



# General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

**64<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting  
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New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Muhammad-Bande ..... (Nigeria)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

## Agenda item 13 (continued)

### 2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

#### Draft resolution (A/74/L.91)

**The President:** The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/74/L.91, entitled “Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2030”.

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

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/74/L.91, the following countries have also become sponsors: Azerbaijan, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Suriname, Turkey and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/74/L.91?

*Draft resolution A/74/L.91 was adopted (resolution 74/305).*

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Mack** (United States of America): The United States would like to deliver an explanation of position with regard to resolution 74/305. The United States wishes to note that it does not concur with the references to the World Health Organization in the twelfth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth preambular paragraphs and paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 23, 24, 27, 28, 34, 40, 41, 44, 47 and 50.

**The President:** We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position after adoption. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 13?

*It was so decided.*

## Agenda items 7 14 and 120 (continued)

### Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

**The President:** Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of agenda item 120 at its 63rd plenary meeting, on 4 September 2020. In order for the Assembly to take action on the draft resolution and the draft amendment, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 120.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of agenda item 120?

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*It is so decided.*

#### **Agenda items 14 and 120 (continued)**

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

#### **Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations**

##### **Draft resolution (A/74/L.92)**

##### **Draft amendment (A/74/L.93)**

**The President:** I would like to inform Members of the following correction to paragraph 47 of the draft resolution. The first sentence of paragraph 47 should read as follows:

“Urges Member States to adopt a climate- and environment-responsive approach to COVID-19 recovery efforts”.

Therefore, the words “climate- and environment-sensitive approach” are replaced with the words “climate- and environment-responsive approach”. That small correction will ensure that the text of document A/74/L.92 accurately reflects the text from the co-facilitators that was received yesterday.

I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/74/L.93.

**Ms. Rodríguez Abascal (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the representatives of Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Belarus, Belize, Burundi, Cambodia, the People’s Republic of China, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Zimbabwe and my country, Cuba.

We have the honour to introduce the final version of the omnibus draft resolution on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, contained in document A/74/L.92. In that regard, while we acknowledge all the efforts and leadership on the issue by the appointed co-facilitators, as well as you, Sir, as President of the General Assembly, we are compelled to note that, despite the fact that our delegations participated in

good faith in all informal consultations, demonstrated a constructive spirit throughout the entire negotiation process and shared many concrete proposals, both individually and jointly, including on the agreed language mentioned, the current wording of paragraph 20 of draft resolution A/74/L.92 does not address the legitimate concerns of our countries about the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on national efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Acknowledgement of the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on national efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic has been consistently expressed by the overwhelming majority of the international community, the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as many United Nations Special Envoys and Special Rapporteurs. In view of that, our delegations propose the following amendment to draft resolution A/74/L.92.

(*spoke in English*)

Our delegations propose deleting the current paragraph 20, which reads as follows:

“Calls for the urgent removal of unjustified obstacles, in order to ensure the universal, timely and equitable access to, and fair distribution of, all quality, safe, efficacious and affordable essential health technologies and products, including their components and precursors, that are required in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic;”

We propose that the current paragraph 20 be substituted with the following paragraph:

“Strongly urges States to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries;”

That is the agreed language verbatim in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as reflected in paragraph 30 of the resolution 70/1.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

Given that it was not possible to reach consensus on this important issue during the consultations, we believe that the proposed exact wording of the 2030 Agenda

agreed by consensus for that important document is the best possible compromise in the current circumstances.

Bearing that in mind, we call on all delegations to support the draft amendment that I have set out, which we hope will meet with consensus. If a vote is requested on the draft amendment, we kindly request that all representatives express their support by voting in favour of the proposed draft amendment to draft resolution A/74/L.92.

**The President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/74/L.92, as orally corrected, and a draft amendment contained in A/74/L.93.

Before proceeding further, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Ms. Lindo (Belize):** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). First, I would like to thank Her Excellency Mrs. Adela Raz, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, and His Excellency Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Permanent Representative of Croatia, for their stellar efforts throughout this process. Despite the challenges and obstacles faced and the polar positions that delegations held, this was a test of the multilateral spirit and the struggles that we face as a global community in responding to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. I would now like to make some brief remarks on the procedure followed, as well as the substance of draft resolution A/74/L.92, before us today.

We acknowledge that the draft resolution was negotiated during trying and difficult times, with extraordinary logistical constraints. We are no doubt still finding our footing operating as the United Nations via online platforms. At the same time, it is important to remember that the purpose of the draft resolution is precisely to address the challenging circumstances to which none of us have been immune. Multilateralism is key to driving common solutions, and it is therefore critical to maintain an inclusive, transparent and intergovernmental approach in our efforts. Our common goals demand it and small delegations need it.

This draft resolution originated as a result of the recognition by all Member States that there needs to be a coordinated and coherent approach to address the far-reaching impacts of COVID-19. What started as a health crisis has ballooned into a socioeconomic catastrophe, with many of us on the brink of a certain humanitarian

emergency. The impacts on health systems, food security and debt sustainability are entrenching vulnerability and poverty. The implementation of our development agendas — the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change — are all the more imperative. We are startled that even citing such documents has become so toxic. If not the agreements that we made just five years ago and the commitments that we reiterated last year, then what?

It is well documented that countries in special situations are bearing an unimaginable and unenviable position during this crisis. But, for the record, AOSIS reiterates that small island developing States are collapsing. Our backs are against the wall. Our health systems are struggling; our economies are failing; and our people are facing an uncertain future. We no longer need platitudes and reassurances. We need the support of Member States and tangible measurable action. It is disconcerting that we still find ourselves bargaining for even mediocre recognition. It is wholly inhumane.

AOSIS is of the view that many of these issues, although covered by the draft resolution, are not placed in a manner that would stave off the crisis that is still unfolding. But do not be mistaken — we are not here to upset the applecart. We recognize and appreciate the effort. While we would have liked more ambitious language in certain paragraphs, such as paragraph 40, on climate change, we are pleased to see that most of the critical elements for which we continuously and vociferously advocated have been covered. We are satisfied that it calls for aligning investments and domestic policies with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement and that it also recognizes the need to communicate or update the nationally determined contributions in 2020. That is essential for promoting the resilient recovery for which many of us have been calling and that complements the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

However, we must emphasize the importance of mobilizing the necessary means of implementation for climate action, not only for adaptation and mitigation but also for addressing loss and damage. That is particularly important for countries that are already experiencing loss and damage due to climate change, while grappling with the response and recovery from the pandemic. We are disappointed that that was not

expressly reflected in the draft text, and we wish to register those concerns on the record.

The pandemic has impacted every country in the world, and, from the beginning of this process, AOSIS has emphasized that one of our own members continues to suffer disproportionately in response and recovery due to the unilateral course of measures levied against it, which should be addressed. Furthermore, in March of this year, the Secretary-General appealed to the countries of the Group of Twenty to waive sanctions that can undermine a country's capacity to respond to the pandemic. It remains unconscionable that the General Assembly would fail to make a pronouncement on this issue in a draft resolution that purports to address the challenges of all people, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it is important to remember why we joined this esteemed institution and our collective goal of addressing the existing and emerging crises that we face today.

**Ms. Goebel** (Germany): On behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States, I would like to call for a vote on draft amendment A/74/L.93. I am also taking the floor to deliver the following explanation of vote.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. We will abstain in the voting on the draft amendment for the reasons that we repeatedly explained during the negotiations. We showed extreme flexibility throughout the negotiations, and we are ready to accept the various texts proposed by the coordinators, as well as the one submitted by the President of the General Assembly. However, we cannot go further and support the draft amendment in the context of the omnibus draft resolution A/74/L.92, on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Allow me to stress that in the EU sanctions are used as part of a comprehensive policy aimed at influencing political and security developments in third countries, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and aggressive policies against civilian populations, as well as more global issues, such as the fight against terrorism, the proliferation of chemical weapons and the threat of cyberattacks. EU measures must be in accordance with all obligations under international law, in particular respect for international human rights law, international refugee law and international

humanitarian law. EU sanctions are targeted, aimed at those responsible for the policies or actions, while avoiding as far as possible any adverse humanitarian effects or unintended consequences for persons not targeted, in particular the civilian population or neighbouring countries. Such a targeted approach not only is a matter of effectiveness, but also reflects the key principles that guide the EU in the use of sanctions, in particular compliance with international law, human rights and proportionality. In principle, when sanctions include export restrictions, such prohibitions do not cover the export of food, medicines and medical equipment.

Moreover, EU sanctions include a system of exceptions. That exception system also applies in the context of a crisis, such as the current one caused by COVID-19. Moreover, the EU continues to closely follow the matter and is always open to listening to the observations of experts on the ground, including with regard to any need for mitigating measures.

The EU and its member States are, and will continue to be, engaged with partners. We have issued guidance, organized events and commissioned studies to ensure that sanctions and counter-terrorism measures do not limit the humanitarian space and to ensure people-centred solutions.

**Mr. Jiménez** (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have the honour to refer to the draft resolution on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), contained in document A/74/L.92. At the outset, we would like to express our solidarity with all families throughout the world who have lost loved ones as a result of this pandemic and are suffering from COVID-19, with its consequences and complications.

We wish to thank the co-facilitators of this process for their efforts with regard to the draft resolution. However, it is regrettable that it was not possible to take into account the legitimate concerns of the great majority of States Members of the United Nations when it comes to such an important issue as that of unilateral coercive measures and on which the General Assembly has adopted numerous resolutions calling for an end to such illegal measures.

Our delegation was very flexible during the entire negotiation process with regard to not only this draft resolution but also all the other draft resolutions that were submitted under the silence procedure, proposing alternative wording, including an agreed paragraph



of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Countries that impose unilateral coercive measures must immediately cease their illegal actions. They are self-proclaimed custodians that operate contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Implementing such measures in times of a pandemic raises their illegality to the level of a crime against humanity. It is important to demonstrate unity and solidarity in order to overcome this pandemic, with its global implications and suffering for all, in particular in developing countries. We must also recognize the negative impact of those unilateral sanctions on such countries. They are a genuine obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the eradication of poverty.

For all those reasons, Nicaragua co-sponsored draft amendment A/74/L.93, introduced by Cuba, for which we thank it on behalf of 20 countries, in order for draft resolution A/74/L.92 to fully reflect the multilateralism, cooperation and solidarity that are necessary so as to successfully overcome COVID-19.

**Mr. Ilnytskyi (Ukraine):** Ukraine regrets the decision to submit draft amendment A/74/L.93 to paragraph 20 of draft resolution A/74/L.92. At this stage, such a draft amendment undermines the efforts of the co-facilitators aimed at the consensual adoption of the draft resolution.

The fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is an unprecedented challenge that requires global unity, cooperation and solidarity. Regrettably, some actors misuse the pandemic to divert attention from other existing serious risks and challenges to global peace and security. Nowadays, we are witnessing attempts by some States to convince the international community that sanctions constrain their ability to counter COVID-19. Those claims are artificial and groundless. As underlined in the statement by High Representative Josep Borrell on behalf of the European Union (EU) on 3 April, the European Union and United Nations sanctions do not obstruct the global fight against COVID-19. They continue to play an indispensable role in countering breaches of international law and proliferation, staunching the flow of arms into war zones, combating human rights abuses and targeting the spoilers of peace processes.

Taking note of the EU position, I would like to underline that sanctions also remain important in order

to restore respect for international law. Today there are no sanctions that run counter to international law. There are no sanctions anywhere that are aimed at decreasing States' ability to protect their peoples from COVID-19 or to participate in global efforts to overcome this crisis.

With that in mind, Ukraine rejects the manipulative attempts of some States to lift sanctions imposed to halt illegal activities. Using the pandemic for political purposes and in calls to lift sanctions should be considered a dishonourable manipulation and attempt to use the suffering of the millions of people in pursuit of one's own profit for selfish aims. The only way for sanctions to disappear is not through their cancellation under the pretext of the need to face and counter the new global pandemic, but through ensuring a thorough implementation of the Charter of the United Nations and a complete halting of continuous violations of international law, including armed aggression, occupation and human rights abuses.

Sanctions can and should be challenged, changed or cancelled altogether if the underlying reasons for their imposition and implementation are removed and respect for international law and order is restored. Anything else would amount of appeasement under a false pretext.

**Mr. Shahin (Egypt):** Egypt wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for your relentless efforts. We also thank the Ambassador of Afghanistan and the Ambassador of Croatia for co-facilitating draft resolution A/74/L.92. It has indeed been a long and daunting process, which has been conducted in unprecedented circumstances.

Egypt supports the draft amendment contained in document A/74/L.93, as presented by Cuba. We see that the proposed text is based on language agreed upon for document A/70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

**Mr. Reed (United Kingdom):** Throughout this process, the United Kingdom has continuously strived for consensus and has shown great flexibility. Throughout negotiations where consensus could not be reached, we have always drawn on the most recent example of agreed language from the World Health Assembly that directly relates to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis. For that reason, we fully supported the text circulated by the co-facilitators yesterday.

We therefore regret that some Member States have used this text for political gain and have decided to

disrupt consensus at the last minute by proposing draft amendment A/74/L.93, which will offset the balance in the text and prevent the General Assembly from speaking with one unified voice on COVID-19. For that reason, the United Kingdom will be voting against the draft amendment.

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

Before we take action on draft resolution A/74/L.92, as orally corrected, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly should first take a decision on the draft amendment contained in document A/74/L.93.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, China, Comoros, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Georgia, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria,

Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Zambia

*Draft amendment A/74/L.93 was adopted by 84 votes to 13, with 60 abstentions.*

**The President:** I now call on the representative of the United States.

**Mr. Mack** (United States of America): The United States had informed the Secretariat that it was requesting votes on both operative paragraph 7 and operative paragraph 34 before we act on the entire resolution.

**The President:** Separate, recorded votes have been requested on operative paragraphs 7 and 34 of draft resolution A/74/L.92. Seeing as there is no objection to this request, I shall put those paragraphs to the vote first, one by one.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar,

Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Iraq, Libya, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Paraguay, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

*Operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/74/L.92, as orally corrected, was adopted by 122 votes to 3, with 25 abstentions.*

**The President:** We shall now take a decision on operative paragraph 34 of draft resolution A/74/L.92.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic,

Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

India, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Angola, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Paraguay, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago

*Operative paragraph 34 of draft resolution A/74/L.92, as orally corrected and amended, was adopted by 142 votes to 2, with 13 abstentions.*

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/74/L.92, as orally corrected and amended.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti,

Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Hungary, Ukraine

*Draft resolution A/74/L.92, as orally corrected and amended, was adopted by 169 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions (resolution 74/306).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor in explanation of vote after the vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats. I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote or position on the resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan):** My delegation requested the floor to exercise its right to explanation of vote after the voting.

In the first place, I would like to convey our appreciation to you, Mr. President; the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Adela Raz; and the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Ambassador Ivan Šimonović, for their dedicated efforts and tireless commitment as the co-facilitators of resolution 74/306, entitled “Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, and congratulate you on its adoption.

However, we regret that our delegation's amendment to paragraph 19, which reiterates the need for compliance with international law and the guiding principles of the humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, as reflected in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, in particular resolution 46/182, was not accommodated. Therefore, my delegation registers its reservation with respect to paragraph 19 of the said resolution.

**Mr. De La Mora Salcedo (Mexico)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico voted in favour of resolution 74/306, entitled “Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, as it believes that it was crucial that the General Assembly respond effectively and in a timely way to that global challenge, which affects not just the health of our peoples, but also the economy, the sustenance and the development of our countries. We would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia for their devotion and commitment to this task.

However, we regret not just substantive shortcomings in the text, but also some procedural issues.

First, Mexico has the impression that there was unnecessary haste in moving towards adopting the final version of this omnibus resolution. In Mexico's view, it would have been natural for this document, which has been negotiated with devotion over various months, to be adopted as an outcome of the thirty-first special session. That would have resulted in a follow-up mechanism to the extraordinary session and would have perhaps avoided a hasty adoption at the end of this session.

Mexico believes that consensus is always desirable, but it should never be a straitjacket with regard to the possibility of having ambitious agreements. Consensus does not mean unanimity.



We will now explain some of the shortcomings of the document, which, in our view, could have been avoided through political dialogue.

The twenty-first preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 22 are not consistent with each other. The list of vulnerable groups should have been incorporated equitably in both paragraphs on the basis of the list of vulnerable groups that is contained in paragraph 23 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Who loses out from this? Children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants all lose out. While paragraph 21 duly takes up the universally agreed list, it is very regrettable that these people are suffering as a result of the unique position taken by one delegation.

With regard to paragraphs 12 and 13, on equitable access to a potential vaccine, Mexico underscores the need to ensure that the vaccine is a global public good. Mexico believes that the previously circulated version of the document was more ambitious and actually made progress in terms of what was agreed upon by the World Health Assembly. We welcome the fact that there was no regression on this issue. However, our country will continue to strongly advocate the vaccine effectively becoming a global public good through cooperation and solidarity.

With regard to the references to sexual and reproductive health, Mexico reiterates what will soon be stated by the representative of Australia, on behalf of a group of countries, indicating that paragraph 7, which was put to a vote, is agreed language and consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 5.6. Mexico wishes to stress that any delegation that erroneously interprets sexual and reproductive health services as something that may mean bodily harm is empirically wrong in its interpretation. Additionally, it is confusing that there was no corresponding editorial modification in paragraph 6 to use language that was agreed with regard to maternal and child health.

Finally, Mexico believes that this document could have been much more ambitious when it comes to the issue of migrant workers and remittances. During the negotiations, my country heard no objections to strengthening this language. That is not surprising, given that remittances are three times the value of official development assistance. Migrant workers are

agents of sustainable development and contribute to their countries of origin and destination. We would hope that, on future occasions, transparency and decision-making on the basis of evidence and statistics will prevail.

**Mrs. Bogyay** (Hungary): We would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia, for their very hard work and efforts.

Hungary wishes to highlight its national position concerning the omnibus resolution 74/306, on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

It is regrettable that the resolution seeks to give the misleading impression that the pandemic does not affect the whole of society in the same way. Instead, the resolution highlights the difficulty faced by randomly selected social groups, including migrants and refugees. In our view, the COVID-19 pandemic has a strong impact on the daily lives of every citizen. Therefore, we should avoid making distinctions of any kind in this respect.

For those reasons, Hungary disassociates itself from the content of paragraphs 21 and 25 of the resolution and wishes to stress again that the unnecessary proliferation of COVID-19-related resolutions does not contribute to finding effective solutions to the current crisis. We should focus on tangible measures.

**Mrs. Furman** (Israel): I would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and of Croatia for their leadership on the omnibus resolution 74/306 and for their tireless efforts during the negotiations on the text.

We believe that the text put forward by the co-facilitators was a comprehensive and balanced one. We were disappointed by the amendment put forward on paragraph 20 of the draft omnibus resolution, which threatened the delicate balance in the text achieved by the co-facilitators, and we therefore voted against the resolution. It is very unfortunate that some delegations preferred to ignore the efforts of the co-facilitators and the compromise language they put forward in paragraph 20, knowing that by doing so they would prevent the resolution from being adopted by consensus. Israel remains committed to working together with the international community in the fight against the coronavirus disease.

**Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, would have preferred resolution 74/306 to have been adopted by consensus. Secondly, I reiterate our delegation's gratitude to the co-facilitators from Afghanistan and Croatia, which succeeded in crafting a text that garnered consensus most of the time up until this moment, and to which all Member States had actively contributed. Your guidance, too, Sir, was very important in the negotiations.

The delegation of Uruguay wishes to refer to the issue on paragraph 20 after the voting, although we would have preferred to raise certain points before the voting. We believe that this explanation will help in a certain way to interpret the meaning of some of the paragraphs in question. As I already said, we had a procedural or formal question, which we would have liked to discuss. What was, until today, operative paragraph 20, as put forward by the co-facilitators and which Uruguay supported, was justified as it appropriately addressed the obstacles, excesses and deviations that may arise in safely and equitably distributing medical supplies and technologies essential for fighting the coronavirus disease. Those obstacles must be eliminated since they affect the enjoyment of human rights. The paragraph, as it was previously drafted, would have been impossible to base on agreed language since it referred to a new and totally unprecedented situation.

With respect to the proposed new paragraph 20, as ultimately adopted, it is very clear that it refers to the promulgation and implementation of unilateral measures that contravene international law. Its inclusion is timely. Its formulation, moreover, is in keeping with the language of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Despite what I have just said, Uruguay understood that the inclusion of the new paragraph 20 would not undermine the previous paragraph as put forth by the co-facilitators, since they referred to scenarios or situations that were not exactly the same, or, rather, a range of situations that should be given consideration since they were not incompatible. That is why we wished to have the opportunity to consider the procedural aspects, or to receive advice or guidance before the voting, or we would have preferred to include both operative paragraphs, whether as subparagraphs or separate paragraphs, because we recognize that the original wording received from the co-facilitators referred to situations not to be overlooked in or omitted from the description.

**Ms. Goebel** (Germany): I should now deliver our explanation of vote on paragraph seven of resolution 74/306. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. We deeply regret the decision to call a vote on operative paragraph 7. Voting on the resolution before us sent a terribly wrong signal to people around the world and our commitment to providing a united response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

We believe that the representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia conducted the negotiations of the resolution in a diligent, fair and transparent manner, and we commend them for the genuine efforts to reflect the different views expressed on the matter.

As outlined by the World Health Organization, the disruption of access to essential health services due to COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the lives of millions of women around the world. The lack of access to those services represent a risk of reversing decades of progress, exacerbating maternal mortality and morbidity, and increasing rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. We cannot turn a blind eye to this emergency.

The European Union advocated for much stronger references throughout the text. We recognize, however, that the practice of the General Assembly is to revert to the most recently agreed language when there is no agreement on alternative wording. Operative paragraph 7 is based on agreed language from General Assembly resolution 73/147, on fistula, presented by the Group of African States.

The United Nations membership, many of whom have divergent views on the issue at hand, has always been able to agree this language. This illustrates how carefully crafted and balanced this long-standing paragraph is. For these reasons, we voted in favour of retaining operative paragraph 7 in the text.

I would now like to read out a statement on the resolution overall. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member State. The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania; the country of the Stabilization Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this explanation of vote.

Allow us to start by praising your leadership, Mr. President, throughout the unprecedented suspension

of in-person meetings at Headquarters over the past six months. You not only ensured the business continuity of the work of the General Assembly in extraordinary circumstances; you also safeguarded its orderly functioning and policy coherence, mainly through the initiative of a comprehensive resolution encompassing all aspects of the COVID-19 crisis and the coordinated response expected from the United Nations and the international community. We also express our gratitude to the two co-facilitators, Ambassadors Šimonović and Raz, and their teams for the tireless efforts aimed at accommodating the concerns from across the membership.

When the project of the omnibus resolution was initiated, many were skeptical on the changes of finalizing a text acceptable to all Member States. Throughout the various town hall meetings, transparent consultation process, as well as a number of more specific engagements to try and narrow the remaining differences, Ambassadors Šimonović and Raz embodied the cooperation and unity required from the international community in these difficult times.

The EU and its member States worked with partners in the spirit of compromise to allow the General Assembly to adopt resolution 74/306 by consensus. We are convinced that in view of the universal impact COVID-19, which affects all our citizens, we need a united response from the General Assembly, stressing the central role of the United Nations system in responding to the pandemic and its immediate consequences, but also in recovering and rebuilding better.

We therefore made significant compromises in a number of areas where we would have preferred more ambition in view of their importance for the COVID-19 and recovery context, ranging from climate and the environment to human rights and civil society on operative paragraph 20, where we showed maximum flexibility, but were ready to accept the text presented by the co-facilitators. We also thank Member States for the largely constructive spirit in which the negotiations were conducted, and we certainly acknowledged the concessions made by other delegations. Overall, we believe that the draft resolution is a comprehensive and balanced document that accurately reflects the different views of Member States and addresses the most important challenges the world is facing and creates the conditions for strength strengthening the international community's capacity to act, including by

supporting the initiatives of the Secretary-General and of the United Nations relating to COVID-19.

While we would have liked to stress stronger references to human rights, we recognize the efforts of the co-coordinators to find a balance between the different positions expressed on the matter. The COVID-19 pandemic affects everyone and every aspect of our lives, but not uniformly. It increases existing inequalities between and within countries. The resolution rightly calls for the international community to join forces to combat inequalities, discrimination, racism and xenophobia in the context of the COVID-19 response and to leave no one behind. This is the time for us to set aside differences and rally behind this greater cause.

The acknowledgement of the central role of the World Health Organization is also essential, as is the reference to the important One Health approach to prevent future health threats, including in particular zoonotic diseases.

We strongly support the provisions reflecting the need to fully address the climate and environmental emergencies, even if we would have preferred stronger language in that regard. Addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution with urgency and ambition is indispensable, both to preventing future zoonotic diseases and to making us more resilient to future global shocks. Building back better must also mean building back greener.

Finally, it was important to acknowledge the significant role digital technologies played in mitigating the crisis and showing their potential, but also in spelling out the associated challenges, such as the digital divide, and the risks posed by new technologies. We regret that, despite our extreme flexibility on paragraph 20, where we were ready to support the final proposal of the coordinators, a number of Member States considered it necessary to introduce an amendment.

Despite its imperfections and having in mind the primary imperative of a strong, united measured message from the General Assembly in facing this crisis, we strongly support the adoption of this important resolution.

**Mr. Fifield** (Australia): First, I should like to make a procedural comment in my national capacity by asking that the Secretariat, in giving its procedural advice, consider whether it may be a better practice that

statements be made before votes are taken so that States have the benefit of the contribution of others when considering their votes.

I also take the opportunity to thank you, Sir, for your stewardship over the past 12 months and, in particular, an extremely difficult six months. It would also be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge the tremendous work of Ambassadors Adela Raz and Ivan Šimonović in getting us to this point today on resolution 74/306.

I shall now deliver an explanation of vote on paragraph 7. I am making this statement on behalf of the following 42 Member States: Albania, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Nepal, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and my own country, Australia.

We are grateful to you, Mr. President, as well as to the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia, for your leadership on the resolution and for the open and constructive way in which the text was facilitated. We regret the breaking of consensus on the resolution, particularly given the importance of ensuring a united global response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

As noted in the Secretary-General's policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on women, sexual and reproductive health services are at particular risk of being deprioritized in the COVID-19 response and recovery. This represents a significant risk of exacerbating maternal mortality and morbidity and increasing rates of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. According to reports, a 10 per cent decline in the use of sexual and health care services resulting from COVID-19-related disruptions would lead to an additional 28,000 maternal deaths and 168,000 newborn deaths. These deaths are a human tragedy and a violation of the rights of women and girls around the world.

We acknowledge that these can be sensitive issues, but terminology such as "sexual and reproductive health" and "reproductive rights" has been used to encompass a wide range of perspectives. Since the mid-1990s, we have all agreed on the importance of sexual and reproductive health. In the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development, we have all committed to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services. It is deeply unfortunate that today we see an attempt to upset the consensus and the balance on these issues. At a time when international cooperation and solidarity are more needed than ever, it is essential that we do not go back on what are our shared commitments. We must not accept attempts to undermine the normative frameworks that underpin our work.

Once again, we express our regret that we have been forced to vote on these issues in the Assembly today, but we thank delegations for supporting the rights of women and girls in voting in favour of retaining operative paragraph seven in the text.

**Mr. Papolizio** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the delegations of Afghanistan and Croatia, as co-facilitators of resolution 74/306, entitled "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic", for their efforts to achieve a consensus-based text that adequately reflects the legitimate concerns of the international community in the fight against this serious scourge.

We have supported this important initiative since its very inception. We believe that dealing with the pandemic and its serious impacts throughout the world necessarily require a coordinated response based on the principles of international cooperation and solidarity. That is why we actively participated in negotiations with constructive proposals and sought to reach common ground on sensitive issues. We wish to underscore the fact that Peru always advocated throughout the negotiations to consider the vaccine for COVID-19 as a global public good in line with the Secretary-General's calls and the statements of the Director-General of the World Health Organization and numerous world leaders.

This approach is not purely altruistic; rather, it is driven principally by the tangible benefits for humankind as a whole as the only realistic strategy to defeat this disease. If vaccines are not available and accessible to all countries, there will always be the risk of further outbreaks. None of us will be safe until we are all safe. That is why, even though we would have preferred the draft resolution to contain a more explicit reference designating such a vaccine a global public good, we understand this to be reflected in paragraph 13's recognition of extensive immunization against



COVID-19 as a global public good, which can be the case only if the vaccine has the same status.

Peru today reiterates its readiness to work with all States Members of the United Nations to strengthen multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity to effectively address the COVID-19 pandemic and its severe social and economic repercussions.

**Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I have genuinely missed you, Sir, and the United Nations staff in this Hall. There really was not a lot of time in yesterday's online event, so I would like to take this opportunity to express gratitude to you, Sir, for bringing even greater glory to your country. Delegations and your team will long remember the dedicated work you have put in.

The Russian Federation welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 74/306, entitled "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic", as amended. We appreciate the fact that the document clearly confirms the commitment of the international community to strengthening multilateral cooperation in addressing the pandemic and the duty of States to cooperate with one another in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. That was a key part of our contribution to the COVID-19 resolution. It also recognizes the important contribution of the United Nations system to the global coordinated COVID-19 response in support of the measures taken by national Governments. The key leadership role of the World Health Organization within the broader efforts of the United Nations is rightly acknowledged.

Our delegation is pleased to see reflected in the text such issues as the importance of primary health care and universal health coverage to the fight against the disease, as well as addressing non-communicable diseases, tuberculosis and other health problems in the context of the current pandemic.

Russia fully supports the strong and unequivocal call in the resolution to refrain from unilateral coercive measures against developing countries, especially in the face of the common challenge of COVID-19. As rightly mentioned by the Secretary-General, who has also called for the waiver of sanctions, this is a time for solidarity, not exclusion. We are not referring to sanctions against Russia today; let those imposing such measures make their own decisions about that. We are referring to sanctions against developing countries.

Maintaining such illegal unilateral measures would not only cause suffering and hamper enjoyment of the rights to health, food and life itself, but also disrupt the global response to the pandemic. So-called humanitarian exemptions are widely known to be futile and cannot be used as a pretext for unlawful business as usual.

The vote that took place today on the consensus language of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is illustrative of the stance of various delegations with regard to international cooperation and to achieving sustainable development worldwide. We urge countries that use unilateral measures to stop turning a deaf ear to the voices of those countries that are suffering the most. Some may try to deceive others, or even themselves, but it is impossible to deceive time, and time will prove that ignoring the voices of the suffering and international law will lead only to greater problems.

We acknowledge the efforts of the co-coordinators in preparing the text in extremely difficult circumstances. Many elements were ultimately agreed by consensus. At the same time, we regret that some groups of States abused the resolution to forestall negotiations on other topics. At times, the talks were aggravated by a lack of transparency and double standards in the use of language sources and in decision-making on the reflections of countries' proposals in the text. Indeed, the process was dominated by a well-known block of States, and the starting point for negotiations was biased, which made some of the compromises reached unsustainable. The arduous timeline for adoption was also a matter of concern. We believe that this approach risks undermining trust among delegations and their willingness to engage and strive towards consensus.

We are therefore forced to state our interpretation of or disassociate ourselves from specific language in a number of paragraphs.

Concerning the fourth preambular paragraph, we reiterate that documents of regional reviews of the International Conference on Population and Development or non-United Nations meetings on the topic, which are not subject to consensus or intergovernmental agreement, are not implied by the wording and cannot be construed as providing any guidance to Member States.

With regard to paragraph 19, we note that the definitions used for "timely" humanitarian and medical access distorts the language in the provisions of World

Health Assembly resolution WHA73.1 on timely access to medicines and vaccines. That language cannot set a precedent for future work of the General Assembly on humanitarian emergency assistance.

We disassociate ourselves from the twenty-first preambular paragraph, which includes unclear wording on the so-called “multiple and intersecting forms of violence, discrimination, stigmatization, exclusion and inequalities”. The same is true for the twenty-second preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 26, which contain dubious and technically incorrect terminology on the subject of violence and do not fully correspond to the evidence from the relevant policy briefs of the Secretary-General. We strongly believe that the General Assembly should operate with unambiguous, well-defined terms.

In paragraph 21, the expression “health care and services” is not clear and is not in line with the usual language used for that topic. Thus, in the absence of a recognized definition, we are forced to disassociate ourselves from this language.

We believe that the reference to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in paragraph 28 is not appropriate, since that paragraph does not take into account the context and scope of that document’s applicability. We therefore disassociate ourselves from that reference.

The wording of paragraph 47 attempts to redefine agreed approaches to actions on climate change and contains imbalanced language on energy. We are committed to the fight against climate change. However, that paragraph does not take into account the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic, which could potentially aggravate its impact, and does not recognize the need for a sustainable approach to COVID-19 recovery efforts. Unfortunately, the coordinators opted to ignore our suggestions on the paragraph. As a result, we disassociate ourselves therefrom.

I am now wrapping up. Our delegation would like to officially place on record the fact that we do not consider ourselves bound by the formulations from which we dissociated ourselves and do not see them as agreed language for future negotiations.

**Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): As you know, Mr. President, my country voted in favour of resolution 74/306, and I sincerely, from the bottom of my heart, would like to thank the co-facilitators, from Afghanistan and Croatia, for the

efforts that they have made to achieve the final form of the resolution. I thank them also for their patience and their flexibility.

Of course, nothing is perfect, and that is why we were forced to introduce an amendment to paragraph 20 and requested that it be replaced with the wording from paragraph 30 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We wish to thank all those countries that supported our amendment, and we deeply regret seeing in this room those who defend unilateral coercive measures. We call on those States to once again consider the appeals made by the Secretary-General and his reports on the impact of those unilateral measures and sanctions on the ability of the States that are affected by them to address economic, social and public-health challenges resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). We call on those States that here in this room defend unilateral coercive measures and that accuse us of politicizing issues. We call on them to take another look at the annual report of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in the countries affected by them.

I recall that I read the following in one of those reports on the situation in my country, Syria:

“When we look at the impact of these unilateral measures on the ability of the Syrian people to live a normal life, and when we consider the implications of these measures, it is difficult or indeed impossible to believe those who say that they are imposing those unilateral measures by way of a defence of human rights or to promote democracy”.

We regret the fact that the co-facilitators were not able to insert language in the seventeenth preambular paragraph on the impact of COVID-19 on the situation of people living in the occupied territories. We also disassociate ourselves from any language that pertains to domestic violence. That is a vague term that does not enjoy consensus, and we cannot accept it.

In conclusion, my country disassociates itself from and places a reservation against paragraph 32. We believe that there is no logic that would justify welcoming anything from the Group of 20, which includes States and Governments that impose unilateral coercive measures on a great many peoples of the world. My country rejects, issues a reservation

against and disassociates itself from any positive mention in paragraph 32 of the efforts of international financial institutions, above all the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Those institutions have adopted biased and unbalanced policies and make their facilitation and support for some States very clearly and unambiguously conditional on the political pressure brought to bear by certain Governments that are great economic and political Powers.

**Mr. Al-dabag** (Iraq): I should like to thank you, Mr. President, and the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan and the Permanent Representative of Croatia, for their stellar work and efforts.

My delegation decided to vote in favour of the omnibus resolution on “Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic” (resolution 74/306) as a demonstration of our commitment to expressing our solidarity with all peoples and countries affected by the pandemic and the need to address the pandemic through a global response based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation among States. We had hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

My delegation would like to disassociate itself from the phrase “marginalized segments of the population” as used in the twenty-first preambular paragraph, operative paragraph 21 and operative paragraph 28, as it does not have an agreed definition.

Iraq would also like to disassociate itself from the phrase used in the twenty-first preambular paragraph “multiple and intersecting forms of violence [and] discrimination” and from that used in operative paragraph 7, “sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights”.

While my delegation wishes to reiterate its strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we would like to indicate our view on operative paragraph 47, which goes beyond the purpose of the resolution and tackles issues that are not necessarily related to its objective. The resolution is not a suitable place to discuss those elements.

**Mrs. Kocyigit Grba** (Turkey): We requested the floor to provide Turkey’s explanation of vote in connection with the adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/306, entitled “Comprehensive and

coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”.

Turkey is determined to combat all climate-related challenges on the basis of equity and within the framework of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Therefore, our general support for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) omnibus resolution on a comprehensive and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic should not be considered as a change in Turkey’s official position regarding the references made to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and operative paragraph 47 of the resolution, as Turkey is not a party to the Paris Agreement.

**Mr. Alshames** (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to thank the President of the General Assembly for presenting resolution 74/306, which we have just adopted and which is one of the most important resolutions ever adopted by the Assembly. We would like also to pay tribute to the efforts that led to the adoption of the resolution and to thank all of those who contributed to the negotiations.

While we deeply appreciate the content of the resolution, we would at the same time underline our country’s right to draw up its policies in line with national legislation and our culture and traditions. On that basis, my country’s delegation wishes to state its reservations concerning the controversial terminology on the issue of sexual and reproductive health that appears in paragraph 7. These concepts should not be accepted by the United Nations or United Nations agencies and used against our country, as they go against our national legislation.

**Mr. Crilchuk** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to thank the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia and their teams for their outstanding efforts, which led to the adoption of the omnibus resolution of the General Assembly on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) (resolution 74/306), reaffirming the key role of this body in the multilateral system.

My delegation would like to highlight the fact that it would have been preferable to have a paragraph-by-paragraph negotiation process. We deplore the fact that we had insufficient time to look at the final version of the text, which limited the possibility of introducing amendments that could have improved the language.

Argentina believes that access to medicines, medical equipment and vaccines to deal with COVID-19 should be universal, timely and equitable, avoiding the creation of any obstacles. Hence we deemed operative paragraph 20, proposed by the co-facilitators, to be timely.

In terms of the draft amendment (A/74/L.93) submitted and adopted, Argentina has no objection to the substantive issues mentioned in the paragraph, recognizing that this is language agreed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On that basis, and in spite of the fact that Argentina would have preferred both paragraphs to remain in the resolution, we voted in favour of the amendment.

We would also like to provide a brief explanation on paragraph 18, which was submitted on a timely basis to the co-facilitators but, unfortunately, was not able to be included in the final version. The adopted text refers to the negative effects of increasing food prices on food insecurity. However, we believe that there is no clear link such as the one mentioned and that in many cases prices must be appropriate in order to incentivize production and increase the supply of foodstuffs.

For that reason, we regret the fact that the wording agreed upon in target 2.c of the Sustainable Development Goals was not used. That wording refers to extreme food price volatility, which can, of course, have a negative effect on food security. Nonetheless, given the importance of the issue dealt with in the resolution, my delegation accepted that reference on this occasion and voted in favour of the draft.

**Mr. Mack** (United States of America): I wish to thank the co-facilitators for their efforts to achieve agreement on resolution 74/306. The United States appreciates the cooperation and collaboration of the international community in the global effort to combat the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). As we strive to make progress to defeat COVID-19, it is important that we focus our efforts and jointly address this virus.

I should like to begin today by expressing our condolences in connection with the illnesses, deaths and other adverse consequences, including those affecting health-care and humanitarian personnel, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our never-ending gratitude goes out to all health-care workers, all United Nations staff and all essential personnel who continue to put themselves in harm's way every day to make us all safer.

The United States has been the largest bilateral donor of global health assistance. Over just the past few weeks, we have increased our funding for the development of vaccines and therapeutics, global preparedness efforts and overseas economic health and humanitarian aid from \$12 billion to more than \$20.5 billion. Our steadfast and heartfelt support for such efforts encompasses all facets of the pandemic response, including second- and third-order effects, and we are working directly with those on the ground to combat this virus, including Governments, multilateral organizations, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, research institutions and many other organizations.

Additionally, we have supported the Secretary-General's call to resource the United Nations response. As of 14 August, the United States had contributed a total of \$908 million in 44 countries to eight United Nations agencies. That equates to 44 per cent of the total humanitarian response raised to date. We welcome the increased contributions that many have already made, and we encourage other countries and stakeholders to do the same immediately. We all need to step up.

Since the pandemic began, the Trump Administration has been very clear that transparency and the timely sharing of public-health data and information are essential to fighting it effectively. Unfortunately, however, failures at the outset of the pandemic by the People's Republic of China, where COVID-19 originated and was first diagnosed, have imperilled all of us and caused needless additional suffering and death. In the early days of the virus, the Chinese Communist Party hid the truth about the outbreak from the world and prevented researchers from accessing vital information. Innumerable deaths that could have been prevented were the result.

We must hold those responsible accountable for their actions and inaction early in this pandemic and ensure that future pandemics are reported in a transparent manner early instead of being hidden from the world. Unfortunately, we might never know for certain how much of the pain and suffering caused by COVID-19 could have been avoided if the Chinese Communist Party had behaved like a responsible Government and immediately warned the rest of the world of the virus that they had uncovered in Wuhan. Not only did they fail world, but the World Health Organization's (WHO) failures in the early days of the pandemic also contributed to needless suffering and



the worsening of the pandemic. WHO needs to reform, including by demonstrating its independence from the Chinese Communist Party. That lack of independence, transparency and accountability is why President Trump made the decision for the United States to withdraw from the WHO. We will continue to call forth its reform, and we will seek alternative, transparent partners in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is incumbent on each of us to collectively commit to the timely sharing of public-health data and information with the international community. Doing so is paramount to the ability to overcome this crisis together and to building our resilience to future pandemics. For those reasons, the United States does not concur with the references to the WHO in preambular paragraphs 11, 12 and 13 and operative paragraph 1.

The United States welcomes the strong health-specific language in the text, including language on therapeutics and anti-microbial resistance. We also welcome language on countering disinformation and calling for an independent evaluation of the WHO coordinated international health response to COVID-19. The United States also welcomes the human rights references in this text, including a standalone paragraph on human rights and fundamental freedoms and several references to civil society and other stakeholders throughout the text. Promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms is critical to ensuring that all people are fully included in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

The United States welcomes the strong standalone paragraph on persons with disabilities and particularly welcomes the reference to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on them, as well as their inclusion in policy- and decision-making at all levels and in all aspects of COVID-19 response and recovery. We also welcome the listing of members of marginalized groups in the text but regret that the full listing was not included.

Despite those positive elements, we cannot support a resolution that is missing key issues. It is regrettable that the final text did not contain even one mention of human rights defenders, which was in the zero draft.

We cannot in good faith adopt a resolution on COVID-19 response and recovery without recognizing those civil-society and human rights defenders at the forefront of those efforts. We do not accept some delegations' ongoing assertion that this phrase is a

red line, particularly as we use this phrase throughout United Nations documents and have a consensual declaration on human rights defenders.

We appreciate the additional reference to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). We still think, however, that this could have benefited from a standalone paragraph on women and peace and security, especially as we near the twentieth anniversary of the critical agenda and the critical role that women and girls play in COVID-19 response and recovery. We also reject the assertion of this topic does not belong in the General Assembly or that it is a red line for delegations, particularly as those same delegations are members of the Security Council and voted to create the agenda 20 years ago.

We also cannot allow the resolution to be hijacked by several themes that are not pertinent to the discussion, and for that reason we voted against the resolution. The United States defends human dignity and supports access to high-quality health care for women and girls across the lifespan. We appreciate the co-coordinators' recognition of our red-line position on sexual and reproductive health and sexual and reproductive rights, and the removal of one reference thereto in the preambular paragraphs. We do not accept references to sexual and reproductive health, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, or other language that suggests or explicitly states that access to legal abortion is necessarily included in the more general terms "health services" or "health-care services" in particular contexts concerning women.

The United States believes in legal protections for the unborn and rejects any interpretation of international human rights to require any State party to provide safe, legal and effective access to abortion. As President Trump has stated, Americans will never tire of defending innocent life. Each nation has the sovereign right to implement related programmes and activities consistent with their laws and policies. There is no international right to abortion, nor is there any duty on the part of States to finance or facilitate abortion. Further, consistent with the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and their respective reports, we do not recognize abortion as a method of family planning, nor do we support abortion in our global health assistance. We also do not recognize references to non-United-Nations-negotiated conferences, summits

or their respective outcome documents. We believe that the General Assembly should include only references to conferences and summits that were clearly mandated through United Nations modalities resolutions, such as this year's Beijing Plus 25, and that others, such as the Nairobi Summit, have no direct or indirect place in any United Nations resolutions.

With respect to the language in operative paragraph 47, we would like to thank the co-coordinators, in particular our colleagues from the United Kingdom, the European Union and the Alliance of Small Island States, for the constructive discussion and small-group negotiation on that paragraph. Regarding the substance of the text, we consider it outside the scope of what this resolution on COVID-19 is intended to address. We further note that the United States submitted formal notification of its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement to the United Nations on 4 November 2019. The withdrawal will take effect one year from the delivery of the notification, and therefore references to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change are without prejudice to United States positions.

On operative paragraph 35, the United States agrees with the need to improve global supply chain connectivity and security in addressing COVID-19, which includes numerous interconnected processes. However, we do not see a clear link between global sustainable transportation and COVID-19 as phrased in the paragraph. We made our concerns about this paragraph clear at the beginning of the negotiations.

The United States cannot support the new language in operative paragraph 20. The text contained in operative paragraph 20 of the resolution inappropriately challenges the sovereign right of States to determine their economic relations and to protect their legitimate national interests, including taking certain related actions in response to national security concerns. It also attempts to undermine the international community's ability to respond to acts that are offensive to international norms. Economic sanctions are a legitimate means of achieving foreign policy, security and other international objectives, and the United States is not alone in that view or in that practice.

I wish to point out that all United States sanctions include humanitarian exemptions. It has already been well proved that the suffering and death in such cases is due to the bombing of civilians, including doctors and

hospitals; suppressing the flow of information about the pandemic; and abuses of human rights by authoritarian, non-democratic regimes against their own people.

**The President:** I should like to propose that the list of speakers on the current item be closed in view of the large number of delegations remaining on the list, namely, Brazil, El Salvador, Indonesia, India, Philippines, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, China, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Guatemala and the Republic of Korea.

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to close the list of speakers.

*It was so decided.*

**Mr. De Souza Monteiro (Brazil):** Brazil decided to vote in favour of the omnibus resolution 74/306, "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic", adopted by the General Assembly today. The text raises important issues and offers valuable contributions to the coordination of international efforts to fight the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which are dear to Brazil.

The text stresses the need to address the pandemic through unity, solidarity and whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approaches. It further recognizes the primary responsibility of Governments to adopt and implement a response to the COVID-19 pandemic based on their national context and realities. They also recognize the importance of considering the specific needs of various segments of society, including women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities, in the responses that each country develops.

It reiterates the need to curb violence, discrimination and disinformation. Furthermore, it reaffirms the need to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19. The text highlights the importance of saving lives and livelihoods, taking into consideration World Trade Organization rules and procedures. These issues remain central for the Brazilian Government.

Brazil also wishes to reiterate its position with regard to language related to sexual and reproductive health. In no way should the text be interpreted as promoting or supporting abortion as a method of family planning. The Brazilian Government implements policies of integral sexual and reproductive health

within the well-established framework set out in its national legislation.

The omnibus resolution is an important document, and Brazil wishes to commend the efforts required to achieve it. Brazil wishes to reiterate its commitment to cooperating and working together in the fight against COVID-19.

**Mrs. González López** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like at the outset to express our thanks for the leadership of and valuable work done by Ambassadors Adela Raz and Ivan Šimonović throughout the process involving resolution 74/306, and we voted in favour thereof.

My delegation participated actively throughout the entire negotiation process, taking into account the urgent need to have a robust resolution on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that would include various elements related to the immediate impacts that our countries have suffered and continue to suffer during this pandemic.

We fully agree with the representative of Mexico as concerns the hasty adoption of this omnibus resolution. The thirty-first special session of the General Assembly on COVID-19, which will be held in coming months, would have been the most appropriate forum for the adoption of this important document. That would in turn have made it possible to have more time to continue to negotiate as we have been doing over the past few months and would have avoided having to resort to a vote.

El Salvador is grateful for the inclusion of language that our country supports, such as the reference to various international instruments in the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs; language on the importance of international cooperation, multilateralism and solidarity; language on peacekeeping personnel and the role of other stakeholders, including civil society, non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions, as well as the disproportionate effects of the pandemic on women and children; language on the taking of measures against stigmatization, discrimination and hate speech, ageing, xenophobia, racism and violence; language on transmissible and non-transmissible diseases, such as HIV, malaria and hepatitis; and language relating to the Forum on Financing for Development, among other key aspects of the final text of the resolution.

Nevertheless, while we acknowledge all of that, we believe that the references to the effects of the pandemic in middle-income countries have not been adequately addressed in the text. The same is true for the issue of remittances and the immediate effects of the pandemic on migrant workers.

We are concerned that paragraph 12 was modified, and are troubled by the removal of the reference to the need to make a future COVID-19 vaccine a global public good, thus ensuring its universal distribution at an affordable cost, which are vital aspects for not only my country, but for all of humankind.

My delegation also expressed throughout the negotiations that it was critical to focus on human rights and the importance of protecting the human rights of children; adolescents; women and girls; indigenous people; the elderly; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons; migrants and internally displaced persons; people living in extreme poverty; and health services personnel, who are on the front lines in this emergency.

However, that list of people was removed from both the twenty-first preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 21, thereby making all those vulnerable groups invisible. In my delegation's view, it is not possible for the language in paragraph 21 to fall below what is agreed in paragraph 23 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which represents the roadmap to follow over the next 10 years and to which we have committed.

As I have expressed previously, El Salvador voted in favour of the resolution, which is the first document negotiated by the entire membership of the United Nations on the global emergency that still afflicts us. We thank all the delegations for their efforts throughout the negotiations process. Nevertheless, in our view, paragraph 21 does not represent the consensus of the entire membership and we cannot accept as agreed language a lower standard than what has been established in the 2030 Agenda.

**Mr. Koba** (Indonesia): My delegation voted in favour of the omnibus resolution 74/306, entitled "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic", under agenda items 14 and 120, because Indonesia sees the resolution in its entirety as a package on the important and relevant topic of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, Indonesia has reservations on the twenty-first preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 21 and 28. We reiterate that Indonesia does not support the unclear reference to vulnerable and marginalized segments of the population in this particular context. We also have reservations with regard to paragraph 26, which mentions sexual and gender-based violence, but does not clearly mention violence against women and girls.

Our reservations are based solely on the context and culture in Indonesia. Our vote today must therefore not be understood as accepting those references as agreed language for future outcome documents in the General Assembly.

**Mr. Kakanur** (India): My delegation thanks you, Mr. President, for your leadership and commitment to producing an outcome document at the end of this process. We also thank Ambassadors Adela Raz and Ivan Šimonović for their efforts to bridge divergent positions among Member States in this process.

My delegation has been consistent in stating that the omnibus resolution 74/306 will be relevant only if the text remains focused on the direct impact of the pandemic and provides concrete strategies to address those challenges. In the name of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the resolution is pretty much aimed at solving all the planet's problems. While the intent may be good, the result is that the text lacks balance and precision.

We have always stressed the importance of having text-based negotiations in this process, but that was not done in this case. While we welcome the strong intent to tackle climate change, paragraph 47 appears to be a valiant but last-minute attempt to bridge divergent viewpoints. We wish to put on record that the positions reflected in that paragraph may not be construed as reflective of my delegation's position in future negotiations on climate change, in the General Assembly or in any other forum.

With regard to paragraph 34, it is like the voyages of the starship *Enterprise*, as it ventures to boldly take all 193 Members to a place where no Member has gone before. We would also urge caution before reproducing and replicating language from this text in future negotiations, especially in the forthcoming Second and Third Committee deliberations, as the formulations were not negotiated and agreed among the Member States.

Overall, the resolution, while making a series of prescriptions, falls short of providing a roadmap for the United Nations to support the efforts of Member States in this moment of crisis. However, in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, we joined consensus on the text in the hope that this is the beginning of a more purposeful discussion on the pandemic in the General Assembly.

**Mrs. Azucena** (Philippines): I have the honour to deliver this explanation of vote with regard to the omnibus resolution 74/306, entitled "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic".

It is unfortunate that the final draft of the resolution was circulated only yesterday, limiting important space and time for consultations with other Member States and capitals. We chose, however, not to let that concern about process derail much-needed global action, and voted in favour of the resolution. We thank the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia for their efforts.

We live in extraordinary times that require unprecedented collective actions to strengthen the global community and deepen our sense of humanity. It is crucial for the people and countries that we represent that we put up a strong, united and decisive front against the common threat we face — the COVID-19 pandemic. For that reason, the Philippines voted in favour of the resolution. However, we wish to register our disappointment regarding two critical aspects of the resolution.

The first has to do with the nineteenth preambular paragraph, which expresses concern that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating impact on sustainable development and humanitarian needs, especially on certain countries and groups of people. We are disappointed that there is no explicit reference to low- and middle-income countries, despite the requests articulated by my delegation from the very start of the consultation process.

The latest data from various United Nations entities and Secretary-General policy briefs have highlighted that the loss of full-time employment and employment in the informal sector, including among youth, and debt stress are specifically impacting middle-income countries. COVID-19 is projected to result in a decline in remittances of \$109 billion, causing hardship for the



800 million people in low- and middle-income countries who heavily depend on them.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has pronounced that the human and economic toll of the pandemic will be massive and that low- and middle-income countries are poised to be the worst affected. Further, the World Health Organization has stated that the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed gaps in health systems, with low- and middle-income countries bearing the brunt of lack of investment in public health systems and shortages of health-care workers. For truly impactful and transformative action, it is therefore imperative that the global community take cognizance of the available data and respond accordingly.

Our second concern is with regard to the twenty-first preambular paragraph, which recognizes the disproportionate heavy impact of the pandemic on vulnerable groups. We are deeply disappointed that the paragraph does not mention migrants. That is a regression from the listing of vulnerable groups in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Even more importantly, that exclusion does not reflect the reality of my country or that of many other countries represented here today.

The Philippines migrant sector is one of the worst hit by the virus, threatening the health and livelihood of hundreds of thousands of overseas Filipino workers and their families. In their host countries, many migrants suffer from lack of access to health services, exclusion in their host countries' response to the pandemic, inadequate living and working conditions and limited local knowledge and networks. In addition, they are the target of xenophobia and discrimination. Yet, migrants are taking on a critical role on the front lines. Filipino nurses working overseas have paid a great cost — some with their very lives — healing and caring for the sick in different parts of the world.

The migrant sector makes up a significant share of the workforce in sectors that have remained open during lockdowns. They are thus disproportionately exposed to the health risks posed by the pandemic. The socioeconomic impact of the pandemic on migrants and their families is immense. Remittances make up more than 10 per cent of the gross domestic product of the Philippines. The impact of the projected drop of such remittances is therefore very real.

As thousands of Filipinos abroad continue to lose their jobs, the Philippine Government has embarked upon a repatriation programme of a magnitude that the country has never seen. More than 200,000 overseas Filipinos needed to come home. Many migrants remain stranded at sea to this day. In these dire times, rather than exclusion, we urge stronger cooperation and solidarity among Member States in promoting and protecting the human rights of migrants, regardless of their migration status.

We note that the resolution is a reflection of the continued struggle for inclusion and recognition of the pronounced impact of the pandemic on vulnerable populations in certain groups of countries and that the words and intent that remain in this document, and those that are missing, have far-reaching consequences that can shape our future and that of the United Nations.

The Philippines views both the nineteenth and twenty-first preambular paragraphs as exceptions, not precedents. We do not consider those paragraphs to reflect agreed language.

**Mr. Sahraei (Iran):** At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia for their hard work in conducting the process of negotiations on the omnibus resolution 74/306.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of the resolution. We also welcome the adoption of the amendments contained in document A/74/L.93, and consider it a strong message from the international community against resorting to illegal measures, particularly against developing countries.

As you are well aware, Mr. President, the common threat of the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) poses a serious challenge to the international community. It is threatening overwhelmed public health-care systems and is having a devastating impact on all spheres of life across the world: the economy, social security, education and food production.

Under the circumstances resulting from the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of unilateral coercive measures, particularly sanctions, imposes additional economic, commercial and financial burdens on the targeted countries and limits the effectiveness of their pandemic response. While Governments are obliged to protect their population from COVID-19 in

order to save lives, those countries have been effectively prevented from doing so due to the economic and other sanctions imposed by certain States.

In these critical circumstances, the United States continues to impose new unilateral coercive measures against various countries, particularly mine. Indeed, by weaponizing this already lethal virus, the United States Administration sees the current situation as an opportunity to achieve what it has failed to do thus far by simply imposing unilateral coercive measures during a pandemic, which ultimately took hostage the basic medical needs and health-care services of the ordinary people, including women, children and the elderly, while placing the lives of the Iranian health worker at a much greater and significant risk.

Due to the illegal unilateral coercive measures, procurement of medical and pharmaceutical items has been significantly reduced due to the suspension of cooperation between supplier companies of goods and health equipment with Iran. Furthermore, unilateral coercive measures have disrupted our ability to secure the medical and pharmaceutical equipment needed for the diagnosis, control and treatment of the coronavirus disease due to the concerns of exporting company regarding the punitive measures taken by the United States.

At the same time, United States sanctions on Iranian airlines have disrupted the process of directly importing medical necessities and transporting medical supplies, which undermines the country's capability to effectively and efficiently fight the coronavirus.

However, despite the immoral and illegal restrictions that have been placed on the Iranian people, I would like to emphasize that nothing will prevent us from trying to overcome the difficulties resulting from the coronavirus disease in order to save the lives of our citizens.

In conclusion, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the delegation that voted in favour of the proposed amendment and voiced their support for affected countries at this critical juncture.

In reference to the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 7, both refer to the outcome document of the review conference of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which encompasses the twenty-fifth session of the ICPD, held in Nairobi in November 2019, which was

not a United Nations initiative, nor was its outcome document negotiated among the Member States of the United Nations. My delegation disassociates itself from the phrases "the outcomes of their review conferences" and "the outcome documents of their review conferences" in those two paragraphs, respectively.

**Mr. Zulqarnain** (Pakistan): At the outset, we wish to thank you, Mr. President, for your very able leadership. We also commend the coordinators for their tireless efforts.

My delegation voted in favour of the omnibus resolution 74/306, on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), to reaffirm global solidarity in our fight against the pandemic. It was important that the General Assembly pronounced itself collectively to show our unity in the face of a common threat. We agreed to the swift conclusion of this process in the sole consideration that it end during your presidency, which has been heavily affected by the pandemic.

However, my delegation has serious reservations on the way this process was carried out. Notwithstanding the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis, the format was in no way appropriate for such an important document. For example, Member States could not engage in text-based negotiations, resulting in the omission of several important elements from the text we adopted today and a lack of balance in the final document.

While we voted in favour of the resolution, we wish to place on the record that we do not think that the text is balanced or that it constitutes intergovernmentally agreed language. We therefore reserve the right to disassociate ourselves from the language in some elements of the resolution if they are proposed in future negotiations, especially in the coming sessions.

**Mr. Jisheng Xing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The omnibus resolution 74/306, on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), reaffirms our commitment to multilateralism and fully recognizes the important role of the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO). It calls upon the international community to strengthen solidarity, increase support for developing countries and intensify efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It voices clear opposition to the racism, xenophobia, hate speech and stigmatization associated with COVID-19.

China voted in favour of the resolution. We commend the President of the General Assembly and the co-facilitators for their work. We regret that the United States obstructed international consensus on the resolution, and chose to stand on the opposite side of the international community. Unilateral coercive measures violate international law and seriously impair people's health and the post-pandemic recovery and development of the sanctioned countries. We urge the United States and other countries concerned to heed the voice of justice from the international community and immediately lift unilateral coercive measures.

The provision of the resolution about promoting global sustainable transport is consistent with the general aspirations of the international community for enhancing interconnectivity. China finds it regrettable that the United States has obstructed international consensus on this issue.

Even as China faces tremendous pressure at home with regard to the COVID-19 response, we have provided assistance to combat the pandemic to 150 countries and four international organization, and have exported medical supplies to more than 200 countries and regions. China will continue to work together with the international community in the fight against the pandemic.

At this solemn moment in the Hall, as the General Assembly calls for solidarity in the fight against COVID-19, the United States representative once again projected a jarring voice in a renewed attempt to turn facts on their head, again pulling out all stops to shift the blame and spread the political virus, which China firmly opposes and categorically rejects.

I must point out that China brought COVID-19 under control on its soil within a very short time and started to offer assistance and supplies to countries around the world, including the United States. All of that was achieved under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The Chinese people will never allow any individual or force to misrepresent or vilify the Communist Party of China.

Since the onset of COVID-19, China has been sharing epidemiological information with the international community on a continued basis in an open, transparent and responsible manner. As early as 3 January, China began regular, official communication with the United States on the pandemic.

On the other hand, according to media reports, the United States was aware of the risks of COVID-19 in the very early days, but deliberately chose to downplay its seriousness so as to "avoid panic". Who, then, has been concealing the truth? Why does the United States boast the most sophisticated medical technologies and the most advanced medical systems in the world and, simultaneously, hold the record for the highest number of infections? Why did New York become the epicentre, so much so that United Nations Headquarters was forced to go into lockdown in its seventy-fifth anniversary year?

I think the truth is now abundantly clear to the international community and the lies and deception of the United States are way past their sell-by date. If the United States is genuinely serious about fighting COVID-19, it should get down to business and focus on protecting the lives and health of their own people instead of running to shift the blame, shirk responsibility and divert attention. If the United States is serious about fighting COVID-19, it should immediately lift unilateral sanctions, which are in breach of international law and the basic norms of international relations, instead of going out of their way to sabotage other countries' responses to the crisis. If the United States is serious about fighting COVID-19, it should return to the path of solidarity, collaboration and multilateralism, which is the only humane way, instead of pulling out of the World Health Organization (WHO) and defunding it, thus undermining the WHO's actions in support of national efforts.

China calls on the United Nations membership to collectively demand that the United States respect facts and science with regard to COVID-19, show genuine care for the well-being of the international community, including the lives and health of its own population, and cease and desist from spreading the political virus, thus pitting themselves against the international family and slipping further and further down the wrong path.

**Mr. Ilnytskyi (Ukraine):** At the outset, let me express my gratitude to the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia for their leadership and efforts to present a consolidated omnibus resolution aimed at countering the global challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

I would like to join Hungary and other delegations that have expressed concern with the adoption of such an important document by a recorded vote. I also

support many of the points made by the delegations of Mexico and Israel in that regard. We regret that the omnibus resolution 74/306 was blocked from being adopted by consensus due to a last-minute amendment to paragraph 20.

In that regard, my delegation wishes to put on record that Ukraine disassociates itself from paragraph 20 of the resolution, due to the reasons expressed in my delegation's explanation of vote during the adoption of the amendment contained in document A/74/L.93. It is disappointing that so many delegations, including my own, have disassociated themselves with paragraphs of the resolution. Other delegations have openly stated that they would not implement entire paragraphs, which clearly undermines the resolution's authority.

We regret that the resolution was put on the fast-track after so many months of deliberations. With so many reservations, disassociations and even assertions from certain countries that they will not implement or follow entire paragraphs of the text, the resolution has been deeply weakened due to the politicization of COVID-19 and propaganda around the issue of sanctions. It is utterly regrettable.

**Mr. Reed** (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking you, Mr. President, for your quick work early on in the pandemic to appoint two coordinators to manage the General Assembly's work on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). That has enabled us to come together to address the pandemic over the past few months.

I would also like to put on record our deepest thanks to Ambassadors Raz and Šimonović and their teams for their heroic efforts in steering that process. As we said all the way back in the first town hall in April, we knew this would not be an easy process, but we believe that it was worth doing, and worth doing well.

The text has many strengths. It reaffirms our commitment to international cooperation, multilateralism and solidarity. It calls upon Member States to ensure that all human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled while combating the pandemic. As the Secretary-General himself has said, human rights can and must guide the COVID-19 response and recovery.

The text recognizes the negative impact the pandemic is having on global humanitarian need and reaffirms the need to ensure the safe, timely

and unhindered access of humanitarian and medical personnel responding to the pandemic. It calls upon all Member States to strengthen health systems and to recognize the value of an integrated One Health approach. We particularly welcome the recognition that mitigation of anti-microbial resistance is vital to ensuring preparedness and prevention for pandemics.

It also urges us to all do better by aligning our domestic policies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. On climate change, as President of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Kingdom will continue to champion action as we rebuild better.

We also want to express our firm support for the language included on sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is a vital part of the pandemic response.

Of course, the text could have been strengthened further, were it not for some Member States drawing artificial red lines. That includes resistance to the inclusion of references to, *inter alia*, human rights defenders, when those are the people on the front lines in the pandemic. It also includes a refusal to recognize the disproportionate impact that the pandemic is having on marginalized people, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex community.

Nevertheless, while we regret that we do not have complete consensus on the text, we do welcome its adoption. We once again thank the co-coordinators and their teams for steering the ship over the past few months.

**Mr. Rugeles** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the coordinators, Croatia and Afghanistan, for their extraordinary work, which has enabled us to reach our goal. Throughout the process, they demonstrated tremendous professionalism, transparency and a balanced vision of the issues.

From the beginning, my delegation enthusiastically welcomed the initiative of drafting an omnibus resolution on coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The situation required the quick reaction of States and agreement among them on certain fundamental principles and action in order to comprehensively respond to the pandemic together.



As a matter of principle, however, my delegation regrets that a consensus was not reached on the resolution. Unfortunately, we had to vote on it, and that was not our wish. We are living in extraordinary times that require extraordinary measures, enormous flexibility and above all boldness on the part of each of us. We cannot be complacent in the face of a world that is asking the United Nations and each of its States Members for answers. We must be unified and leave behind fragmentation. Greater international cooperation and greater solidarity are required, all within the framework of strict respect for the principles of international law.

The vote we took today sends some clear messages to the world — from the United Nations to the world — because the world was expecting swift action. Indeed, it was expecting the United Nations to take up a great responsibility and show leadership. Today, my delegation would like to make one message very clear, namely, that we must all — all — work together to build the United Nations of the future, and we must all strengthen multilateralism, because it is our duty, and it is a duty that all of our peoples are asking us to fulfil.

**Mr. Lam Padilla** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala voted in favour of resolution 74/306, entitled “Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, which was skilfully facilitated by the Ambassadors of Afghanistan and Croatia.

Guatemala supports the substance of the resolution, based as it is on the solidarity, cooperation and medical assistance that must be provided during this pandemic. The impact of this disease on the most vulnerable groups, including migrants, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities, is also a concern.

Nevertheless, we would like to state that we express our reservation with respect to paragraph 7 of the resolution, since the term “reproductive rights” could be erroneously interpreted, given that our national legislation contemplates sexual and reproductive health policies, and not sexual and reproductive rights, which could be interpreted as a right to abortion or abortion practices that contravene Guatemala’s national legislation.

**Ms. Pyo** (Republic of Korea): Before I deliver this explanation of vote on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Korea, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the coordinators, the Permanent

Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia, for their dedicated leadership on the resolution just adopted, entitled “Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic” (resolution 74/306).

Today, the Republic of Korea voted in favour of the resolution. The unprecedented challenges posed by the present crisis warrant a unified global response, and my delegation believes that the resolution adopted today provides a wide range of useful tools for promoting an effective response based on international cooperation and solidarity.

However, the Republic of Korea voted against the amended paragraph 20. The paragraph in question is from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted nearly five years ago. My delegation believes that the language does not fully address the challenges and needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic today.

My delegation also emphasizes the importance of timely delivery of humanitarian assistance in addressing the COVID-19 crisis. We appreciate that relevant humanitarian exemptions to sanctions measures are being adequately provided to this end.

**The President:** We will now hear a statement after the adoption of the resolution.

**Archbishop Caccia** (Holy See): At the outset, I would like to express thanks to the coordinators, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ms. Adela Raz, and the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Mr. Ivan Šimonović, for their work.

Pope Francis recently underscored that

“the current pandemic has highlighted our interdependence: we are all connected to each other, for better or for worse. Therefore, to emerge from this crisis better than before, we have to do so together” .

Because of this the Holy See supported the idea of this omnibus resolution (resolution 74/306) from the beginning and during the negotiations emphasized the need for a common and consensus-based approach. It is unfortunate that this omnibus resolution, launched as a means of showing the world that the General Assembly stands as one, has been adopted without a consensus. Like many others, the Holy See would have preferred

to see much more time given to discussion on the difficult issues.

As for the specific content of the resolution, my delegation would like to make the following points and express one reservation.

Extensive immunization could be a global public good, provided that vaccines are not only adequate, safe, quality, efficacious and effective, but also free from ethical concerns and, especially, available to all. We regret the exclusion of faith-based organizations from the list of those that play an important role in response to the pandemic. Through their hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, schools and charitable organizations, faith-based organizations support people on the ground, especially those most affected by the pandemic.

Furthermore, religious leaders are crucial in promoting dialogue and tolerance. The wording, however, of the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 4 should have followed applicable, agreed language from consensual resolutions of the General Assembly to ensure the safeguarding of freedom of religion and belief and freedom of expression in this context. The inclusion of specific references to older persons in the text is crucial, considering the impact the pandemic has had on the elderly in many countries. This concern should have been buttressed by stressing that health-care decisions affecting older persons should always respect their right to life and never be interpreted otherwise.

We are pleased to see consideration given to the international debt architecture and the international financial system as an integral part of our common response to the pandemic. However, stronger language about the need to renew the international financial architecture would have given the text greater impact. Reduction, if not cancellation, of the debt burdening the poorest nations is essential to ensure that all countries are put in a position to meet the needs of their people during the pandemic.

We applaud the inclusion of comprehensive language about climate change and the protection of the environment. In this regard, it is essential to ensure that recovery strategies integrate all three pillars of climate action: mitigation, adaptation and resilience. The pandemic should not reduce the attention we pay to the climate crisis, which continues to be one of the most serious global emergencies.

Finally, the Holy See reiterates, in line with its reservation expressed at the international conferences held in Beijing and Cairo, that it considers the phrase “reproductive health and related terms” as applying to a holistic concept of health that embraces the person in the entirety of his or her personality, mind and body. In particular, the Holy See rejects the interpretation that considers abortion or access to abortion, sex-selective abortion, abortion of fetuses diagnosed with health challenges, maternal surrogacy and sterilization as dimensions of “reproductive health,” or as part of universal health coverage.

**Ms. Raz** (Afghanistan): I have the honour to speak in my national capacity as well as in my capacity as one of the General Assembly coordinators on initiatives relating to coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

First, I would like to express Afghanistan's solidarity with States Members of the United Nations that are fighting COVID-19. We extend our sincere sympathy and condolences to those who have lost loved ones.

Resolution 74/306, on the comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease pandemic, not only serves to coordinate our response to COVID-19, but is also a tribute to the victims of the pandemic. I reiterate my admiration for the leadership and vision of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Muhammad-Bande. His support for and trust in the coordinators, Afghanistan and Croatia, have been instrumental to the success of the resolution. Throughout the process, his team helped us with their expertise, for which we are very grateful. We are also thankful for the leadership of the Secretary-General and his Office, and for the knowledge that the Secretariat experts shared in terms of technical assistance and essential advice.

During the past six months, the General Assembly has shown incredible commitment to formulating a comprehensive, coordinated and action-oriented response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe that resolution 74/306 very much responds to the moment. As we meet today, more than 900,000 have died from COVID-19, and more than 25 million people have been infected with the virus. The world is experiencing the worst economic recession since the Second World War. Inequality and poverty are increasing, and more people are experiencing hunger. We are indeed facing the most significant global catastrophe since the founding of this important Organization, the United Nations.

Today, we have seen that the General Assembly is ready to respond. Although we would like to have seen a resolution adopted by consensus, we nevertheless do see that the General Assembly can be united in supporting solidarity and cooperation among States, generations and institutions. Working together, we resolve to serve the most vulnerable among us, and we have made a united commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the blueprint for building back better after the pandemic.

The resolution adopted today formalizes our agreement and harmony. It provides the Assembly with the support it needs for the critical work of the Secretary-General, and it encourages further action by Governments, civil society organizations, international organizations and the private sector. The strong message from the General Assembly today is important at this time. I wholeheartedly believe that the resolution will make a real difference on the ground and will set the stage for a better world for the next generation.

In conclusion, I reiterate my appreciation as well as that of my fellow coordinator, Ambassador Ivan Šimonović, to all States Members of the United Nations for their constructive and meaningful engagement throughout the process. Thanks to the flexibility they have shown and to their dedication to the bigger and greater good of all, the adoption of resolution 74/306 is their success and a testament to their hard work and their efforts.

**The President:** I would like to express my appreciation to the entire membership of the General Assembly for their patience and engagement in the process that got us here. Obviously, the really important work of Ambassadors Raz and Šimonović and their teams is outstanding. They have done the very best under difficult circumstances, but they have done the hard work needed. They have listened and done everything they could to engage the Secretariat and whomever could help us get to where we are today. I have no speech to make other than to thank them on behalf of the General Assembly for the outstanding work they have done.

The meaning of resolution 74/306 is well known to us. All the statements made have made reference to the importance of this resolution. Of course, others have also mentioned the need not just for the resolution, but to see that we live up to the commitments we have made.

By way of conclusion, I would simply say that the adoption of resolution 74/306 is an outstanding step for the General Assembly, which I thank on behalf of the facilitators, who worked so diligently with my Office.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda items 14 and 120?

*It was so decided.*

#### **Agenda item 115 (continued)**

#### **Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments**

##### **(i) Appointment of members of the Board of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns**

**The President:** The General Assembly will now turn to the appointment of members of the Board of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, in order to replace those members whose term of office expired on 15 September 2019.

Members will recall that by its resolution 67/203, of 21 December 2012, the Assembly decided to establish the 10-member Board, consisting of two members from each United Nations regional group. Members will also recall that by its resolution 69/214, of 19 December 2014, the Assembly decided that the duration of subsequent terms for members of the Board shall continue to be two years, starting on 16 September of every second year, and that United Nations regional groups may renominate one of their existing two members of the Board for one consecutive term, while ensuring that no Member State is eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms and taking into account the importance of ensuring continuity and rotation in the work of the Board. In that regard, the Secretariat has received the nomination of Bhutan.

I would like to note that Bhutan has already served one term, from 2017 to 2019, and that it has been renominated by the Group of Asia-Pacific States for another term, from 2019 to 2021. In that connection, may I take it that the General Assembly wishes to appoint Bhutan as a member of the Board of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns for a term beginning on 11 September 2020 and ending on 15 September 2021?

*It was so decided* (decision 74/414 B).

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 115 and of agenda item 115 as a whole?

*It was so decided.*

## **Agenda item 123 (continued)**

### **Strengthening of the United Nations system**

#### **Draft resolution (A/74/L.57)**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia to introduce draft resolution A/74/L.57.

**Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, allow me to express my appreciation and gratitude to you, Mr. President, for your exceptional leadership of the General Assembly during your presidency, above all during the difficult times that we have been going through owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). You have played a personal role in ensuring that we remain steady and balanced as we proceed on the path of the work of the Assembly and of the United Nations in general. Indeed, you have been essential in maintaining and preserving the effectiveness of the Organization in these difficult times.

We are meeting at a time when we are facing one of the greatest public health challenges ever, the COVID-19 pandemic. With more than a million victims in less than nine months and with 24 million people infected worldwide, it is a threat to public health. It has also brought with it economic damage, causing life itself to grind to a halt and forcing many people into unwanted isolation.

This ferocious pandemic does not discriminate between men or women, young or old. Therefore, I would like, at this juncture, to express my condolences to the people all over the world, wherever they may be, who have lost those who were close to them. We wish a swift recovery to all those who are ill and express our gratitude to all of those who are working on the front lines of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic with which the entire world is grappling.

As we face this unprecedented pandemic, which has demonstrated to us the global system's fragility in tackling a virus that we cannot see with our eyes and yet has yet caused catastrophic damage, it is a warning

for us to be better prepared to address such scourges in future. We are better aware now of the importance of cooperation and coordination and the need to set aside our differences in order to identify a transparent and global approach. Before it is too late, we must establish a firm, balanced and comprehensive foundation for sustainable development that will allow the United Nations to lead cooperation around the world and successfully address this threat.

From the beginning of the crisis, together with Bahrain, Canada, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Arab Republic of Egypt has taken the initiative of drawing up a draft resolution, under agenda item 123, calling for greater cooperation in developing tangible and robust methods for combating COVID-19 (A/74/L.57). The draft resolution is entitled "United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19".

We have based our work on the conclusions of the Group of Twenty summit, held in March 2020, which called for the participation of a large number of States and international organizations to come up with joint measures to combat this scourge with a view to alleviating its impact in the economic, social and public health spheres and to coordinating efforts around the world.

From the outset of the drafting process, we have worked with every regional group, making sure to include the concerns of all States. Indeed, we have made every effort to ensure that the draft resolution would, in its final form, be balanced, in line with the interests of all Member States, and capable of assisting all developing countries without discrimination or exclusion and in a timely fashion. Our purpose was to address the crisis in a manner such that the draft resolution could meet the needs of all Member States and thereby enjoy consensus.

It is regrettable that the silence procedure was broken. Nevertheless, in its final form the draft resolution reflects the viewpoints of 120 States, and the level of support it has received reflects its underlying power to assist all States, in particular developing States, as well as such marginalized groups as the elderly and women, with a view to addressing the crisis.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as Bahrain, Canada, Egypt, Oman, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, we hereby



submit draft resolution A/ 74/L.57, entitled “United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19”, in the hope that it will be adopted by consensus so that, if all of our differences are set aside, we can focus our efforts on the crisis. Cooperation and understanding are the only way for us to overcome it and achieve prosperity and development for all peoples and societies, as well as humankind itself.

**The President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/74/L.57.

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

**Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have requested the floor to inquire about the procedural rules governing the issue of the letter sent by a number of Member States on the draft resolution contained in document A/74/L.57, which, as you will recall, Mr. President, the General Assembly did not adopt by consensus once the silence procedure was broken. We refer in this regard to the procedures on the adoption of draft resolutions, as set forth in decision 74/544, dated 27 March 2020, entitled “Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, which imposes the rule of consensus as a condition for the adoption of such decisions. In that regard, I would like to present our procedural and legal understanding of the draft resolution entitled “United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19”, co-sponsored by the Permanent Missions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Canada, Lebanon, Bahrain, the Arab Republic of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, as well as a number of other Member States. The draft resolution, contained in document A/74/L.57, was submitted in April.

In terms of procedure and practice, requests of the co-sponsors cannot be reconsidered, since copies of the draft resolution have not been circulated to delegations and we were not informed that the draft resolution would be put to the vote or discussed not later than the day preceding the meeting, in accordance with rule 120 of the rules of procedure. In terms of substance, the letter dated 3 September from the co-sponsors addressed to the President of the General Assembly includes many major fallacies, including describing the draft resolution, which was not adopted because the

silence was broken, as one of the adopted resolutions of which the General Assembly should take note at its first plenary meeting, to be held as soon as circumstances allow. That action is not in line with decision 74/544, paragraph (b):

“Decided that, if the silence is not broken, the decision should be considered adopted, and the General Assembly should take note of the decision at its first plenary meeting held after the cessation of the precautionary measures as soon as the circumstances allow”.

I would like to remind Member States of the following facts.

First, as is known to all, draft resolution A/74/L.57 was not adopted because the silence was broken by a number of States. In that regard, I would like to refer to a letter dated 22 April 2020 from the President of the General Assembly, in which he notifies Member States that the silence was broken and that the draft resolution has therefore not been adopted. The letter naturally did not include any indication that any procedure would be taken at a later stage or that the draft resolution would be reconsidered once the plenary meetings resumed.

Secondly, as Member States are aware, there are a number of other draft resolutions on which the silence was broken during the period of precautionary measures taken by the General Assembly to limit the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Those draft resolutions, which were not adopted, were not included for reconsideration once the plenary meetings resumed. That affirms our correct understanding of the substance of decision 74/544.

Thirdly, on 20 April, the President of the General Assembly appointed the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan and Croatia as co-facilitators to work on unifying and coordinating the initiatives on COVID-19 to enhance the international response to that challenge and to take appropriate measures to deal with its social, economic and health impacts. In that letter, the President of the General Assembly referred to the proliferation of COVID-19-related draft resolutions and the need to agree on coordinated efforts and initiatives in that regard. We still believe that we need to work collectively and in a balanced and non-politicized manner, without any impediments and discrimination. We believe that we should not fall into the trap of the proliferation of resolutions and overlapping mandates. Only minutes ago, we adopted resolution 74/306, the

omnibus resolution on combating the health, social and economic impacts of COVID-19, which I just mentioned.

In conclusion, we are not discussing the substance of the draft resolution contained in document A/74/L.57. The substance of that draft resolution was not the subject of negotiation, deliberation or any transparent discussion. There has not been a single meeting to discuss the substance of the draft resolution. We are discussing the issue in terms of procedure and legal understanding. We want realistic answers to be provided by the President of the General Assembly and a legal understanding based on the rules of procedure that govern the work of the General Assembly.

**The President:** To explain that our understanding is clear: the silence procedure was broken; it was not that draft resolution A/74/L.57 was rejected. At the time, the procedures were such that any objection, regardless of number, meant that the silence was broken and the matter was not rejected as such. It was simply that that was the understanding.

We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote before the vote.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/74/L.57, entitled “United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19”.

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

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/74/L.57: Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Côte d’Ivoire, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, New Zealand, the Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe,

Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Spain, the State of Palestine, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Togo, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**The President:** A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia,

Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia,  
Slovenia, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic

*Draft resolution A/74/L.57 was adopted  
by 122 votes to none, with 31 abstentions  
(resolution 74/307).*

**The President:** In view of the lateness of the  
hour, we will hear the remaining speakers at 3 p.m. on  
Monday, 14 September, in this Hall.

*The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.*