



General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

103rd plenary meeting
Friday, 10 September 2021, 12.30 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Bozkır (Turkey)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Arriola Ramírez (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 12.30 p.m.

Agenda item 126 (continued)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/75/973)

Draft resolution (A/75/973, paragraph 27)

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We shall now proceed to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/75/973, paragraph 27. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Ochalik (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Under the terms of operative paragraph 47 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretariat to continue to improve, harmonize and unify e-services provided to Member States under the e-deleGATE portal with a view to creating a full-fledged online workplace for delegates in all six official languages in order to save costs, reduce the environmental impact and improve the distribution of documents.

Pursuant to operative paragraph 47, the creation of a full-fledged delegates' online workplace in all six official languages would require non-recurrent

systems development and translation services giving rise to budgetary implications of between \$50,000 and \$85,000 under the proposed programme budget for 2023 for section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management. Detailed cost estimates can be determined only after further analysis of the system development and translation requirements.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, detailed resource requirements would be included in the proposed programme budget for 2023.

The statement I just read was distributed through the plenary place on the e-deleGATE portal and will be made available in the *Journal of the United Nations* under the e-statements link for the meeting.

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

Mr. Dundon (Australia): I am pleased to deliver this statement today on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and my own country, Australia (CANZ). I would like to begin by thanking Ambassadors González López and Mlynár for their leadership of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. CANZ commends the co-Chairs for an action-oriented draft resolution (A/75/973, paragraph 27) containing many practical and

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concrete steps aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the General Assembly. The resolution to be adopted today is the product of an ambitious zero draft, a transparent and inclusive consultation process and a willingness on the part of all delegations to engage constructively. In our view, this year's draft resolution makes meaningful progress on a broad range of important reform issues that if implemented effectively will deliver a more representative and inclusive Organization. Among the many new measures agreed on, the decision to biennialize the revitalization process itself is one that CANZ warmly welcomes. It is our hope that biennialization in this forum will pave the way for the further streamlining of other processes in the Assembly.

As we approach high-level week, CANZ is also pleased that progress has been made on limiting the number of side events in the margins of the general debate and that the decision was made to bring forward the opening of the General Assembly, allowing the incoming President more time to prepare for the busiest event of the session. Our delegations welcome new commitments to increasing women's representation in high-level meetings of the General Assembly, including achieving gender parity among invited speakers and panellists and new language inviting the nomination of women candidates for the role of Secretary-General. CANZ would like to thank the Secretariat and the Office of the President of the General Assembly for their support and guidance throughout this process, and we thank all delegations for showing flexibility and an eagerness to agree on practical reforms. While we have made significant progress on the revitalization agenda this year, it is now incumbent on every delegation to ensure that the measures are implemented effectively and without delay. Australia, Canada and New Zealand look forward to working with all delegations throughout the upcoming seventy-sixth session to advance the proposals contained in this and previous revitalization resolutions.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I would like to start by offering my thanks and congratulations to this year's co-facilitators for the Alignment Process, Bangladesh and Slovenia, and to the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, El Salvador and Slovakia. The fact that we were able to achieve so much against such a challenging backdrop speaks to their professionalism, determination and leadership. I

also want to congratulate fellow delegates on the hard work, ambition and spirit of flexibility they have shown throughout the year.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations offered us a unique opportunity to reinvigorate the United Nations and ensure that it remains fit for purpose for the future, and I am glad that we took the opportunity. This year's draft resolution (A/75/973, paragraph 27) and report of the Ad Hoc Working Group (A/75/973) goes further than any recent agreement. We have made considerable progress in several key areas across both the revitalization and alignment agendas. First, we welcome the progress on working methods and a plan to appoint focal points to address the General Assembly's overloaded agenda. Secondly, we welcome the biennialization of the revitalization process and the triennialization of alignment, with a fresh emphasis on implementation in the intervening years. Thirdly, we welcome the adjustments made to the process for recruiting future Secretaries-General.

While we have made significant progress this year, more remains to be done. We must all maintain our high ambitions in the years ahead. So, building on this year's momentum and heeding the call in the Secretary-General's report on Our Common Agenda (A/75/982), let us commit to implementing this draft resolution to ensure a more effective and efficient General Assembly.

I want to underline our congratulations on a successful and ambitious session of the Ad Hoc Working Group. We look forward to continued cooperation in the years ahead.

Mr. Espinosa Cañizares (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank President Bozkır and his team for their work. They have shown us that in difficult times and equally difficult conditions it is still possible to strengthen the work of the Assembly. I would also like to express Ecuador's deep gratitude to the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassadors Egriselda González López of El Salvador and Michal Mlynár of Slovakia, not just for the important progress that has been made in the revitalization of the General Assembly, but also for the revitalization of the revitalization process.

I would like to make three specific and fundamental points. First, I want to highlight that the draft resolution contained in paragraph 27 of document A/75/973 reiterates the importance of ensuring that the Security

Council continues its endeavours to provide an annual report to the General Assembly in compliance with resolution 58/126, which urges the Council to continue initiatives designed to improve the quality of the report with a substantive, analytical and material account of its work.

Secondly, I would like to highlight the amendment to rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, whereby effective from the seventy-eighth session the General Assembly will begin its work one week earlier, thus allowing two weeks of preparation between the beginning of the session and the general debate. That is something that we have been working on for years and that has finally become a reality.

Thirdly, today the General Assembly welcomes the initiatives of States aimed at strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, including through a transition workshop that includes revitalization among its main components. In that regard, on 3 September it was my honour to inaugurate, together with President Volkan Bozkır of the General Assembly and with the President-elect for the upcoming session, the first such workshop for the transition between teams, with the participation of the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group. The workshop, organized by Finland, Malaysia and Ecuador with the support of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the full support of the Offices of the President of the General Assembly, current and elect, also reflects the strengthening of this process, to which Ecuador will continue to contribute. Ecuador thus joins the consensus in adopting the draft resolution before us.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position before adoption. The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”, contained in paragraph 27 of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/75/973).

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution contained in paragraph 27 of document A/75/973 was adopted (resolution 75/325).

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor for explanations of position after

adoption, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Hermann (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group (ACT), which is a cross-regional group of 27 small and mid-sized States, including my own country, Denmark.

At the outset, ACT would like to take this opportunity to pay a very special tribute to Their Excellencies Mrs. Egriselda González López, Permanent Representative of El Salvador, and Mr. Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, for their dedicated work as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, and not least for their efforts to hold in-person negotiations as much as possible despite the extraordinary circumstances imposed by the pandemic.

While the coronavirus disease pandemic has naturally affected the work of the General Assembly and of the United Nations more generally, it has also offered us an opportunity to reflect on the Assembly’s effectiveness at adapting its working methods in a way that will enable us to continue to address global challenges as they evolve. ACT welcomes the progress made in resolution 75/325 and the spirit of collaboration shown by the Member States and groups participating in the negotiations. We have looked at possibilities for further streamlining our agenda, dedicating more time to genuine dialogue, reviewing the implementation of resolutions and furthering the quality and effectiveness of working methods. I think we also made important strides by adjusting the starting date of future General Assembly sessions. We adopted new guidelines to limit the number of high-level events, as well as side events held in the margins of the general debate, and we took new initiatives to strengthen the work of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, all very important measures.

In addition, we have addressed the multiplicity and overlap of events and issues by incorporating the recommendations made by the alignment process regarding the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, especially the Second and Third Committees, in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Furthermore, we celebrate the resolution's call for gender parity for all high-level events and for senior level positions, and its recognition that there has yet to be a female Secretary-General, while inviting Member States to bear that in mind in future when nominating candidates for the position of the Secretary-General.

ACT set out in these proceedings with the aim of achieving an enhanced, transparent and inclusive General Assembly. While the outcome document is certainly a step in the right direction, there are discussions and issues that remain unresolved and that we must bring with us into the seventy-seventh session. ACT would therefore like to emphasize that it considers the following aspects of the nomination and selection process of the Secretary-General to be pending.

First, we call for a clarified timeline for the overall process, a structured time frame that calls for the process to start in October of the year preceding the appointment and includes a deadline for the presentation of candidates in order to ensure a transparent and inclusive process. That will ease procedural burdens and improve the clarity of the process for Member States and candidates alike.

Secondly, we will continue to call for further exploration of the prospect of the Security Council's recommending multiple candidates for the General Assembly's consideration. ACT believes that the selection process for the world's foremost diplomatic post should be as thorough as possible.

Thirdly, while we stand firm and steadfast in our support for the Secretary-General as he begins his second term, we maintain our principled call that it is highly appropriate as well as historically very important to ensure that after 80 years of uninterrupted male leadership, this Organization selects a female Secretary-General. In that respect, we recognize the importance of inviting Member States to present female candidates, as we agreed this year in paragraph 68 of the resolution. The Group strongly encourages the Security Council to put forward women for appointment by the General Assembly.

Fourthly, we reiterate our call for a thorough discussion on the term of office of the Secretary-General, including the consideration of a term that is longer, but single and non-renewable, for future Secretaries-General. ACT looks forward to discussions with the entire membership well before the appointment of the term anticipated to begin in 2027.

ACT also requests further discussion on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly with a view to ensuring its more substantive, analytical and material account. Without interfering in the prerogatives and mandates of the Charter regarding the Security Council, this will facilitate and strengthen the indispensable and symbiotic relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.

Strengthening the work of the General Assembly is key to ensuring that this chief deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations remains relevant, adaptable and, most importantly, capable of addressing the plethora of global problems that require truly global solutions.

Ms. Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the end of the term of the current Secretary-General, this Organization will have been led exclusively by men for 80 uninterrupted years. That is 80 years during which patriarchy, hard security and toxic militarism have thrived and during which women and girls have been told that they just do not have what it takes to be the most important diplomat in the world. That begins with the Charter of the United Nations itself, which states that "he shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization". This error is compounded by General Assembly resolution 11 (I), of 1946, which states that the Secretary-General must be a man of eminence. While we appreciate that qualified women candidates are increasingly being considered for the position, good intentions are not enough. We judge policies not by their intentions but by their results, and so far the results have always and exclusively produced a man at the helm of the Organization.

However, with resolution 75/325, the General Assembly is united in declaring that 80 years is too long. We hold the United Nations and ourselves to a higher standard. This Organization has set the standard for the rest of the world with Sustainable Development Goal 5 but has not yet lived up to its own recommendations. With today's resolution Member States now acknowledge for the first time that it is high time for a woman Secretary-General. Make no mistake, the road to get us here was not easy. This is not the text that Costa Rica wanted. We made compromises with those who thought it was too progressive or bold to call for elevating women to the thirty-eighth floor of this building, and those who thought that prioritizing female candidates or even requesting gender-balanced shortlists from the Security Council was going too far.

(spoke in English)

Eighty years of uninterrupted male leadership is not an accident or a coincidence. It is intentional. And our calls for a woman at the helm of the United Nations must therefore be intentional as well. Costa Rica also welcomes this resolution's call for parity at all levels and high-level positions. Parity is a requisite for democracy. It is a floor, not a ceiling. It is a cultural change that this institution must adopt and promote, because if we fail to take decisive action, we will not reach parity at the pinnacle of power for another 130 years. As long as parity is an incomplete endeavour, the United Nations will be an incomplete endeavour. But change is coming. We stand ready to welcome and celebrate Her Excellency the tenth Secretary-General as she takes office on 1 January 2027, when we will look back on this resolution and recognize the momentum it helped to build before we move on to the next struggle for equality for women in international politics.

Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia): It is a pleasure to see you presiding over this meeting today, Mr. Vice-President. I am taking the floor on behalf of myself and my co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, my distinguished colleague and friend, Ambassador Egriselda González López, Permanent Representative of El Salvador. First and foremost, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to all delegations for the consensus that we reached in order to enable us to adopt resolution 75/325, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly".

Recalling the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1), it is clear that the commitment to multilateralism and to continued work to revitalize the Assembly is a crucial priority for the international community today. In that regard, the revitalization of the General Assembly, as the main deliberative and decision-making organ of the United Nations, plays a key and indispensable role in the overall reform of the Organization and in strengthening multilateralism. Today more than ever multilateralism must be improved so that we can address the challenges facing humanity in an increasingly interdependent and interconnected world. That is a long-term process, and this year's resolution should be seen as a progressive achievement in a process that must continue and be strengthened in the years ahead. One of the most important aspects of revitalizing the General Assembly, after all, is making

sure that we are continually building a multilateral system that is relevant, flexible, agile and able to react to our common challenges. It is probably not a coincidence — and we are happy to acknowledge it — that the adoption of the revitalization resolution comes just after this morning's presentation by the Secretary-General of his report on Our Common Agenda (A/75/982) and the ensuing important debate on the report, which certainly includes the revitalization of the United Nations and of the General Assembly in particular.

After last year's technical rollover resolution, I am also personally happy to say that today, thanks to the current set of strict precautionary anti-pandemic measures at United Nations Headquarters, it was possible to conduct a full-fledged process, starting with a standard general debate, four consecutive thematic debates and an interactive dialogue between the Permanent Missions and the Secretariat. But what is more important is that we have managed to carry out proper negotiations on the text of the resolution through in-person meetings, and I make so bold as to say that all delegations have greatly benefited from the important opportunity to engage face to face on many aspects of the draft, as several delegations have already kindly mentioned.

I would like to very briefly highlight the most important deliberations we managed to deliver on this year. First, with a view to leading by example and revitalizing the revitalization process — if I can say that — this year we have agreed that beginning with the next session, the Ad Hoc Working Group will conduct the revitalization process on a biennial basis. That will enable us to better focus our efforts on the implementation of decisions in greater detail and to reflect in depth on future actions.

Secondly, regarding the role and authority of the General Assembly, we took important steps to strengthen the relationship between the principal organs of the United Nations, with particular emphasis on the important interactions between the General Assembly and the Security Council. We also established practical measures designed to preserve the primacy, significance and established practices of the general debate of the General Assembly, which will start again in less than two weeks.

Thirdly, in the light of the experience that the General Assembly has gained during the pandemic,

we carefully considered the current situation of our methods of work. Indeed, the pandemic has taught us many lessons, and we are duty-bound to do our best to learn from them and take them into account in our future work. In that regard, bearing in mind that such methods must keep pace with and adapt to evolving circumstances, we acknowledged the important role of the use of information and communication technologies in the work of the General Assembly and for which we intend to further discuss possible lessons learned from the pandemic, with a view to ensuring resilience and better preparedness in exceptional circumstances. The issue of digital technology is of course here to stay and would require further deliberations and efforts.

A further substantive decision reflected in the recommendations of the Working Group concerns the amendment to rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, allowing the session to start on the Tuesday of the second week of September — one week earlier than it does now — in order to provide more time for the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and for the President him- or herself, to prepare for the general debate and high-level week. As we know, that will take effect as of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Fourthly, we firmly addressed the issues related to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads, which have long been a key component of the revitalization efforts. We believe that the Ad Hoc Working Group has taken important steps to improve the process and to continue to ensure that it is guided by the principles of transparency and inclusiveness. A milestone in this important process has also been the recognition that there is yet to be a woman Secretary-General.

Finally, recognizing the important role played by the Presidency of the General Assembly, the Working Group intends to review in depth the functioning of the Office of the President of the General Assembly during the seventy-seventh session with a view to strengthening it further.

Where revitalization is concerned, consensus has been, so to speak, a golden rule accepted for many years. This year was no exception in that regard. Following a series of informal consultations, the text was unanimously agreed during the formal meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on 27 July.

On behalf of the co-Chairs, I would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkır, for the trust placed in us to steer this very important process during this session. I would also like to express my gratitude for the active and constructive engagement of the representatives of all the Member States who took part in the negotiation process, providing valuable input. Our thanks also go to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for the advice and support provided throughout the process.

Finally, if I may, and on a personal note, let me express my deep appreciation for the trust that Member States have placed in me to be one of the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group for three consecutive sessions. It is an experience that has unquestionably enabled me to attest to the great relevance of this intergovernmental process. I want to encourage all Member States, Permanent Representatives, Deputy Permanent Representatives and experts to maintain their focus on the process and to uphold its importance so that we can concretize the future that we want and the United Nations that we need. It is not a technical process that deserves merely technical considerations. Indeed, it is at the heart of our political efforts, and with the necessary amount of political will and attention, we can achieve further positive results.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. We will now hear statements after the adoption of the resolution. I give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

Mr. Gonzato (European Union): On behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States, I would like to take this opportunity to once again commend the co-Chairs of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassadors González López and Mlynár, the Permanent Representatives of El Salvador and Slovakia, for their excellent work in steering this important resolution (resolution 75/325) to a successful and speedy conclusion. I would also like to thank all delegations for the very constructive spirit they have demonstrated throughout the process, which was decisive in reaching a very substantial outcome, the most substantial in quite some time. This past year and a half, marked by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, has taught us many lessons in terms of how we can work more effectively and efficiently together. Resolution

75/325 was a unique opportunity to draw on the lessons learned, and I would like to commend States for doing their best to ensure that this was the case. I would like if I may to highlight some of the most positive elements of the resolution, starting with the decision to move this resolution to a biennial cycle — something that many of us have long asked for and that will hopefully enable us to focus more on implementation while also serving as inspiration for other General Assembly processes. Not every resolution requires annual action.

Second, there is a commitment to further efforts to streamline the work and agenda of the General Assembly. We believe that we should use next year as an opportunity to take stock of the way in which we have adopted the recommendations made in previous resolutions, and if necessary take steps to improve our performance in that respect.

Third, there is strong alignment language on measures aimed at accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has been set back due to COVID-19.

Fourth, there is an agreement to bring the General Assembly's start date forward by a week — a long-standing request by the Office of the President of the General Assembly — so as to give the President more time to prepare for high-level week.

Fifth, there is further progress on the selection and appointment process for the Secretary-General, including the encouragement to Member States to put forward more female candidates for the highest office, in recognition that this Organization has not yet seen a female Secretary-General.

Sixth, there is a request to the Secretariat to present lessons learned from the impact of COVID-19 on the work of the General Assembly, with a view to ensuring better preparedness. We see this as an opportunity to draw further lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic in two years' time and to improve the way in which we work here at the United Nations.

Seventh, there is a collective understanding of the importance of gender parity and an aspiration to achieve it for high-level and other General Assembly meetings, as well as a clear commitment to strengthening multilingualism as a core value and pillar of the Organization.

Eighth, there is a further commitment to limiting the number of side-events in parallel to high-level week,

not only during COVID times but in general, so as to preserve the primacy of the general debate and focus on our most pressing priorities. We sincerely hope that all Member States will honour that commitment and contribute to a more focused high-level week.

Last but certainly not least is the collective recognition of the important role of civil society in United Nations processes, including in the selection processes for the offices of Secretary-General and President of the General Assembly, which brings a clear added value in finding appropriate and effective answers to the challenges we face. All in all, a very impressive outcome that shows what we can achieve if we all work together for the betterment of our Organization. I hope this constructive spirit will prevail in future negotiations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the only statement after adoption of the resolution.

I should like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassadors Egriselda González López and Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representatives of El Salvador and Slovakia, the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, who have so ably conducted the Working Group's discussions and complex negotiations. I am sure the Assembly joins me in expressing our sincere gratitude for all their work.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 126?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 19 (continued)

Sustainable development

Draft resolution (A/75/L.135)

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.135, entitled "Modalities for the international meeting entitled 'Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all — our responsibility, our opportunity'".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.135?

Draft resolution A/75/L.135 was adopted (resolution 75/326).

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Guinea to speak in explanation of position after adoption.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea): I have the honour to deliver this statement in explanation of position on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We thank the co-facilitators, Sweden and Kenya, and their teams, for their efforts in the negotiation process to achieve consensus on the adoption of resolution 75/326, entitled “Modalities for the international meeting entitled ‘Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all — our responsibility, our opportunity’”. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to our Group of 77 and China coordinator, Mr. Andrés Córdova Chabla of the Permanent Mission of Ecuador, for his hard work and negotiation, and for duly representing our Group throughout the intergovernmental consultations of both the enabling (resolution 75/280) and modalities resolutions for this international meeting, playing a key role in their successful and consensus adoptions.

As reflected in the resolution’s first preambular paragraph, we recall that the purpose of holding this international meeting is to commemorate the 50 years since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and its outcome documents. The meeting will be a contribution to the environmental dimension of sustainable development with the aim of accelerating the implementation of commitments in the context of the Decade of Action and Delivery for sustainable development, including a sustainable recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We recall the decision to hold this event as an “international meeting” and not as a “conference”, taking as precedent resolutions 57/262 and 58/213.

The Group restates its understanding that there is no expectation that the meeting will redefine, renegotiate, or mandate new mechanisms or new commitments, nor that it will go beyond the provisions of multilateral environmental agreements. We also recall that the outcome document of the international meeting will consist of a summary of its discussions, as reflected in operational paragraph 20. The Group emphasizes the decision that the international meeting should be mutually reinforcing with the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme, avoiding overlap and duplication, as well as the role of the United Nations

Environment Programme in support of the preparations of the event. We also recall the invitation to the United Nations Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme to provide input leading up to Stockholm+50.

With regard to operational paragraph 3, and as has been outlined in detail through the explanatory note of the Secretariat, we stress the common understanding that the international meeting and its preparation will provide for the effective participation of all 193 States Members of the United Nations, four States members of specialized agency — the Cook Islands, the Holy See, Niue and the State of Palestine — and one regional economic integration organization, the European Union, which will participate on an equal basis, and with no differentiation.

The Group of 77 and China reaffirms the position it has maintained throughout the negotiation process with respect to paragraph 15 of annex II, which is to place a full stop after the reference to “non-objection basis”, without reference to bringing the list of other relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the attention of the General Assembly for a final decision regarding their participation in the international meeting, as well as to replace the footnote associated with this paragraph so that the participation of NGOs without consultative status in the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly would be based on previously agreed consensus language — the language proposed by the Group aimed at ensuring the participation of NGOs without consultative status, on the one hand, and striking a balance between the differing views on the General Assembly’s role in the decision pertaining to their participation, on the other. The Group continues to believe that the proposal put forward during the negotiation process, if approved by all the membership, would have offered a consensus consideration of paragraph 15 of annex II, based on agreed language on the issue of the participation of NGOs without consultative status, for which the Group expresses its full support. We are disappointed that our proposal on the participation of NGOs put forward during the negotiation process and based on the previous consensus was not accommodated. We believe that as has been the case in this and other processes of the General Assembly, the language of the aforementioned paragraph does not have the full support of the entire membership and is not acknowledged as agreed

language. As such, the Group considers that further efforts could be made to build on language that can be broadly accepted by all.

The Group of 77 and China looks forward to the international meeting and hopes that the event will be an occasion for raising awareness of the importance of protecting our planet and achieving sustainable development for the well-being of this and future generations.

The Acting President: We have heard the only statement in explanation of position after adoption for this meeting.

We shall hear the remaining speakers on Monday, 13 September, at 10 a.m. in this Hall, after which we will take up the remaining item.

(spoke in Spanish)

I would like to express special thanks to the interpreters, who gave us 20 minutes of extra time.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.