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Official Records

*President:* Mr. Bozkir . . . . . (Turkey)

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

## Tribute to the memory of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait

**The President:** It is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, who passed away on 29 September. On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of Kuwait to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Kuwait and to the bereaved family of His Highness.

On behalf the General Assembly, I extend my deepest condolences to the Al-Sabah family and to the Government and the people of Kuwait on the passing of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait.

The Amir was known as the dean of Arab diplomacy for his commitment to peace and dialogue. It is a privilege to call this great man one of us — a diplomat. His Highness spent 40 years as Kuwait's Foreign Minister and played a key role in creating the Gulf Cooperation Council, which was and still is crucial to strengthening cooperation in the region.

I would also like to take a moment to remember the times the Amir addressed the General Assembly. Two instances come to mind. The first was the most recent, at the 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Summit for the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, where the Amir made Kuwait's commitment

to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development abundantly clear. The second was back in 1963, when Kuwait became the 111th State Member of the United Nations. The Amir, then a young Foreign Minister, said,

“Kuwait's participation in these international activities clearly indicates that it does not look on independence and membership of the United Nations as ends in themselves. It considers them rather as a means of sharing in the responsibility of securing a better life for its people and for the people of other nations” (A/PV.1203 (XVII), para. 114).

The United Nations has recognized the work of this eminent leader, and in particular the humanitarian leadership of His Highness in 2014. Kuwait's leadership and funding saved tens of thousands of lives and galvanized others to participate in coordinated international action. Its generosity extended beyond the Middle East as Kuwait also supported humanitarian action in other countries and regions.

I wish the people of Kuwait and the family of the Amir well as they mourn this great leader.

I now ask representatives to join me in observing a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

*The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.*

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

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**The Secretary-General:** I would like to express my profound condolences to the family of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al Sabah and to the Government and the people of Kuwait.

His Highness was a distinguished statesman, an outstanding humanitarian, a bridge-builder and a messenger of peace. We mourn his loss together with Kuwait. And it is fitting that we do so in the General Assembly. His Highness prioritized cooperation and multilateralism and led Kuwait to join the United Nations in 1963.

He steered his country's foreign policy for almost 60 years, first as Foreign Minister and then as ruler from 2006. Throughout his reign, His Highness earned recognition and respect from near and far for his outstanding leadership and commitment to peacemaking. He always stood ready to bridge faiths, cultures and countries in the neighbourhood and beyond. With foresight, political wisdom and persistence, His Highness shaped Kuwait's preventive diplomatic engagement in the region and internationally. He played a vital role in mediating crises, facilitating dialogue and spreading messages of peace, tolerance and coexistence. As a close friend of the United Nations, he was also reliably on the front lines of mobilizing the international community in acts of solidarity.

I will never forget when I was High Commissioner for Refugees at the peak of the Syrian refugee crisis. In the complex political situation at the time, it was very difficult to mobilize international solidarity to support Syria's refugees. It was His Highness who decided to convene the first conference for solidarity with Syria. Kuwait started it with an offer that was so generous that other countries felt the need to do the same, and we were able to provide an effective response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Then, for two more years, when no other countries volunteered to do so, His Highness continued to convene conferences for humanitarian solidarity with the Syrian people and refugees and maintained a very high level of support and generous leadership.

His initiative and leadership were decisive in some of the most important humanitarian efforts around the globe. The lives of millions of people in need were improved because of his compassion and commitment. His ambitious vision also contributed to the evolution of modern Kuwait. His work to support and empower women at all levels was manifested in his efforts to ensure women's suffrage in Kuwait.

The world has lost a global leader and a symbol of humanity. I extend my best wishes to Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who, while grieving the loss of his brother, has taken over the leadership of Kuwait.

The United Nations looks forward to continuing its strong partnership and friendship with the State of Kuwait, while building on the legacy of His Highness. We will keep supporting Kuwait's mediation efforts and its role in promoting peace and stability. I trust that the tireless efforts of His Highness in regional and international diplomacy and stability will remain a priority for the State of Kuwait.

At this difficult time, I once again offer my deepest condolences on this heavy loss to the people of Kuwait, the region and far beyond.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Cameroon, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

**Mr. Tommo Monthe** (Cameroon): On behalf of the Group of African States, it is with profound respect that I pay tribute to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, who passed away two weeks ago.

The Amir leaves behind an important legacy through his major contributions to the development of the State of Kuwait and international humanitarian efforts throughout the world. The leadership and vision of Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at home led to key advances in many important areas. His efforts helped to ensure that his nation enjoyed strong international engagement and partnership.

A couple of years ago, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Sabah, Kuwait donated hundreds of millions of dollars for humanitarian operations in many African countries as well as in the Middle East. Kuwait's leadership and funding has saved lives and encouraged others to participate in coordinated humanitarian action. Under the Amir's leadership, Kuwait also became an important contributor to humanitarian issues, helping to improve the lives of people across the globe. The Amir's efforts to promote dialogue, harmony and peace will always be remembered.

In conclusion, I would therefore like to extend my sincere condolences to his bereaved family and to the Government and the people of Kuwait.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States.

**Mr. Djani (Indonesia):** On behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States, I express my deepest condolences to the family of the late Amir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and to the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait. My sympathies also go to His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will be remembered for his notable leadership and his remarkable acts of kindness, compassion and generosity. His exemplary leadership in the humanitarian field will long be remembered. In 2014, our former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon honoured him as a humanitarian leader, and His Highness will be remembered for the fundamental part he played in shaping Kuwait's role as a humanitarian centre, which is a source of significant pride for the country's Government and people. He is known for repositioning Kuwait as a peacebuilder, negotiator, humanitarian and development icon, both regionally and globally.

We are here today to pay sincere tribute to the life and leadership of His Highness Sheikh Sabah. We are grateful to His Highness and the people of Kuwait for their outstanding generosity towards those in need. We will always remember Sheikh Sabah as a noble advocate for tolerance and peace. He demonstrated courage and statesmanship in his engagement with the world's leaders and prioritized peace above all. As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will be remembered as a peacemaker and humanitarian leader committed to the founding ideals of our Organization. May he rest in peace.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

**Mr. Pildegovičs (Latvia):** On 29 September, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, passed away at the age of 91. At this time of national mourning in Kuwait, the Group of Eastern European States offers its sincere condolences to the ruling family, the Government and the people of Kuwait.

His Highness ruled over Kuwait for 15 years and had overseen Kuwait's foreign policy for almost 40 years. He was known as the wise man of the region, or the dean of Arab diplomacy, for his determination and his unreserved efforts to strengthen peace, cooperation, prosperity, both in the region and throughout the globe.

The late Amir has left an impressive legacy. For more than five tumultuous decades, he maintained Kuwait's strong commitment to international cooperation and especially to the United Nations. His determination was tested by wars, conflicts and a foreign occupation. In 1990, His Highness spearheaded the creation of the international coalition that recovered the freedom and sovereignty of Kuwait following its painful occupation by the forces of Saddam Hussein. That historic unified response by the United Nations community upheld the Charter of the United Nations and demonstrated clearly that no Member of the United Nations will be abandoned in the face of external military aggression. That telling lesson still resonates today.

His Highness spared no effort in orchestrating reconciliation and reconstruction in the Gulf region and the Middle East. He was one of the architects of the Gulf Cooperation Council, enhancing regional cooperation. Kuwait has shown a strong commitment to enhancing the role of the United Nations, while playing an active part in the Security Council in 2018 and 2019. Kuwait has also generously hosted a number of donor conferences to alleviate humanitarian suffering and foster recovery in Syria and Iraq. His Highness was honoured with a United Nations Global Leadership Award in recognition of the significance of his contribution in that area. At the ceremony, then-Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said,

“We are sitting together with a great humanitarian leader of our world.... Kuwait may be a small country in size but it has a big, broad and compassionate heart.”

His Highness was a strong voice in the region when promoting women's rights and the freedom of the media, thereby paving the way for more democratic, inclusive and prosperous societies in the future.

Last but not least, under the leadership of His Highness, Kuwait has played an active role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and development cooperation around the world.

Many world leaders have been paying their respects to the late Amir of Kuwait, including in Eastern Europe. Secretary-General António Guterres calls him an extraordinary symbol of wisdom and generosity, a messenger of peace and a bridge-builder. Those qualities will be greatly missed and admired by future leaders of the twenty-first century. Once again, the Group of Eastern European States offers its sincere condolences to the ruling family and to the Government and the people of Kuwait.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

**Mr. Amorín** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, I would like to pay tribute to the memory of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait.

First, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, I would like to extend sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Kuwait and to the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations on the passing of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness had been at the helm of the State of Kuwait since 2006 but his statesmanship was shaped over many years before that, during which he held several Government posts, including those of Foreign Minister, Finance Minister and Prime Minister. Consequently, his extensive experience in Government made him an expert on his country's policies for 50 years. His leadership was inspired as stability was achieved. He did notable work in serving as a mediator in various crises and conflicts in the region and made significant contributions at critical junctures in his country's history. As Head of State, he also played a key role in maintaining stability within the Gulf Cooperation Council.

This is also the right time to recall his work as a humanitarian, especially his generous contribution to efforts to ease the suffering of thousands of refugees. His work was recognized by the Organization in 2014 when the then-Secretary-General honoured him for his exemplary humanitarianism as one of the world's great leaders. People such as His Highness Sheikh Al-Jaber Al-Sabah inspire the international community and our policy decisions and continue foster understanding, concord and good relations among peoples.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

**Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

It is with profound sadness that we learned of the passing of the late Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. On behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, I would like to express our deepest condolences to his family and to the people and the Government of Kuwait. Our thoughts and prayers are with them during this difficult time.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will be remembered for his commitment to peace, as a steadfast supporter of humanitarian activities and as a voice of pragmatism and reconciliation. Under his leadership, Kuwait extended very generous humanitarian support and convened and hosted relevant conferences on various occasions.

In a region often troubled by conflict, His Highness acted as a mediator in regional disputes and was a staunch advocate and petitioner for the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, a principle anchored in the Charter of the United Nations. His leadership and guidance were also reflected in the constructive and independent role that Kuwait played as an elected member of the Security Council in 2018 and 2019. The Group of Western European and other States is thankful for his commitment to multilateralism, diplomacy and solidarity and we will honour his impressive legacy.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

**Mrs. Craft** (United States of America): It is a solemn honour to join with so many others today in paying tribute to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. We extend our sincere condolences to his family and to the people of Kuwait. He will be missed not only by the people of his country but also by his friends and admirers in the region and throughout the world, including the United States.

As the United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has said, the Amir's vision shaped Kuwait into the prosperous and modern State it is today, and his

global leadership has resulted in lasting and positive change in Kuwait and the entire region of the Middle East. It is a testament to the strength of the many deep friendships that Sheikh Al-Sabah forged over the course of a life devoted to the peaceful resolution of disputes that he was known among many of those friends as the dean of Arab diplomacy. His life's work — first during his almost 40 years as Kuwait's Foreign Minister, then as Prime Minister and, finally, as Amir — was dedicated to peaceful dialogue and unity.

Sheikh Al-Sabah was instrumental in the creation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), truly one of his greatest legacies. In honour of his life's work, we hope that the members of the GCC will recommit to healing the rift that he sought to mend during his last years. Sheikh Al-Sabah set Kuwait on a prosperous path to sustained peace and safety in cooperation with the GCC, in which he was a tireless mediator, capable of bridging apparently insurmountable divides in the pursuit of stability and security.

His Highness Sheikh Al-Sabah was a revered leader and a friend to all nations. He led efforts to help rebuild relations with Iraq, thereby once again demonstrating his dedication to peaceful dialogue and coexistence. He was committed to action as well as to words and concepts. He gave generous political and economic support to Kuwait's friends and neighbours in times of need. In recognition of his generosity, the United Nations named him a humanitarian leader in 2014. In 2018, he hosted a summit that produced \$30 billion in pledges to help rebuild Iraq after the war against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham. Sheikh Al-Sabah hosted similar donor conferences to raise funds for Syrians suffering from their country's civil war. An extraordinary architect of Kuwait's humanitarian contributions in the world, Sheikh Al-Sabah personified the shared value that Kuwait and the United States place on helping the most vulnerable, and in doing so he promoted a safer and more secure world.

The United States so valued the Amir's strong partnership in promoting regional stability and security that President Trump awarded him the prestigious order of the Legion of Merit, Chief Commander, as a token of our country's appreciation. And so today the United States mourns the loss of a dear friend, who distinguished himself by his exceptional leadership, humanitarianism and efforts to bring about a stable and more secure region. We mourn with the Kuwaiti

people for the loss of such a wise and devoted leader. We honour his legacy and remain committed to our strong partnership and friendship with Kuwait.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

**Mr. Edrees (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*):** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

We are here today to bid farewell to a man whose death is a loss for Arab and Muslim nations. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, has left us. However, he will live on through his noble endeavours, which bear witness to his work and legacy.

Bidding farewell to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah means saying goodbye to one of the symbols of our Arab nation, belonging to a generation of leaders, pioneers and founders of the nation-State project in the Arab world. The late Amir was a witness to all the major events that shaped the contemporary Arab world, including many varied challenges. He also felt the hopes and aspirations of the people in the region through the important posts and roles that he assumed after our sister State of Kuwait achieved independence. The late Amir held the post of Minister of Information in the first Kuwaiti Government, in 1961. In 1963 he became Minister for Foreign Affairs and held that post for nearly 40 years. He was also the first to raise the Kuwaiti flag here at the United Nations when his country became a member of our Organization in 1963. On 13 July 2003 he was appointed Prime Minister of Kuwait, a post he held until on 29 January 2006, when he became Amir of the State of Kuwait, succeeding His Highness Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salim Al-Sabah.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah worked to achieve the advancement of our sister State of Kuwait through the various posts he held. Thanks to him, Kuwaiti women were able to exercise their political rights. The first appointment of a woman as a Cabinet Minister came in 2005 after His Highness became Prime Minister during the reign of His Highness Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Kuwaiti women also entered Parliament when he became Amir.

During the Amir's reign, Kuwait witnessed comprehensive development progress in various

sectors. The State of Kuwait enshrined the concept of citizenship, the rule of law and national unity. But His Highness's contributions were not limited merely to the development of our sister State of Kuwait. On the contrary, he launched and made a number of initiatives and contributions at the international level. In 2007, for example, at the third Summit of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, held in Riyadh, he made a major donation to establish scientific research programmes related to the environment and climate change. In 2008 he established a Decent Life Fund, which enabled efforts to deal with the ongoing food crisis at the time. Kuwait also hosted several donor conferences in support of Syria in 2013, 2014 and 2015, in addition to an international donor conference in 2018 for the reconstruction of Iraq.

The late Amir received several regional and international prizes in recognition of his work as a leader in the humanitarian field, including the Certificate of Appreciation awarded to him by the United Nations in September 2014. His country will therefore be remembered and acknowledged as one that has provided humanitarian assistance throughout the world. He received such accolades and expressions of gratitude from Arab and non-Arab States alike.

With regard to international peace and security in the Arab region, in April 2016, under the auspices of the United Nations, His Highness hosted talks on bringing about peace in Yemen. The Amir also believed in the importance of deepening relations between Arab and African nations, which was why his country hosted the third African-Arab Summit in November 2013, and he launched several important initiatives aimed at strengthening relations between African and Arab countries and developing African States. The State of Kuwait made soft loans to several African States with a view to strengthening them in the areas of investment and infrastructure. In addition, his country established an annual \$1 million prize to foster research related to development in Africa. At the African Union Summit in July 2012, the State of Kuwait announced that it would contribute to building the new African Commission headquarters in Addis Ababa.

His Highness launched so many initiatives that it would be difficult to list them all here. I would nevertheless like to point to the crucial role that his country played in promoting Arab and Islamic issues, particularly the Palestinian cause, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and

the establishment of an independent Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. We will never forget the work of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in fostering the development and prosperity of his country.

Lastly, we bid farewell today to a symbol of the nation and a man representative of a generation of pioneers in whom we in the Arab world take pride. We pray that the people of our sister State of Kuwait, as well as the other Arab and Islamic nations, will stay strong while mourning the death of Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. May his soul rest in peace.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates, who will speak on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

**Ms. Nusseibeh** (United Arab Emirates): On behalf of the member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), I express our heartfelt and sincere condolences to the honourable Al-Sabah family and to the Government and the people of Kuwait, following the passing on 29 September of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait.

His death is an immense loss to the Islamic world and to advocates for peace, humanity and mediation around the globe. The late Amir of Kuwait left an outstanding legacy of advocacy for multilateralism and preventive diplomacy. His Highness demonstrated wisdom, compassion and strength in the most challenging moments to bring peace and stability to the region and beyond. He has been recognized globally and here in this Hall today as an exceptional leader who sought peace and supported humanitarian causes.

He worked tirelessly to mediate conflicts in the region and all around the world. His Highness mobilized the international community on many occasions to support people in the most vulnerable situations. His empathy for those in need was reflected in his dedication and generous contributions to numerous global humanitarian causes. We also recall Kuwait's active role within the OIC, successfully hosting the fifth session of the Islamic Summit Conference in 1987, when His Highness was Kuwait's Foreign Minister, as well as the forty-second session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC in 2015, when His Highness had become Amir of Kuwait.

At home, His Highness built Kuwait into the great country that it is today. For more than 50 years, he served his country with honour and grace. He promoted peaceful coexistence and interfaith and intercultural dialogue at the national, regional and global levels. He called for unity and development for people everywhere. He was also dedicated to empowering women and young people, to cite only a few of his numerous achievements.

We will always remember His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a distinguished leader and a great friend to our nations and peoples, a man who built bridges of peace and understanding between countries. May he rest in peace. We reiterate our condolences to the Government of Kuwait, and we would also like to wish His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the new Amir of Kuwait, every success in serving his country and supporting international peace and security.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Kuwait.

**Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On Tuesday, 29 September, Kuwait bade farewell to the leader of its journey. We received the news with hearts replete with faith in our acceptance of God's will. Death is a fact and a part of life. The Amir's departure, however, is difficult. We seek comfort in the words of God, who when disaster falls instructs us to say, "We belong to Allah, and to Him we shall return" (*The Holy Qur'an, 2:156*).

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to you, Mr. President, for holding this special session of the General Assembly to pay tribute to the late Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. May he rest in peace in God's heaven. We also thank the Secretary-General and those who have spoken today on behalf of the regional groups for their kind and heartfelt words. The Government and the people of Kuwait are grateful to all who have shared in our sorrow and offered us their condolences on the loss of our deceased as well as the deceased of the Arab and Muslim nations.

The Amir dedicated his life to serving his nation and defending its causes in every regional and international forum for more than six decades. History will remember his steadfastness and his long journey. It will remember all that he contributed to Kuwait's development, stability and security, as well as what

he did to enhance the prosperity of his people and ensure that they assumed their rightful place among the nations of the world.

The late Amir's life was marked by numerous achievements, illustrated by the many offices he held throughout his life. He made his mark in the cultural, media, economic and political arenas. His legacy is also embodied in huge architectural and development projects dedicated to education and culture, which will continue to advertise the history of Kuwait as well as the progress and development that the country has accomplished so far. During the Amir's reign, Kuwait made great strides in human development that reached every sector of society. The late Amir believed that young people hold the key to our future and that we need them if we are to continue on the way to development and prosperity. He always supported and encouraged young people while incentivizing them to use and channel their creative energy to serve their country and its educational and cultural institutions, whose purpose is their betterment.

During the late Amir's reign, women were able to effectively exercise their political rights. In 2006 they participated as voters and candidates in parliamentary elections for the first time. His Highness played an important part in advancing the role of women and their status in society. He laid the foundation for developing a legislative framework that has enabled women to enjoy all their rights, empower themselves and participate in political decision-making. He also appointed women to ministerial and high-level posts and increased their representation in various State institutions, including in the areas of security and the judiciary.

In addition, there were many bright moments and achievements for Kuwaiti diplomacy during the late Amir's reign. Guided by his wisdom, he was able to navigate the troubled waters of our region and see Kuwait safely to shore. He was able to maintain our country's security, stability and prosperity while working with determination to achieve unity among the nations of the Gulf and the Arab and Islamic world. He worked tirelessly to overcome crises and made use of the deep trust placed in him as a mediator to resolve conflicts and heal divisions in many regions.

The Amir's work was based on goodwill and a sincere desire to achieve peace, security and stability, as well as to end bloodshed and channel efforts and

resources towards developing and realizing the aspirations of the people and the region. He did not falter in defending issues related to the destinies of Arab and Islamic nations, particularly the Palestinian question, where he supported the choices of the Palestinian people. He held to the relevant international terms of reference and Security Council resolutions as the way to bring about a just, comprehensive and lasting solution leading ultimately to a two-State solution and the establishment of a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital. He was right in laying a strong foundation for Kuwait's foreign policy based on reason, moderation and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which call for respect for the sovereignty of States, non-interference in others' internal affairs and refraining from the use or threat of use of force while resolving conflicts through peaceful means, as well as for establishing relations based on mutual respect and good neighbourliness.

After he became Head of State in 2006, the Amir continued his efforts aimed at achieving international and regional cooperation through his hosting of many economic, social and humanitarian conferences. He launched noble initiatives aimed at increasing partnership among nations, eliminating poverty, maintaining human dignity and alleviating the suffering of people affected by natural or other disasters, regardless of their nationality, colour, race or religion. He also took many initiatives designed to promote sustainable development. With its various establishments and funds, Kuwait has been active in pursuing sustainable development and continues to support development and humanitarian programmes in many developing and least developed countries.

The international community recognized the role that the late Amir played in supporting United Nations humanitarian aid efforts. In 2014, the then-Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon conferred the distinction of humanitarian leader on the late Amir and on Kuwait as a humanitarian centre. The late Amir believed in collective international action and was a staunch supporter and defender of the purposes and principles enshrined in international law and the Charter. He called for peace and tolerance, rejecting hatred, violence and intolerance while supporting the United Nations as an indispensable international tool for confronting international threats and dangers. In that regard, I would like to quote the late Amir in his first address from this rostrum after Kuwait joined the

United Nations in 1963. At the time, the late Amir was the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait. You cited the same address in your statement, Mr. President:

“Kuwait's participation in these international activities clearly indicates that it does not look on independence and membership of the United Nations as ends in themselves. It considers them rather as a means of sharing in the responsibility, of securing a better life for its people and for the people of other nations.” (A/PV.1203, para. 114)

May he rest in peace.

He was an Amir of humanity and modesty, and we ask Almighty God to embrace him in his mercy and graciousness, give him a place in heaven and reward him for all the good that he did for his people and his nation and for humankind as a whole. His achievements will continue to be a shining and sustained testament to all his efforts, while his memory will continue to live in the minds and hearts of his people. We wish every success for the new Amir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and his Crown Prince, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, as they continue on the path of contributing to the welfare of Kuwait, its people, the region and the world at large.

In conclusion, we once again thank you, Mr. President, for holding this meeting, and we also thank the Secretary-General and all those who spoke, attended and offered their condolences. Kuwait will remain on its path and in its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, defending its noble message of peace, tolerance and justice as an active member of the United Nations. We will continue to assist international efforts to improve people's lives and maintain human dignity.

#### **Agenda item 145**

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

#### **Report of the Fifth Committee (A/75/382)**

**The President:** The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I therefore take it that if there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, the General Assembly decides not to

discuss the report of the Fifth Committee before the Assembly today?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of position. Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled “Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: requests under Article 19 of the Charter”, recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 75/2).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of position after adoption, I would like to remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has joined the consensus that has made it possible to adopt resolution 75/2. However, we must reiterate that this should in no way be interpreted as an endorsement, validation or recognition on our part of the most recent report of the Committee on Contributions (A/75/11). That is because despite the fact that the Committee is a technical body, the internal discussions of the request that Venezuela made at the time were deliberately exploited by some of the Committee’s members to advance petty national political interests and prevent our delegation from participating, by depriving it not only of a voice but also of a vote in the intergovernmental processes that take place within the framework of the General Assembly, thereby blocking the existing majority consensus from recommending that our country also be granted the corresponding exemptions.

Venezuela is one of several countries whose right to vote in the General Assembly has been suspended since January 2020, pursuant to the provisions of

Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations. Today my country is still unable to fully enjoy its rights and privileges within the Organization, including voting. That is because despite having the financial means to do so — as we have shown and as the Secretariat is aware — it has been impossible for us to honour our financial commitments, for reasons clearly beyond our control.

The ever-increasing magnitude and scope of the illegal economic, commercial and financial blockade that the United States Government has unilaterally imposed on our country, in flagrant violation of the Charter and the norms of international law, has had extraterritorial consequences that are exacerbated by the policy of persecution and extortion that the same Government carries out against any entity that enters into commercial relations or other types of entirely legal transactions with Venezuela. We are therefore not only cut off from regular access to the international financial system, but companies and individuals are threatened by so-called secondary sanctions and forced into a position of violating international law, as has in fact already happened with companies and individuals who have nothing to do with our country. That is the reason why it has become virtually impossible to effectively transfer the funds needed to pay our arrears to the United Nations.

This situation has been brought to the attention of the Secretary-General as well as that of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and the Committee on Contributions since last year. You yourself, Mr. President, like your predecessor and the membership of the Organization, have been informed in detail of this injustice. Unfortunately, nothing concrete, practical or even remotely tangible has been done so far.

In the interests of transparency, I should mention that seven weeks ago the United States Government issued a new licence, which is supposed to end this unfortunate situation. Since then, we have tried to work with it to test its effectiveness. However, what we have seen so far is that the document has had the same effect as the two previously issued licences — which is to say none whatever. In practice, United States licences change nothing. Moreover, as the United States delegation has been covering for itself here by saying that its Government has already issued a licence and that everything has been resolved, its authorities in Washington, D.C., have been threatening banks with the consequences of doing business with Venezuelan

sources, something that was even confirmed recently by Mr. Elliott Abrams in a statement to the press.

My country is not asking for its debt to be cancelled or to be exempted from honouring its international obligations. We possess both the economic resources and the political will needed to pay our arrears to the United Nations. As is obvious from the evidence at hand, however, we are facing a situation in which — although Venezuela has the financial resources to fulfil its commitments in terms of quotas and contributions to the Organization — every channel for making that payment has been blocked. We therefore call for the complete and immediate lifting of all the unilateral coercive measures and other limitations that have been imposed on us to prevent our delegation from fully and effectively exercising its responsibilities and thereby complying with the purposes of the United Nations.

Venezuela reaffirms its commitment to continuing to take every possible step and redoubling its efforts to end this injustice. At the same time, we are asking the General Assembly and you, Mr. President, to exercise your good offices with the relevant authorities of the host country, in coordination with the Secretariat, in order to establish a financial channel that will ensure that our payments reach their final destination effectively and safely, without being illegally or arbitrarily rejected or confiscated, thereby enabling us to finally settle our debt to the Organization and freely exercise all our rights and privileges.

In conclusion, using coercion to control legal efforts is impermissible and should be categorically rejected. Let us remember that today it is Venezuela, but tomorrow any other State Member of the Organization could be subjected to the United States Government's campaign of so-called maximum pressure. We must therefore all unite to defend the principle of the legal equality of States and the integrity of the Headquarters Agreement, and to end once and for all the United States Government's abuse of its role as host country to the United Nations through its use of coercion, threats and blackmail to advance petty national political interests.

**Mrs. Rodríguez Abascal** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation endorses the statement made by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. We agreed with the adoption by consensus of resolution 75/2, as we believe it to be of the utmost importance that waivers to Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations be granted as

soon as possible to our brotherly countries Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia and the Comoros. We reiterate that the case of Venezuela should have been considered within the Committee on Contributions without political intrigue and in strict adherence to Article 19 of the Charter. The situation involving arrears is the result of circumstances beyond Venezuela's control, as its representative has just comprehensively explained. Ignoring such flagrant violations is akin to committing them. We emphasize that while today it is Venezuela, tomorrow it could be any of us if we allow the host country to act with impunity.

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

In the light of resolution 75/2, which we have just adopted, I would like to kindly request the representatives of the Comoros, Sao Tome and Principe and Somalia to approach the East Documents Counter in order to receive their ballot papers for the election of members to the Human Rights Council. I would like to ask all other delegations that have not already picked up their ballot papers to do so now.

#### **Agenda item 7 (continued)**

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

##### **Draft decision (A/75/L.3)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/75/L.3, entitled "Introduction of certain reports in the plenary meetings at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft decision A/75/L.3?

*The draft decision was adopted (decision 75/506).*

**The President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 7.

## Agenda item 119

### Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

#### (c) Election of members of the Human Rights Council

**The President:** The General Assembly will now proceed with the election of 15 members of the Human Rights Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2020.

The 15 outgoing members are the following: Afghanistan, Angola, Australia, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain and Ukraine.

In accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, these Member States are eligible for immediate re-election, except those that have served two consecutive terms, namely Nigeria and Qatar.

The 15 vacant seats should be distributed among the regional groups as follows: four seats for the African States; four seats for the Asia-Pacific States; two seats for the Eastern European States; three seats for the Latin American and Caribbean States; and two seats for the Western European and other States.

In accordance with resolution 60/251, membership in the Council shall be open to all States Members of the United Nations, and the members of the Council shall serve for a period of three years. The members of the Council shall be elected directly and individually, by secret ballot, by a majority of the members of the General Assembly. Accordingly, 97 votes constitute a majority in the General Assembly, which has a membership of 193 States.

I would like to inform members that the following States will continue to be members of the Human Rights Council: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Eritrea, Fiji, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Libya, the Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Namibia, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Somalia, the Sudan, Togo, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The names of these States, therefore, should not appear on the ballot papers. I also want to remind delegations once again

that the following Member States should not appear on the ballot papers, as they have served two consecutive terms and are therefore not eligible for this election: Nigeria and Qatar.

The election will be held in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly on elections. In that regard, rule 94 shall be applied.

As indicated in my letter dated 9 October 2020, all representatives have been requested to pick up their ballot papers from the East Documents Counter, located towards the back of the General Assembly Hall, before being seated. The ballot papers are marked "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E". Each ballot paper is assigned to one of the five regional groups. I ask that representatives use only these ballot papers.

Representatives of the following States have kindly agreed to serve as tellers: Hungary, Indonesia, Saint Lucia, South Africa and Spain. One ballot box has been placed at the front of the General Assembly Hall, where tellers will be able to observe it and the casting of ballots.

For the casting of ballots, the Secretary will call the name of each delegation following the General Assembly protocol seating arrangement, starting with the delegation of Iceland, and ask the representative of that delegation to proceed to cast their country's ballot. Representatives are requested to practice distancing of no less than two metres and to proceed to cast their ballots only when the previous representative has finished. This will continue until the last representative has cast a ballot.

In order to minimize the risks posed by prolonged exposure and crowding, once representatives have cast their ballots, they are requested to leave the General Assembly Hall through the exit on the west side. Once all ballots are cast, the meeting will be suspended and the tellers, accompanied by the Secretariat staff, will proceed to the Trusteeship Council Chamber for the counting of the ballots. Upon receipt of the results certified by the tellers, I will resume the plenary meeting to announce the results and to declare elected those Member States that have received the greatest number of votes and the required majority.

The proceedings of the resumed plenary meeting for the announcement of the results will be televised on the webcast. If additional balloting is needed to fill any remaining places, the next round of secret balloting

will take place at the plenary meeting to be held this afternoon at 4 p.m. in this Hall. Representatives should aim to arrive at the Hall 30 minutes before the start time of the meeting in order to collect their ballot papers and take their seats so that the meeting can begin on time.

Consistent with the practice of the General Assembly, if more than the required number of Member States have obtained the votes of a majority of the members of the Assembly on the same ballot, those Member States that have obtained the largest number of votes above the required majority will be considered as elected, up to the number of seats to be filled. Also consistent with past practice, if, due to a tied vote, it becomes necessary to determine one candidate to be elected or to proceed to the next round of restricted balloting, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to these procedures?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Regarding the candidatures of the respective regional groups, the Secretariat has been informed that for the four vacant seats for African States, the Group has endorsed four candidates: Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Malawi and Senegal.

For the four vacant seats for Asia-Pacific States, the Secretariat has received communications from five candidates: China, Nepal, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan.

For the two vacant seats for Eastern European States, the Secretariat has received communications from two candidates: the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

For the three vacant seats for Latin American and Caribbean States, the Secretariat has received communications from three candidates: the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cuba and Mexico.

For the two vacant seats for Western European and other States, the Secretariat has received communications from two candidates: France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I have also been informed by the Secretariat that voluntary pledges and commitments made by Member States in accordance with paragraph 8 of

General Assembly resolution 60/251 have accordingly been issued as official documents of the seventy-fifth session.

Before we begin the voting process, I would like to remind members that pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/323 of 8 September 2017, the names of the States that have been communicated to the Secretariat at least 48 hours prior to the election today have been printed on the ballot papers for each of the regional groups. Also, additional blank lines corresponding to the number of vacant seats to be filled for each of the regional groups have been provided on the ballot papers for inscribing other names as necessary.

Representatives are requested to use only the ballot papers that have been provided at the Documents Counter, to put an "X" in the boxes next to the names of the States that they wish to vote for and to write other eligible names on the blank lines. If the box next to the name of a candidate is checked, the name of that candidate does not have to be repeated on the blank line. The total number of checked boxes and handwritten names should not exceed the number of vacant seats to be filled, as indicated on the ballot paper. A ballot paper containing more votes than the number of vacant seats indicated on the ballot paper will be declared invalid. A ballot will also be declared invalid if all the votes on that ballot do not belong to the relevant region.

Accordingly, for the ballot papers marked "A" for African States, the total number of checked boxes and handwritten names should not exceed four; for the ballot papers marked "B" for Asia-Pacific States, the total number of checked boxes and handwritten names should not exceed four; for the ballot papers marked "C" for Eastern European States, the total number of checked boxes and handwritten names should not exceed two; for the ballot papers marked "D" for Latin American and Caribbean States, the total number of checked boxes and handwritten names should not exceed three; and for the ballot papers marked "E" for Western European and other States, the total number of checked boxes and handwritten names should not exceed two.

If a ballot paper contains the name of any of the following types of Member States, the ballot remains

valid but the vote for that Member State will not be counted. These are: Member States that do not belong to the region concerned; Member States that are not eligible for re-election; and Member States that will continue to be members of the Council next year.

Finally, if a ballot paper contains any notation other than votes in favour of specific candidates, those notations will be disregarded. If a mistake is made in filling out the ballot paper, delegations should request a new ballot paper from the Secretariat at the East Documents Counter.

We shall now begin the voting process.

The Secretary will now call on delegations in the seating protocol order and invite them to come forward to cast their ballots. Representatives should proceed to the ballot box only after the name of their delegation has been called. Once their ballots have been cast, I ask representatives to leave the General Assembly Hall and exit the building. The results of the election will be seen on the webcast.

*At the invitation of the President, representatives of Hungary, Indonesia, Saint Lucia, South Africa and Spain acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

*The meeting was suspended at 11.50 p.m. and resumed at 2 p.m.*

*In the absence of the President, Ms. McGuire (Grenada), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

**The Acting President:** The result of the voting in the election of members to the Human Rights Council is as follows:

Group A — African States (4 seats)	
Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	191
Abstentions:	1
Number of members present and voting:	190
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Senegal:	188
Côte d'Ivoire:	182
Malawi:	180
Gabon:	176
Morocco:	1
Group B — Asia-Pacific States (4 seats)	

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	191
Abstentions:	0
Number of members present and voting:	191
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Pakistan:	169
Uzbekistan:	169
Nepal:	150
China:	139
Saudi Arabia:	90

Group C — Eastern European States (2 seats)

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	192
Abstentions:	4
Number of members present and voting:	188
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Ukraine:	166
Russian Federation:	158

Group D — Latin American and Caribbean States (3 seats)

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	192
Abstentions:	1
Number of members present and voting:	191
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Mexico:	175
Bolivia (Plurinational State of):	172
Cuba:	170

Group E — Western European and other States (2 seats)

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	192
Abstentions:	18
Number of members present and voting:	174
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
France:	167
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:	165

*Having obtained the required majority and the largest number of votes of the members of the General Assembly, the following 15 States were elected members of the Human Rights Council for*

*a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2021: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, France, Gabon, Malawi, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uzbekistan.*

**The Acting President:** I congratulate those States that have been elected members of the Human Rights Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 119.

*The meeting rose at 2.05 p.m.*