forums to ensure access to medicines and health technologies for all who need them, wherever they are. We deeply regret the lack of nuance around the assumption for setting up the Panel, according to which there is policy incoherence between the justifiable rights of investors, international human rights law, trade rules and public health. We would have been in favour of a more comprehensive approach to this crucial issue, and we think that the Panel could have advanced more balanced, comprehensive and workable solutions to the problem of access to health. The challenge is to strike the right balance between the need to promote and finance the research of new and better medicines for all, ensuring that medicines are accessible and affordable to those in need, while guaranteeing the sustainability of health systems.

We believe that these goals are not contradictory and must be pursued jointly. Regarding possible next steps, it is important to recall that this report is merely a contribution to the global discussion of a complex issue, which is addressed in several multilateral bodies. In this regard, we are waiting for the forthcoming report of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on access to innovative medicines and sustainability of pharmaceutical spending. Given our concerns, shared by many other members, we consider that any future activities at the United Nations level in this area should be conducted on the basis of a much broader understanding of the complex issues involved. This report would not constitute a basis for future work of a consensual nature in this area.

Mr. Kononuchenko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank the Director-General of the World Health Organization for the comprehensive analysis of the response to health crises (A/71/598). In recent years we have witnessed serious challenges in that area. There have been outbreaks of infectious diseases, including the spread of yellow fever and the Ebola and Zika viruses. There is therefore an ever-increasing role to be played by medical personnel, on whose skills and operational capacities depend the timely and effective response to emerging threats.

Implementing a comprehensive strategy to train and enhance the professionalism of medical staff is particularly important in the light of the ambitious targets for the global health system set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The ambitious nature of the Sustainable Development Goals obliges the international community to take pre-emptive steps to prevent the emergence of any shortage of medical personnel and of any gap in their geographical distribution within and among countries, and to prevent any drop in the quality of their professional training.

We agree with the conclusions of the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth. We believe that the recommendations to enhance the qualifications of medical workers throughout their professional life and to adapt medical training programmes to national particularities and the requirements of individual sectors of the population are justified. We call for greater use of the potential offered by information and communications technology.

We are particularly concerned by the continued scarcity of medical personnel in rural areas, and we believe that establishing various material or other forms of stimulus would allow us to leave no one behind. In particular, since 2012 my Government has successfully implemented the Village Doctor Programme, aimed at attracting doctors under the age of 45 to rural areas by giving them a one-time bonus of more than \$16,000 in national currency for the purpose of acquiring housing. Problems can also be addressed by ensuring the free movement of medical staff between countries. To that end, we should continue to work to harmonize legislation regarding the mutual recognition of medical diplomas. We agree with the working group that the service provision model for high-quality medical assistance and disease prevention is important for all sectors of the population.

Ms. Etuk (Bahamas), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In conclusion, we note that the year now ending has been marked by health issues. At the high-level meetings of the General Assembly, the United Nations set a new path forward to counteract HIV / AIDS and resistance to antimicrobial medicines. We now have new challenges and new goals. The adoption today of draft resolution A/71/L.41, entitled “Global health and foreign policy: health employment and economic growth”, refers to the holding in Moscow in November 2017 of a global ministerial conference to combat tuberculosis in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also contains a decision to organize in 2018 a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on tuberculosis. These events should provide a comprehensive analysis of the situation regarding tuberculosis infections around the world and mobilize broad medical expertise and the political will of States in dealing with these dangerous infectious diseases on the basis of an intersectoral approach. In Moscow, we intend to discuss not only the medical aspects of the problem but also the issue of social support to the most vulnerable categories of the population, including refugees and migrants. I take this opportunity to invite all interested States to take part in this upcoming event in the Russian capital.

Ms. Ryan (United States of America): The United States appreciates the opportunity to address today the importance of health employment in meeting the global health challenges facing populations throughout the world, and the impact of health employment on economic growth. The United States plays a role, not only by employing millions of health workers, but also in providing some of the most up-to-date and cutting edge training. We are proud to be able to help in educating and training health professionals in our own universities and through educators deployed abroad. Trained health workers are needed not only to fight infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases but to promote sexual and reproductive health as well.

I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of South Africa for introducing this year’s draft resolution, entitled “Global health and foreign policy: health employment and economic growth” (A/71/L.41), on behalf of the cross-regional group of main sponsors on this important topic. I also thank the South Africa expert, Ms. Bengu, for her exemplary chairing of the intensive negotiation process. As we adopt this draft resolution today, the United States supports its focus on

the important topics of health systems and the challenges for countries, both developed and developing, related to a sufficient and well-trained health workforce. A number of paragraphs reinforce that objective, including in the larger context of the impact of an enhanced health workforce on the Sustainable Development Goals. A high-functioning health workforce is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals across the board.

We appreciate the work done by the Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth and thank the Chairs, President Hollande of France and President Zuma of South Africa, for the thought-provoking and concrete recommendations the Commission provided. Moreover, we support the work of the Secretary-General on the establishment of the Global Health Crises Task Force and the work to standardize procedures for humanitarian actors for large-scale response efforts. We must make concerted progress towards getting the health workforce needed in times of outbreaks and humanitarian health crises. Health professionals can face many dangers in the field when responding to emergencies, and we owe it to them to have effective shared procedures for human resource preparedness.

The United States welcomes the call in the draft resolution to hold a high-level meeting in 2018 on the fight against tuberculosis, and we look forward to working with stakeholders and engaging on that process going forward for a successful meeting. We see this as an important step in tackling one of the world's most lethal diseases. This high-level meeting on tuberculosis will also build on this September's high-level meeting on antimicrobial resistance, as tuberculosis has developed many multi-drug-resistant strains.

Turning to a less welcome aspect of the text of this draft resolution, I wish to reiterate the deep disappointment of the United States with regard to the report of the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth. The United States is committed to working with international partners and identifying practical ways both to increase access to safe, effective, affordable and life-saving medicines around the world and to support policies that drive the development of new medicines. While there are real problems pertaining to access, these barriers are due to many reasons, but the report does not help us attain these critical objectives; rather, it detracts from them. We also note the Panel's inability to find consensus on its key recommendations, and we take strong objection to the Panel's narrow focus and presumption of policy

incoherence. We share the concern expressed by several Panel members that the report's recommendations, if taken forward, could have significant unintended negative consequences for the innovation of new medicines. This carries a significant public health risk in relation to new treatments that save and improve lives around the world.

For these reasons, the United States wishes to register our strong disagreement with the references made to the High-level Commission in preambular paragraph 26 and operational paragraph 18. The United States emphasizes that the reference in operational paragraph 12 of the draft resolution to technology transfer is premised on the transfer being on mutually agreed terms by the parties. The United States Government supports voluntary technology transfer between private parties. We do not support the reference to "advantageous". The use of the word advantageous is unclear and inappropriate, and the United States disagrees with its use.

In conclusion, we reiterate our firm commitment to working with multilateral and international partners to promote stronger health systems and better health outcomes throughout the world. We thank the Oslo Group for continuing to bring attention to the issue of global health and foreign policy, both in New York and Geneva. We ask that this statement be made part of the official records of the meeting.

Ms. Mouflih (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes to thank the Director-General of the World Health Organization for her report on lessons learned from actions undertaken to tackle public-health emergencies and on the management of previous international crises that have had health consequences.

Ensuring that health systems are able to face up to health emergencies as well as daily health-care needs is a matter of pivotal importance. My delegation also wishes to commend the efforts undertaken by the delegation of South Africa in order to facilitate negotiations under the Global Health and Foreign Policy Initiative. We also wish to thank the team responsible for drawing up draft resolution A/71/L.41, which we will adopt today. The draft resolution is both timely and appropriate, following the publication of the report of the Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth.

The number of health crises has been rising steadily in relation to unusual or unexpected events of

a biological, chemical or radiological nature. The acute severe respiratory syndrome epidemic, the H1N1 flu pandemic or, recently, the Ebola epidemic, have clearly demonstrated that emerging risks of infectious diseases constitute a global threat. That requires effective and proactive national monitoring and health security systems acting together with the global health safety system, in accordance with new international health regulations. In future we must ensure that international action to tackle humanitarian and health crises is undertaken in a timely and coordinated fashion.

The Kingdom of Morocco reaffirms its desire to strengthen cooperation to prevent, tackle and combat the emergence of new contagious diseases by improving civilian health capacities and conducting research on epidemics. I recall that my country was one of the first to answer the appeals for aid from countries affected by Ebola. At the national level, the 2011 Constitution acknowledges that health is a fundamental human right. The Constitution afforded a unique opportunity to give rise to a number of reforms, ensuring progress towards universal health-care coverage and making progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In that connection, in 2016 we have witnessed the implementation of the national plan for medical emergencies. The plan consists of five pillars: the improvement of pre-hospital and hospital care, strengthened training and management of medical and paramedical personnel, the development of public-public partnerships and the promotion of regulatory frameworks in this field. This year, we also adopted Law No. 43-13, related to the practice of nursing, and Law No. 44-13, related to the practice of midwifery. These two laws complete our legal framework in the health-care field, which is enshrined in the legislative programme of the Ministry of Health for the period 2012-2016. These efforts have enabled the publication of 93 pieces of legislation, decrees and bylaws, which together underpin the health-care system in Morocco.

For over a decade, the Kingdom of Morocco has committed to improving and broadening health-care coverage in order to achieve universal health-care coverage at the national level by 2020. Moreover, in Rabat from 26 to 30 September, Morocco hosted the fourth international health conference on economics and health-care policies. This initiative, which was co-organized by the African Health Economics and Policy Association, the Maghreb Network on Health

Economics and Health Systems and the World Health Organization, allowed participants to discuss the challenges that health-care systems must tackle if we are to move towards universal health-care coverage. Moreover, the Kingdom of Morocco has implemented basic health-care coverage, which benefits around 20,000 sub-Saharan migrants.

My delegation commends the initiative of holding a ministerial conference at the global level on the fight against tuberculosis in November 2017 in Moscow. Morocco also welcomes the convening of a high-level meeting in 2018 on the same issue, as stipulated in paragraph 17 of the draft resolution. The fight against tuberculosis has always been and continues to be a crucial priority in the sectoral strategy for the health care system in Morocco. In order to curb the spread of this disease, significant resources have been deployed at the national level. More than \$3 million were allocated in 2012, and 65 million dirham, or \$6.5 million, were allocated in 2015.

Allow me to conclude by recalling the inextricable link between foreign policy and global health. The promotion and improvement of health are crucial to sustainable development as well as to the response to climate change. What we need, therefore, is a more comprehensive inter-sectoral approach to improving health, reducing inequalities, promoting sustainable food production and consumption and protecting the environment. That will enable us to lay the groundwork for a high-performing template for implementing a global health system while protecting the health of both individuals and the community as a whole, providing them with a secure environment and with prevention and vigilance when any urgent threats to individual or collective health are at issue.

Mr. Roet (Israel): Israel welcomes draft resolution A/71/L.41 and the report of the World Health Organization (A/71/601).

Over the past two years, we have witnessed one of the greatest health crises in recent history. The Ebola outbreak and the global response to it served as a sobering reminder that despite technological advances, groundbreaking research and new treatment methods, as a global community we still have a lot of work to do to prevent and combat future health emergencies. The aftermath of the Ebola outbreak left us with shattered communities and dysfunctional health-care systems and ruined economies, and reinforced our

understanding of the clear links between health and sustainable development and the fact that one cannot exist without the other.

Ahad Ha'am, one of our most prominent Zionist thinkers, wrote that a healthy man instinctively loves life, and that saying is as true today as it was in the nineteenth century. Healthier societies are happy societies. Strong public-health systems are crucial to economic growth, peace and prosperity. Healthy people can break out of the cycle of poverty and reduce inequalities within countries. When communities are healthy, Governments can invest in their peoples' future by building sustainable infrastructure, providing quality education and promoting technology and innovation.

Israel believes firmly that health is the greatest wealth. For decades, we have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to strengthening public health at home and around the world. Earlier this year, the African Union Commission recognized Israel as the largest per-capita donor in fighting and preventing the spread of Ebola in Africa. When the Ebola virus spread, Israel immediately responded by donating \$8.75 million to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund. We also established fully equipped emergency medical field clinics in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, and sent protective gear and medical supplies. In addition, we deployed public-health and infectious-diseases experts to Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire to train local health professionals. When he spoke at the United Nations in September, Prime Minister Netanyahu declared that Israel has Africa's back and Africa has Israel's. Israel is committed to continuing to strengthen its cooperation with African nations, including in confronting health hazards and disease.

In addition to responding to global health emergencies, Israel has focused on prevention and mitigation by building resilient health-care systems and training health professionals around the world. Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, MASHAV, serves as a bridge between our medical community and the developing world. Its programmes in emergency medicine, public health and infant and maternal health care are focused on a long-term approach to training the trainers. Such programmes include assisting with organizational reforms, building human and institutional capacity and delivering medical services and health education to rural areas.

One of the biggest health challenges still facing the developing world is the high rates of maternal and neonatal mortality. Last year, about 2.7 million newborns died during the first month of their lives and more than 300,000 women died from complications related to pregnancy or childbirth in 2015. The great majority of those deaths occurred in developing countries and could have been prevented with proper treatment and care. Israel has been working with health professionals around the world to improve maternal and neonatal care and to provide support and training. This summer, MASHAV deployed two Israeli neonatal experts to Ashgabat in Turkmenistan to share know-how and skills on essential newborn care. It also sent a team of leading experts to Kumasi, Ghana, to evaluate the performance of a mother-and-baby intensive care unit that it established in 2015 with the goal of reducing maternal mortality.

Another major global health challenge is antimicrobial resistance, which is rising owing to the overuse and misuse of antibiotics. It is predicted that by 2050, 10 million people will die annually as a result of drug-resistant infections. In September, the United Nations convened a high-level event on the problem that highlighted the importance of reducing the prevalence and transmission of bacterial infectious diseases and scaling up collaborative cross-sectoral efforts in order to combat this significant public-health challenge. Israel is a member of the Joint Programming Initiative on Antimicrobial Resistance, a platform set up to pool national research efforts in order to develop a common strategic research agenda and improve national and international antimicrobial-resistance surveillance systems.

Investing in science, technology and innovation will continue to be crucial to unlocking the solutions to many of today's global health challenges. Israel has been at the global forefront of medical innovation for decades. Israeli scientists and doctors have invented new devices and treatments for both communicable and non-communicable diseases. One such invention has had an impact on the global battle against HIV. PrePex, a non-surgical circumcision device that requires no anesthesia, has made HIV prevention affordable and scalable. Last year, Rwanda became the first country to launch a nationwide scale-up of non-surgical adult male circumcision aimed at reducing HIV infection using the Israeli device, and this year the World Health Organization announced that PrePex will be made

available as part of its AIDS-prevention programme for all teenage males in 14 countries in southern and eastern Africa.

Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 3, will require an integrated approach, enhanced international cooperation and better coordination among all stakeholders. Together, let us pledge to improve the health of every family, community and country, laying the foundation for a more secure, prosperous and peaceful planet.

Mr. Minami (Japan): At the outset, Japan would like to commend the General Assembly for its forthcoming adoption of draft resolution A/71/L.41, on global health and foreign policy, following intensive and constructive negotiations by Member States. Japan was very pleased to be one of its sponsors, and we would like to thank South Africa warmly for facilitating it.

I would like to take this opportunity to make a short statement about the draft resolution. It focuses on the importance of the health workforce, which will be critical for us if we are to achieve the health-related Goals and targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including universal health coverage and an enhanced response to future health crises. Japan believes that today's draft resolution will contribute to securing an appropriate and qualified health workforce and to building that workforce's capacity in every country, which is what is needed if we are to achieve our goals.

I would also like to take a moment to congratulate the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on its completion this month of the standard operating procedure established for the Level 3 activation procedures for infectious-disease events. Japan welcomes the inclusion of that important element in today's draft resolution. We will continue to make every effort to ensure appropriate preparedness for and responses to future health crises around the world.

Today's draft resolution also touches on the issue of access to medicine, which is critical to achieving universal health coverage and should be discussed further from several perspectives, including research and development and strengthening health systems. Japan is ready to be constructively involved in that important discussion.

For all those reasons and more, Japan decided to become a sponsor of today's draft resolution. But I

would like to make a final comment on paragraph 15, on technology transfer. The adoption of the draft resolution today will not change Japan's position on that issue from what was agreed on in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Mr. Velázquez Castillo (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the report of the Director-General of the World Health Organization on the lessons learned in the public-health emergency response to and management of previous international crises with health consequences (A/71/601).

Mexico decided to become a sponsor of today's draft resolution A/71/L.41, entitled "Global health and foreign policy: health employment and economic growth", because it is a priority issue of vital importance to my country. It affects people's well-being and national economic development and has an increasingly global impact that goes beyond the work being done in Geneva within the framework of the World Health Organization. We therefore welcome the draft resolution's contribution to coherence between the United Nations here at Headquarters and the World Health Organization in their global health efforts on issues such as antimicrobial resistance, non-communicable diseases, universal access to health and combating other pandemics and health risks. In that regard, we reiterate our commitment to supporting health-sector employment in order to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. We commend the constructive work done during the informal consultations in order to ensure a fair balance between the various positions under the leadership of the South African facilitator, representing the Foreign Policy and Global Health Network.

Mr. El Haycen (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We would also like to express our special appreciation to the representatives of the World Health Organization here in New York, who once again provided invaluable support in order to ensure that the political and technical efforts of both bodies are aligned and mutually reinforcing.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): With respect to draft resolution A/71/L.41, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Mahmassani (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This statement is made

in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraph 22 of draft resolution A/71/L.41, the General Assembly would decide to hold a high-level meeting in 2018 on the fight against tuberculosis, and would call on the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with the Director-General of the World Health Organization, and in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to propose options and modalities for the conduct of such a meeting, including potential deliverables, and building on existing efforts in that regard.

With regard to the request in operative paragraph 22, it is understood that all issues related to the high-level meeting, including dates, venue, format, organization and scope, are yet to be determined. Accordingly, in the absence of modalities for the meeting, it is not possible at the present time to estimate the potential cost implications of the requirements for meetings and documentation. Following a decision on the modalities, format and organization of the meeting, the Secretary-General will submit the relevant costs of such requirements, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Furthermore, the dates of the meeting will have to be determined in consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management.

Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/71/L.41 would not give rise to any financial implications under the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. Copies of the statement that I have just read out have been distributed desk-to-desk in the Hall and will also be made available on the PaperSmart portal.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): We will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.41, entitled “Global health and foreign policy: health employment and economic growth”.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Mahmassani (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/71/L.41, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors: Algeria, Andorra, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Denmark,

Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, the Netherlands, Palau, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovenia, Sweden and Viet Nam.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.41?

Draft resolution A/71/L.41 was adopted (resolution 71/159).

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before giving the floor to those wishing to speak in explanation of position, I would like to remind speakers that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Kiener (Switzerland): Switzerland would like to thank the core group and the facilitator from South Africa for their efforts to bring the negotiations on resolution 71/159, “Global health and foreign policy: health employment and economic growth”, to completion.

While the Swiss delegation did not want to block the consensus, we would like to take this opportunity to dissociate ourselves from certain aspects of this particular resolution. The global health and foreign policy resolution is historically rooted in the Oslo Ministerial Declaration and focuses each year on one of its specific topics. This year’s resolution bears the title “Health employment and economic growth”, based on point 3 of the Oslo Declaration, entitled “Human resources for health and foreign policy”. Yet we see a lack of focus on health employment.

While the needs in this particular area of the Oslo Declaration have certainly evolved since it was formulated in 2007, and while new commissions, such as the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, have enhanced discussions of the subject, it is essential to acknowledge that the extent of a resolution’s scope contributes to the effectiveness of its message. Switzerland particularly regrets two structural issues in that regard.

First, the text includes a variety of subjects not directly related to the topic of this year’s resolution. Switzerland recognizes the importance of all of them. However, we believe that they should be discussed in appropriate forums. Indeed, the resolution’s resulting

loss of focus has the consequence of weakening the important message we could have otherwise delivered. Some examples of such unrelated subjects are antimicrobial resistance, tuberculosis, access to medicines, sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS, just to name a few.

Secondly, and most importantly, we regret the definition of follow-up actions that by their nature should rather be discussed in specialized forums dedicated to their respective topics, which again are not directly related to the topic of today's resolution.

To sum up, Switzerland hopes that the resolution we have just adopted will not create an undesirable precedent that jeopardizes the roles and functions of the existing specialized forums and hampers efficient global coordination.

Ms. Bouillon Dégin (Canada): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

At the outset, we would like to thank the co-facilitators and our colleagues for their hard work in achieving consensus on resolution 71/159. While we joined the consensus on the resolution, we believe that stronger language around sexual and reproductive health and rights would have contributed to a more comprehensive document grounded in human rights. We strongly support the inclusion of wording on universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and women's and girls' full enjoyment of all human rights, as initially proposed in the zero draft, and we are concerned about its deliberate exclusion.

Member Governments, in their role as bearers of primary responsibility, and in accordance with the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action, must, at the very least, promote sexual and reproductive health and rights aimed at protecting women and girls. Ensuring that women, girls and adolescents particularly are aware of and understand their right to realize their sexual and reproductive health and rights is consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and specifically Sustainable Development Goal 5 and its target 5.6. Those rights are inextricably linked to other human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights instruments and

United Nations consensus documents. In that regard, we strongly support the ICPD Programme of Action, which states in section 7.3 that

“the promotion of the responsible exercise of these rights for all people should be the fundamental basis for Government- and community-supported policies and programmes in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning” [and reproductive health services].

Regarding operative paragraph 15, on technology transfer, we read this paragraph as in compliance with other international agreements, such as the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. The language in today's resolution does not create a precedent on technology transfer, with language contained in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda remaining the most recent intergovernmental agreement on the issue.

Mr. Joshi (India): Global health is one of the most pressing concerns on the international agenda. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has given a significant impetus to this urgent necessity by encouraging broad-based and inclusive health goals and targets. But despite earnest efforts to promote and protect the right of every person to enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, substantial gaps persist in the area of health care. Essential medicines and health technologies for preventing and treating diseases continue to remain out of reach for millions worldwide, particularly in developing countries. It is in that context that we welcome today's important resolution 71/159, which has been brought forward by the delegations of South Africa and the members of the core Oslo group. We worked closely and constructively during the finalization of the draft and have joined the consensus.

The resolution we have just adopted calls attention to the importance of addressing the rising global demand and need for health workers over the next 15 years, an issue that presents significant challenges. We have noted that the recommendations in the report of the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth aim to stimulate the creation of health and social-sector jobs as a means to advance inclusive economic growth, paying specific attention to the needs of low-income and lower-middle-income countries.

Besides the chronic issues involved in the global health challenges that Sustainable Development Goal

3 seeks to address, the international community has also learned important lessons from the disastrous pandemics that have affected various parts of the world, including the recent Ebola and Zika health crises. Earlier this year, the international community deliberated on the HIV/AIDS issue, and in September, at the start of the Assembly's seventy-first session, global attention was focused on the fast-spreading and imminent challenge posed by antimicrobial resistance.

We also note that today's resolution recognizes that there is a close and interdependent relationship between foreign policy and global health, and therefore that global challenges require concerted and sustained effort on the part of the international community and must be addressed in their entirety. In that context, while resolution 71/159 seeks to address several important objectives, we were somewhat disappointed to note attempts that were made during the discussion to dilute the importance accorded the far-reaching and very significant recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth in the resolution's twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 18.

The report is the outcome of a specific mandate providing options and recommendations to discuss and address the policy incoherence and glaring imbalance between human rights, intellectual property rights and public health objectives in the context of health technologies. It also addresses issues such as new incentives for research and development, including the de-linking of its costs from prices and the full utilization of flexibilities based on the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (WTO TRIPS), as well as governance, accountability and transparency. We therefore do not subscribe to some delegations' view that the resolution has included subjects that are unrelated to its topic. We look forward to continued engagement and dialogue in all the relevant United Nations agencies, including the General Assembly and the World Health Organization, on the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Access to Medicines. In that regard, we welcome the ongoing discussions of the report at the WTO TRIPS Council.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate India's long-standing commitment and record in promoting the cause of global health, including through South-South cooperation. The Indian pharmaceutical

industry continues to be acknowledged globally as a source of affordable, safe, effective and high-quality generic medicines for vulnerable people, especially in developing countries. We have always remained open to sharing our technical expertise and experience with our fellow developing country partners. Through its national rural health mission, India has also continued to strive to strengthen its public-health infrastructure, including through the appointment of hundreds of thousands of health-care providers and community workers.

At this juncture, making a reality of our global political commitment to realize the vision of healthy lives for all people, at every age, is an international imperative, and India is committed to working with the international community to achieve it.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 127.

Programme of work

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to draw the attention of members to the date of recess of the current session. Members will recall that at its 51st plenary meeting, on 5 December 2016, the General Assembly agreed to postpone the date of recess of the seventy-first session to Monday, 19 December 2016.

In the light of the work still to be completed in the Fifth Committee, I would like to propose to the Assembly that the date of recess of the current session now be further postponed to Friday, 23 December. If there is no objection, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to further postpone the date of recess of the seventy-first session to Friday, 23 December 2016?

It was so decided.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should also like to consult members regarding an extension of the work of the Fifth Committee. Members will recall that at its 51st plenary meeting, on 5 December 2016, the General Assembly agreed to extend the work of the Fifth Committee to Friday, 16 December. However, I have been informed by the Chair of the Fifth Committee that the Committee requests an additional extension of its work to Friday, 23 December, in view of the fact that such an extension would facilitate reaching consensus on the resolutions pending before it.

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Fifth Committee until Friday, 23 December 2016?

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.