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Chair: Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 82: Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization
(continued) (A/74/33, A/74/152 and A/74/194)

1. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) said that the exercise of examining the ways and means the Organization and presenting proposals with a view to strengthening its role was a necessary and crucial one that should continue.

2. Egypt welcomed the annual thematic debates of the Special Committee on the means for the peaceful settlement of disputes, and in particular, the selection of the subtopic "Exchange of information on State practices regarding the use of mediation" as the focus of the debate in 2019. Ensuring the rule of law at the international level required States to subject themselves to the authority of international law and to employ its various dispute settlement mechanisms. The peaceful settlement of international disputes in a manner that did not endanger peace, security and justice was one of the key principles of international law set forth in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Egypt welcomed the recommendation of the Special Committee that the thematic debate at its next session be on the subtopic "Exchange of information on State practices regarding the use of conciliation".

3. **Mr. Poudyal** (Nepal) said that the Special Committee had played a crucial role in upholding the Charter over the years, including in maintaining international peace and security and in creating an effective international legal system through adherence to the rule of law and justice.

4. Nepal was deeply committed to the principles and purposes of the United Nations and strongly believed that the United Nations was central to promoting multilateralism. When the values and norms of multilateralism were at stake, the General Assembly, as the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, served as a beacon of hope for enhancing multilateralism. Nepal also strongly believed in the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes through negotiation and dialogue, which should be the primary tool for dispute settlement.

5. The issue of encroachment by the Security Council on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had been frequently raised. Nepal believed that the Special Committee, by mandate, was the appropriate forum for

examining the legal aspects of the issue. The Special Committee should also engage fully in deliberations on issues falling within its mandate, and engage constructively in topics of interest to the wider membership.

6. Referring to the creation of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, he said that, when the Ad Hoc Working Group was allocated resources for year-round business, the Special Committee, which had been established for the same purpose, was left with almost nothing to do. That situation must be remedied. The reform of the United Nations should aim to make the Organization more democratic, transparent and accountable, which would in turn reinforce the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter.

7. Lastly, his delegation wished to express its appreciation for the work of the Secretariat on the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, which served as important resources and research materials for students and academics of international law.

8. **Mr. Sharifi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Special Committee was the only enduring mechanism within the United Nations framework for discussing issues relating to the Charter and the strengthening of the role of the Organization. By unlawfully resorting to the threat or use of force, a few Member States had acted in defiance of peremptory norms of international law and, in violating the Charter, had called into question the credibility of the United Nations. In that context, clarifying and reaffirming the provisions of the Charter concerning the use of force could help to strengthen the Organization. It was therefore regrettable that a few Member States opposed the proposal by Belarus and the Russian Federation that the General Assembly request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the resort to the use of force by States without prior authorization by the Security Council, except in the exercise of the right to self-defence.

9. The international community was witnessing an affront to the United Nations system by the United States, in violation of the Charter, in particular Articles 100 and 105. By imposing unprecedented restrictions on Iranian diplomats in New York, the United States had weaponized the Headquarters of the United Nations and had mixed up its responsibility as the host country with its considerations under its bilateral relations, completely disregarding its international obligations as well as the repeated pronouncements of the General

Assembly that “the maintenance of appropriate conditions for the normal work of the delegations and the missions accredited to the United Nations and the observance of their privileges and immunities, which cannot be subject to any restrictions arising from the bilateral relations of the host country, are in the interest of the United Nations and all Member States”. As a result of that wrongful act, the Organization’s credibility had been called into question and its smooth functioning disrupted, to such an extent that the work of two Main Committees of the General Assembly had been suspended for a few days. It was indicative of a serious crisis within the Organization. The host country had systematically tried to silence the delegations it did not favour and to impede their normal functioning, in violation of the Charter. That trend was weakening the United Nations and multilateralism and ran counter to the very objective of the Special Committee, which was to strengthen the role of the Organization.

10. Fortunately, the founders of the United Nations had foreseen that possibility, and had not given the host country *carte blanche*. Under Article 105 of the Charter, representatives of Member States must “enjoy such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connexion with the Organization”. The host country had seriously jeopardized the independent exercise of such functions by the Iranian mission.

11. The host country had also violated Article 100 of the Charter, according to which Member States must respect the international character of the United Nations and United Nations officials were accountable only to the Organization and not subject to any instructions from their home country. Host countries must therefore refrain from treating United Nations officials differently, or discriminating against them, on the ground of nationality or in the event of degradation in their bilateral relations with an official’s home country. In particular, they must refrain from imposing selective travel restrictions on United Nations officials as a means of retaliation against a home country.

12. In view of those flagrant violations, the Special Committee needed to urgently review Articles 105 and 100 of the Charter and formulate concrete recommendations aimed at strengthening the Organization.

13. It was also discouraging that a permanent member of the Security Council was not only violating the Council’s resolution 2231 (2015), concerning the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, but was also taking the unprecedented step of penalizing other States for abiding by it. That country was addicted to sanctions,

which it seemed to view as a tool for pursuing its national interests. Such morally wrong and ethically unjustified unilateral measures not only defied the rule of law at the international level but also infringed upon the right to development and led to violations of basic human rights.

14. The Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights had said that such sanctions were unjust and harmful and were destroying the economy and currency of Iran, driving millions of people into poverty and making imported goods unaffordable. In his latest report (A/74/165), the Special Rapporteur had concluded that unilateral sanctions “kill” and “may amount to war by another name”. However, unlike traditional wars, such measures targeted civilians exclusively and killed them in large numbers in an indiscriminate manner. Put simply, those criminal acts constituted economic terrorism.

15. His delegation called on all States to give in-depth consideration to the valuable proposals that had been submitted by a number of delegations and to engage in constructive dialogue to improve the work of the Special Committee. Genuine political will was needed in order to make progress with regard to the long-standing matters on the agenda of the Special Committee.

16. **Mr. Marani** (Argentina) said that his delegation continued to support the decision of the General Assembly to hold an annual thematic debate, under the agenda item on the peaceful settlement of disputes, to discuss the means for the settlement of disputes in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter and the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. It remained committed to the peaceful settlement of disputes, consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter. All methods of peaceful dispute settlement were equally valid and were the only way to reach just and lasting solutions. All Member States had an obligation to settle disputes peacefully, and the Secretary-General had a specific role to play in that regard, in terms of mediation and the provision of his good offices. United Nations bodies should act in good faith when urging the parties to a dispute to negotiate and should avoid frustrating the duty of both parties to resolve the dispute by peaceful means.

17. Argentina considered that Member States needed a forum in which to discuss the application of Article 51 of the Charter, and that the Special Committee could be a suitable such forum.

18. The *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security*

Council made a significant contribution to international law and the international system. His delegation wished to thank the Secretariat for updating those documents and for its efforts to make them available on the United Nations website.

19. **Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that it was essential for all delegations, without exception, to provide greater and clearer support for the work of the Special Committee. At the same time, however, delegations needed to engage in constructive self-criticism and to conduct a genuine review of its working methods. The United Nations, and the international community more generally, faced increasing political and financial polarization. The workings of the Organization were becoming less transparent and less trusted. In such a complex situation, the United Nations was in no position to maintain international peace and security, help in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, or promote multilateral diplomacy to prevent conflict, disasters, terrorism, poverty and hunger.

20. His delegation continued to support the proposal that an advisory opinion be requested from the International Court of Justice as to the legal consequences of the resort to the use of force by States without prior authorization by the Security Council, except in the exercise of the right to self-defence. Like many others, his delegation was concerned at the growing number of cases in which States had invoked Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations using the pretext of self-defence or counter-terrorism. The security of one country could not be guaranteed by violating the sovereignty of another. In such cases, the Security Council should assume its responsibility to maintain international peace and security by prevailing on the aggressor to withdraw its forces. In particular, any military presence on Syrian territory that had not been authorized by the Syrian Government or the Security Council could only be described as aggression and occupation. Any purported agreement between the Turkish and American sides for the establishment of a so-called safe zone on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic was unlawful, violated national sovereignty, and could have no effect and no future. Such challenges to international law raised significant questions regarding the credibility of certain States' commitment to the resolutions of the Security Council concerning the situation in Syria.

21. It was vital to adopt mechanisms to assess the impact and effectiveness of sanctions imposed by the United Nations. Such sanctions often failed to induce States to change their behaviour, and civilians ultimately paid the price. The Special Committee should

also pay attention to the issue of unilateral coercive economic measures, which were illegal and inconsistent with the Charter, and had been rejected in a considerable number of resolutions of the General Assembly. The Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights had expressed deep concern at the economic and human impact of the measures on the Syrian people and found it difficult to accept claims that their purpose was to protect Syrians or to prompt a democratic transition. Member States should therefore bring an end to the measures and assist the Syrian people in their endeavour to achieve reconstruction and reconciliation, realize the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and successfully complete the Syrian political process.

22. The objectives of the Special Committee were clear, and the necessary means for their achievement had been well defined, although they might be in need of development and financial resources. What was missing was collective determination; members should acknowledge their differences and avoid political bias or private agendas.

23. **Mr. Warraich** (Pakistan) said that while some might feel that the work of the Special Committee in some cases amounted to a repetition of the same clichés year after year and led to a never-ending cycle of reports and meetings, Pakistan considered that to be a grave injustice with respect to the mandate of the Special Committee and its potential to enhance the ability of the United Nations to achieve its purposes and function more effectively. It considered the annual thematic debate on the peaceful settlement of disputes to be useful and took note of the proposed subtopic for the next session, "Exchange of information on State practices regarding the use of conciliation". Such discussions should not be seen as an academic indulgence; rather, they should further efforts to make the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter the cornerstone of the United Nations peace and security architecture. That would entail addressing threats to international peace and security emanating from, inter alia, prevailing inter-State conflicts and from foreign occupation and denial of the right of self-determination.

24. The discussions on the issue of sanctions were equally compelling. Since sanctions were a means to a broader end, it was important to maintain their credibility and to prevent them from being used as a precursor to the use of force. Pakistan had consistently held that sanctions should be imposed with the utmost caution and only when other peaceful options had been exhausted. The threat of sanctions could be more effective than their actual imposition; thus, conditional

or deferred sanctions should be considered whenever possible. The Security Council had sought to place greater emphasis on targeted sanctions, but streamlining and greater transparency, objectivity and predictability were needed in order to prevent sanctions from being abused.

25. While looking forward to further discussions regarding the proposal that the Special Committee conduct a legal analysis of Article 51 of the Charter from a substantive and procedural perspective, his delegation was deeply concerned by the efforts of some to reinterpret fundamental provisions of the Charter, including those concerning the pre-emptive, preventive or protective use of force. That self-serving artifice had no place in international law or in the Charter.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

26. **Mr. Machida** (Japan) said that the comments made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in reference to Japan at the 18th meeting of the Committee were groundless and based on factual errors. For over 70 years since the end of World War II, Japan had regarded the facts of history with a spirit of humility, consistently respected democracy and human rights, and contributed to the peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region and the international community. Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should bring true peace to North-East Asia by overcoming their mutual mistrust and deepening their cooperation with one other.

27. **Mr. Kim In Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), responding to the comments of the representatives of some delegations regarding the "United Nations Command", said that the Special Committee, as the body responsible for considering legal matters in the fulfilment of obligations under the Charter, with a focus on ensuring international peace and security, was the appropriate forum in which to address the issue of the "United Nations Command". The presence of the illegal and ghost-like "United Nations Command" was a flagrant violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter, since it seriously jeopardized peace and security by seeking to expand its military influence over the Korean Peninsula and the rest of the region.

28. The United States was seeking to involve Japan in the "United Nations Command" as part of its effort to expand the Command into a multinational force. As an example, an article in the 2019 Strategic Digest published by the United States forces in South Korea in July contained wording to the effect that the Command would continue its cooperation where necessary in terms

of support and war services. His delegation reiterated its position that the Command must be dissolved without delay, in accordance with the relevant resolutions adopted at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

29. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia), responding to the statement made by the representative of Azerbaijan at the 18th meeting, said that his delegation wished to thank Azerbaijan for acknowledging that it had been the delegation responsible for misleading the Special Committee by putting forward groundless arguments. The reference to the well-known conflict as contained in the report of the Special Committee ([A/74/33](#)) was a factual mistake reflecting the conflict narrative of Azerbaijan and distorting the official formulation used by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which was referenced in the report. The official documents of that organization and the internationally mandated mediation process of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs, including joint statements to which Azerbaijan had also adhered, referred to "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict".

30. **Ms. Ozgul Bilman** (Turkey) said that her delegation rejected the accusations contained in the statement made by the representative of the Syrian regime and regretted that attempt to politicize the work of the Committee. As Turkey had explained in numerous forums and at the highest levels, the operation in question was limited in purpose and scope, since it was based on legitimate security concerns arising from the threats and acts of terrorism targeting its southern border. Turkey had also confirmed its commitment to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of Syria. It would not make any further comments on the matter.

31. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that, in an attempt to distort the causes, conduct and consequences of the war waged against Azerbaijan, the representative of Armenia had made selective references to certain formulations while deliberately omitting others. He wished to fill in the gaps.

32. In the decisions adopted at its seventh meeting, held in Prague in 1992, the Committee of Senior Officials of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe had stated that the Nagorno-Karabakh area was part of Azerbaijan. It had also reached agreement on certain required principles, including "respect for the inviolability of all borders, whether internal or external, which can only be changed by peaceful means and by common agreement".

33. Another example was the declaration of the Minsk Group countries issued in connection with the capture and occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and contained in enclosure 1 of document [S/26718](#), where

they stated that “no acquisition of territory by force can be recognized, and the occupation of territory cannot be used to obtain international recognition or to impose a change of legal status”. The formulation used in the report of the Special Committee was consistent with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

34. **Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the representative of Turkey had referred to the Syrian Arab Republic as the “Syrian regime”. He wondered whether the representative of Turkey or any other delegate had the right to refer to a given State by anything other than its official name.

35. **The Chair** said that the Secretariat would look into the matter further and seek clarification from the Office of Legal Affairs if necessary.

36. **Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he appreciated the response given by the Chair and looked forward to hearing the opinion of the Secretariat.

37. Referring to the statement delivered by the representative of Turkey, he said that Turkey was reacting not just against the Syrian Arab Republic but against all those who had spoken about the abuse of Article 51 of the Charter by certain Governments. His delegation had never politicized the issue; rather, it was Turkey that had done so by deploying its forces in Syrian territory, attacking the Syrian people, expelling 160,000 Syrian civilians overnight from Ra's al-Ayn, and then turning around to say “friends whom I've been killing, I'm committed to your territorial integrity and sovereignty. I'm only here to kill and destroy things, then I'll be gone”. That was laughable because, while Turkey was talking about State sovereignty, it was also reaching an agreement with the United States to establish safe zones in Syria. Turkey claimed that its goal was to expel terrorists; yet, over the previous eight years, it had opened its borders and airports to 70,000 foreign terrorist fighters. The fighters had not come to Syria and Iraq on parachutes or spaceships or from outer space; they had arrived from Turkey.

38. Moreover, Turkey was using the Syrian refugees on its territory to extort the European Union, both politically and economically. If European Union funding came to an end, or if Turkey objected to a policy or statement of the European Union, it would expel its Syrian refugees, leaving them to travel to the European Union or die at sea. Turkey was protecting the Levant Liberation Organization and the Nusra Front – both of which were listed as terrorist organizations by the United Nations – in Idlib, and then saying that it was going east of the Euphrates to defend its territory.

39. Similarly, Turkey had invoked the need to combat secessionist groups east of the Euphrates as an excuse to enter into Syria. Those groups were illegal and were not recognized by the Syrian Government and would one day be dissolved; but Turkey supported terrorism and secession, encouraging those groups to bear arms. The real terrorism was in Idlib. All Member States had been implicitly or explicitly asking why the United Nations was not raising the issue of the abuse of Article 51 by Turkey. His delegation hoped that Turkey would earnestly and responsibly fulfil its role as a guarantor of the Astana process, rather than going to Astana and yet deploying troops in Syria.

40. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia) said that his delegation wished to thank the delegation of Azerbaijan for confirming that there was indeed no single document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe that supported the conflict narrative of Azerbaijan reflected in the report of the Special Committee. The attempts of the representative of Azerbaijan to distort the facts compelled him to quote directly from official documents of that organization in order to help the Committee distinguish between factual evidence and propaganda.

41. The joint statement by the heads of delegation of the Minsk Group's Co-Chair countries and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Azerbaijan, adopted in Athens on 1 December 2009, contained references to “the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict”, as did the joint statement on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict made at the L'Aquila Summit in July 2009. In another joint ministerial statement, adopted on 6 December 2018 in Milan, the Minsk Group's Co-Chair countries and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Azerbaijan had “agreed to continue working towards a just and lasting peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict”.

42. Armenia left it to the delegation of Azerbaijan to address that discrepancy in the framework of the internationally agreed mediation process. The conduct of Azerbaijan was a classic case of mediation shopping aimed at concealing its lack of political will to engage in the negotiations constructively and in good faith and at using international organizations and platforms to propagate its one-sided narratives.

43. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that the Nagorno-Karabakh region had always been and would remain an integral part of Azerbaijan. In addition to the numerous international documents confirming that assertion, his delegation welcomed the determination made by the Special Committee in its 2019 report ([A/74/33](#)), which had been adopted by consensus.

44. Armenia was the country that had resorted to force, violence and terrorist activities in an attempt to realize its groundless and unlawful territorial claims. Armenia continued to occupy the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the surrounding seven districts of Azerbaijan in gross violation of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. Armenia and its affiliates in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan were responsible for internationally wrongful acts, several of which constituted serious breaches of obligations arising from peremptory norms of general international law.

45. Lastly, contrary to the assertions of Armenia, the primary objective of the ongoing peace process was to ensure the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders, and the return of forcibly displaced persons to their homes and properties. The achievement of that objective was a must, not a compromise; it was also inevitable and pressing, as the unlawful use of force and the resulting military occupation and ethnic cleansing of the territories of Azerbaijan did not represent a solution and would never bring peace, reconciliation and stability.

Agenda item 166: Observer status for the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States in the General Assembly (A/66/141)

46. **Ms. Guardia González** (Cuba), making a general statement on requests for observer status, said that the criteria for the granting of observer status in the General Assembly as set out in General Assembly decision 49/426 must be strictly applied. Such status must be granted solely to intergovernmental organizations whose activities covered matters of interest to the General Assembly. The procedure for analysing each request for observer status must therefore be followed. There was consensus in the Committee that, in order for each request to be properly considered, a copy of the organization's constitutive instruments and information on its objectives and membership must be made available. Her delegation was grateful to the Secretariat for its efforts to facilitate the consideration of requests for observer status in a more coherent manner.

47. **The Chair** recalled that, at its sixty-sixth to seventy-third sessions, the General Assembly had decided to defer to the subsequent session a decision on the request for observer status for the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States in the General Assembly (General Assembly decisions 66/527, 67/525, 68/528, 69/527, 70/523, 71/524, 72/523 and 73/534). If

he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly defer to the seventy-fifth session a decision on the request.

48. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 167: Observer status for the Eurasian Economic Union in the General Assembly (A/70/141)

49. **The Chair** recalled that, at its seventieth to seventy-third sessions, the General Assembly had decided to defer to the subsequent session a decision on the request for observer status for the Eurasian Economic Union in the General Assembly (General Assembly decisions 70/524, 71/525, 72/524 and 73/535). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly defer to the seventy-fifth session a decision on the request.

50. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 168: Observer status for the Community of Democracies in the General Assembly (A/70/142)

51. **The Chair** recalled that, at its seventieth to seventy-third sessions, the General Assembly had decided to defer to the subsequent session a decision on the request for observer status for the Community of Democracies in the General Assembly (General Assembly decisions 70/525, 71/526, 72/525 and 73/536). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly defer to the seventy-fifth session a decision on the request.

52. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 169: Observer status for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Secretariat in the General Assembly (A/72/194)

53. **The Chair** recalled that, at its seventy-second and seventy-third sessions, the General Assembly had decided to defer to the subsequent session a decision on the request for observer status for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Secretariat in the General Assembly (General Assembly decisions 72/526 and 73/537). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly defer to the seventy-fifth session a decision on the request.

54. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 170: Observer status for the Global Environment Facility in the General Assembly
(A/72/195)

55. **The Chair** recalled that, at its seventy-second and seventy-third sessions, the General Assembly had decided to defer to the subsequent session a decision on the request for observer status for the Global Environment Facility in the General Assembly (General Assembly decisions 72/527 and 73/538). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly defer to the seventy-fifth session a decision on the request.

56. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 171: Observer status for the Group of Seven Plus in the General Assembly (A/74/214; A/C.6/74/L.2)

Draft resolution A/C.6/74/L.2: Observer status for the Group of Seven Plus in the General Assembly

57. **Mr. Kabba** (Sierra Leone), introducing the draft resolution, said that Brazil, Chad, Cuba, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Somalia, Sweden and Yemen had joined the sponsors.

58. According to General Assembly decision 49/426, the granting of observer status in the General Assembly was confined to States and intergovernmental organizations engaged in activities of interest to the Assembly. The Group of Seven Plus was a treaty-governed intergovernmental organization with legal personality. Its outlook on development was based on the premise that there could be no development without peace and security; that peace could not be sustained without development; and that development cooperation should be consistent with domestic contexts and based on national development agendas.

59. The members of the Group were from different regions but were united by a spirit of solidarity and a common vision for peace and stability. They were generally conflict-affected or fragile countries that were striving to make the transition to the subsequent stage of development. The Group was a platform for collectively promoting country-led and home-grown peace through dialogue and reconciliation, and for sharing experiences. The Group advocated context-specific and country-owned planning mechanisms. Peer learning and cooperation among members in the areas of peacebuilding and State-building had been widely noted.

60. Its activities were clearly of interest to the General Assembly and were aligned with the primary purpose of the United Nations, as enshrined in its Charter, which

was to safeguard international peace and security and promote the peaceful settlement of disputes.

61. A key element of global development aspirations was the promotion of just, peaceful and inclusive societies. The goal of pursuing peace and justice and building strong institutions had been included in the 2030 Agenda as Sustainable Development Goal 16 thanks to the advocacy and outreach of the Group of Seven Plus countries. The Group's members were very active in leveraging support and partnerships for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 16.

62. If granted observer status, the Group would be able to give complementary effect to the objectives of the United Nations through its main deliberative organ. For the United Nations, it was essential that the members of the Group recovered fully from conflict, consolidated peace and pursued development. Fragility created a context conducive to the resumption of conflict and extremist manipulation. The success and stability of the Group and its member States would be essential to the United Nations goals of maintaining international peace and security and promoting sustainable development.

63. It was the Group's collective hope that the Committee would give favourable consideration to its request, which would only add value to and enhance the work of the General Assembly. Its members looked forward to broad support from Member States for the draft resolution.

64. **Mr. Jaiteh** (Gambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that 15 of the 20 members of the Group of Seven Plus were also members of the Group of African States, but their support for the draft resolution transcended that membership nexus.

65. The Group of African States noted with satisfaction that the Group of Seven Plus was a treaty-governed intergovernmental organization with legal personality, as evidenced by its constitutive charter, which was adopted in Lomé in 2014. Its activities were centred on peacekeeping and State-building. The members of the Group of Seven Plus were countries that had experienced periods of instability and conflict, and were now advocating the peaceful resolution of conflicts through country-led dialogue and reconciliation and the promotion of principles of effective engagement, cooperation and peer learning. Those activities were of interest to the General Assembly. The organization therefore met the criteria for observer status in the General Assembly, as set out in General Assembly decision 49/426.

66. Observer status would give the Group of Seven Plus an avenue to pursue its objectives and provide collective input to the agenda and work of the United Nations, particularly on sustaining international peace and security and implementing the 2030 Agenda. The common factor among all the organization's member States was that they were all post-conflict or conflict-affected States faced with the challenges of fragility. The work of the United Nations was to ensure that such countries, including the members of the Group of Seven Plus, recovered fully from conflict, consolidated peace and pursued development. Granting observer status to the Group would provide it with a platform to pursue its objectives and enrich the deliberations of the General Assembly, thereby assisting the General Assembly in carrying out its mandate.

67. In conclusion, the Group of African States joined the call for broad support from all Member States for the draft resolution.

68. **Ms. Lopes De Jesus Pires** (Timor-Leste) said that Timor-Leste was one of the founding members of the Group of Seven Plus, which had been established in Dili in 2010 and currently comprised 20 countries that were conflict affected or had emerged from conflict.

69. The States members of the Group had come together to advocate country-led and country-owned transitions towards sustainable peace and resilience as prerequisites for sustainable development. The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States was an important framework that had been endorsed by over 40 countries and organizations and set out principles for effective development cooperation.

70. The members of the Group were bound by the principle of solidarity. They worked together to share experiences and lessons learned as they built resilience through the rule of law, strong State institutions, good governance, inclusion, dialogue and reconciliation to consolidate peace and prevent the recurrence of conflict in their respective countries. The Group had also recently adopted a platform on natural resource management for conflict prevention, including the importance of ensuring that all citizens benefited from income derived from the natural resources of its member countries. The members of the Group had benefited greatly from cooperation and peer learning in the areas of peace and State-building.

71. The States members of the Group had continued to engage widely with other States Members of the United Nations, and had participated in and contributed to various United Nations forums and discussions on justice and the rule of law, political transitions, peace and sustainable development. They were also

participating actively in efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16 through the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies and the Sixteen Plus Forum. Many members of the Group had hosted United Nations special political and peacekeeping missions, and based on those experiences, Timor-Leste and some of the other members had made submissions to the Secretary-General for the reform of the peace and security architecture.

72. Timor-Leste believed that the Group of Seven Plus met the criteria set forth in General Assembly decision 49/426. It was a treaty-governed intergovernmental organization with legal personality, whose activities were centred on the pursuit of peace and sustainable development and were most relevant to the General Assembly. Her delegation therefore hoped that the Committee would give favourable consideration to the Group's request for observer status.

73. **Mr. Fintakpa Lamega** (Togo) said that, as a member of the Group of Seven Plus, Togo fully supported the Group's request for observer status. The objectives of the Group, whose charter had been adopted in Lomé in 2014, were extremely relevant to the United Nations goals of maintaining international peace and security and promoting sustainable development.

74. The members of the Group worked actively to forge partnerships aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16, with a view to promoting peace and social inclusion while also accelerating local and international progress.

75. Being granted observer status in the General Assembly would diversify the Group's international network and give it more opportunities to achieve its important goals. Observer status would also enable the Group's members to improve their synergy and coordination with United Nations bodies operating in their countries.

76. For all of the above reasons, his delegation had sponsored the draft resolution and invited other Member States to support the request for observer status for the Group.

77. **Mr. Lutfi** (Afghanistan) said that, as a country that was striving to recover from the devastating effects of conflict, Afghanistan attached great importance to the activities of the Group of Seven Plus. The Group provided an important platform for sharing experiences, coordinating efforts and presenting a collective voice on its priorities as its members advanced towards sustainable development.

78. Afghanistan had always been a strong supporter of raising the Group's profile. It had been the first country

to ratify the Group's charter and had been involved in various ways with the Group since then. Afghanistan had also raised relevant issues in various United Nations bodies and forums, including in discussions regarding the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States.

79. The Group's main objectives, including advocating the peaceful resolution of conflicts through country-led dialogue and reconciliation and promoting the principles of effective engagement, were closely aligned with the mandate of the United Nations. Afghanistan therefore considered that the Group was well positioned to obtain observer status in the General Assembly.

80. **Ms. Kpongo** (Central African Republic) said that the Group of Seven Plus met the requirements set forth in General Assembly decision 49/426 for the granting of observer status, since it was an intergovernmental organization created by international treaty and had legal personality.

81. As countries that had experienced periods of instability and conflict, the members of the Group were linked by the principle of solidarity with one another, something which they were also applying to all States Members of the United Nations. The Group's key activities were advocating the peaceful resolution of conflicts through country-led dialogue and reconciliation and promoting the principles of effective engagement. Its members promoted and had mutually benefited from cooperation and peer learning in the areas of peace and State-building. Those objectives were fully aligned with the general mandate of the United Nations, making the Group an important ally of the Organization in its work to maintain international peace and security. The members of the Group had engaged in dialogue with different United Nations bodies and had shared their collective perspective as conflict-affected and fragile countries.

82. Since the outbreak of the crisis in the Central African Republic in 2012, the Group had played a key role in mobilizing support for the country from its partners. Several meetings on the situation had been organized with partners at all the Group's statutory meetings. Her delegation therefore urged all States to support and sponsor the draft resolution and asked all partners to support the Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation initiative, which underscored the importance of national ownership of the development process.

83. **Mr. Liu** Yang (China) said that the work of the Group of Seven Plus covered matters of interest to the General Assembly, was consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and would contribute to the maintenance of international

peace and security and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. China therefore supported the granting of observer status to the organization.

84. **Mr. Elsadig Ali Sayed Ahmed** (Sudan) said that his delegation believed that the Group of Seven Plus met the criteria for the granting of observer status and that it should be granted that status for the reasons provided in the explanatory memorandum contained in annex I to document [A/74/214](#).

85. **Mr. Abdallah** (Comoros) said that his delegation wished to join the sponsors of the draft resolution. The Group of Seven Plus met the criteria for the granting of observer status established by the General Assembly in its decision 49/426, as it was an intergovernmental organization established by treaty, which had legal personality. Its members were conflict-affected countries that had come together in pursuit of peace and stability. Since its goals were closely aligned with those of the United Nations, the Group of Seven Plus was an important ally for the United Nations in its efforts to achieve international peace and security. Its members had engaged with various organs of the United Nations and had shared their collective perspective as countries affected by conflict and fragility.

86. **The Chair** said that the meeting when the Committee would take action on the draft resolution would be announced in the *Journal of the United Nations*. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

87. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 172: Observer status for the International Organization of Employers in the General Assembly ([A/74/291](#) and [A/C.6/74/L.3](#))

Draft resolution [A/C.6/74/L.3: Observer status for the International Organization of Employers in the General Assembly](#)

88. **Ms. Heusgen** (Germany), introducing the draft resolution also on behalf of France and Turkey, said that the request for observer status for the International Organization of Employers in the General Assembly had been submitted along with a parallel request for observer status for the International Trade Union Confederation ([A/74/292](#)). Belgium, Colombia, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Romania and Sri Lanka had joined the sponsors.

89. For nearly 100 years, the International Organization of Employers, in collaboration with its members, had played a key role in creating a sustainable economic environment that promoted free enterprise and was fair and beneficial to both business and society.

It had facilitated cooperation between the private sector and Government at the national and international levels and would bring significant value added to the work of the General Assembly in that regard.

90. The International Organization of Employers was already strongly engaged in supporting the aims of the United Nations. As an observer, it could ensure that the views of employers and the private sector were taken into account in discussions on the 2030 Agenda, sustainable development and economic growth, climate change, gender issues in the workplace, and the role of young people. The United Nations was also seeking to broaden its partnerships and deepen its dialogue with civil society, of which employers formed an important part. The International Organization of Employers was one of the largest private sector networks in the world, representing 50 million businesses in 150 countries. For almost 100 years, it had been representing business in social and employment policy debates at the national and international levels and in the Group of Twenty and other emerging forums.

91. With regard to meeting the criteria for the granting of observer status contained in General Assembly decision 49/426, the International Organization of Employers was engaged in activities that were unquestionably of interest to the General Assembly, although it was not an intergovernmental organization. However, since 1994 the General Assembly had made exceptions to the criteria when an organization's importance and history justified it. The sponsors of the draft resolution considered that the International Organization of Employers certainly qualified for such an exception, given the value that it could bring to General Assembly discussions as an observer.

92. The International Organization of Employers was one of the three constituents of the International Labour Organization (ILO), one of the oldest specialized agencies of the United Nations, which brought together government, employer and worker representatives to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes to promote full and productive employment and decent work for all as well as the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8. It was time for the status of the International Organization of Employers to be reflected in the United Nations global governance system.

93. At its 335th session in March 2019, the ILO Governing Body had supported the request for the International Organization of Employers to be granted observer status. Furthermore, in its resolution 73/342, the General Assembly had encouraged "active dialogue and collaboration among the various bodies, funds,

programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, including representatives of employers' and workers' organizations [...] with a view to strengthening policy coherence".

94. By granting observer status to the International Organization of Employers, the General Assembly would provide the institutional means for that mutually beneficial dialogue to take place.

95. **Mr. García López** (Spain) said that, after careful examination of the reasons for the requests for observer status for the International Organization of Employers and the International Trade Union Confederation, his delegation considered that a number of conditions and specificities made both organizations particularly suited to sit as observers in the General Assembly and to make a valuable contribution to its work.

96. The International Organization of Employers represented 50 million businesses in over 150 countries in the work and activities of ILO. It served as the secretariat of the employers' group in the tripartite governance structure of ILO, and was an ILO constituent.

97. Over almost 100 years of contributing to the work of ILO, the International Organization of Employers had gained experience in understanding the workings of businesses; in establishing valuable mechanisms for dialogue on work-related issues and with workers' organizations; in developing standards to help businesses address violations of core labour rights; in coping with new technological challenges in work-related issues; and in helping provide a pathway to the autonomy and empowerment of women through employment. In addition, it had been the voice of business in policy discussions in areas such as development, migration, climate change and the integration of young people into the labour market.

98. That experience made the International Organization of Employers a particularly suitable actor to contribute to the work of the General Assembly in relation to the 2030 Agenda, in particular regarding a number of Sustainable Development Goals that would be difficult to achieve without the support of employers and the business sector and their commitment to a sustainable production model.

99. Spain was well aware that an organization must be intergovernmental in nature to qualify for observer status in the General Assembly, and also that the International Organization of Employers could not strictly be identified as such. However, it had a special status as the secretariat of the employers' group in the tripartite governance structure of ILO, putting it in a

unique position in terms of its mission to interact with the United Nations system, certainly more so than other organizations that currently enjoyed observer status in the General Assembly.

100. For the above reasons, Spain considered that the uniqueness of the intimate and constitutive relationship between the International Organization of Employers and ILO should be a factor in favour of granting observer status in the General Assembly to the International Organization of Employers.

101. **Ms. Ozgul Bilman** (Turkey) said that her delegation strongly supported the draft resolution, which would pave the way for fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of Employers. As an integral part of the ILO tripartite structure, the International Organization of Employers had already demonstrated the unique and significant contribution it could make to United Nations efforts, especially those aimed at tackling some of the most important and urgent challenges facing the international community.

102. Turkey hoped that the organization would be granted observer status, not only because it deserved such status, but also because that would enable the United Nations to benefit directly from its expertise and its global network.

103. **Ms. Pierce** (United States of America) said that there could be little doubt that the International Organization of Employers played an important role as the secretariat of the employers' group in the uniquely tripartite ILO. However, the International Organization of Employers was ineligible for observer status in the General Assembly because it was not an intergovernmental organization. It was composed of business and employer organizations, rather than States.

104. In its resolution [71/156](#), the General Assembly had not intended to create a new and potentially limitless category of exceptionally "unique" organizations. On the contrary, the General Assembly had emphasized that the eligibility criteria in decision 49/426 remained unchanged. Indeed, during the current session, the General Committee had taken note of decision 49/426 in its first report ([A/74/250](#)). The United States was concerned that additional exceptions would eventually render the General Assembly's decision meaningless, essentially changing the rule without debate on the merits of abandoning the criteria.

105. The voice of the private sector should be heard and taken into account in United Nations deliberations, and in that regard, her delegation hoped that the International Organization of Employers would

continue to play a robust role in support of employers both in ILO and at the United Nations in New York, drawing on its status as a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, which it had rightfully held since 1947 and which allowed it to participate in meetings of the Council and all its subsidiary bodies, as well as in the meetings of certain other United Nations bodies.

106. **Ms. Ponce** (Philippines) said that her delegation supported the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to the International Organization of Employers.

107. **Ms. Melikbekyan** (Russian Federation) said that her delegation in no way wished to undermine the activities of the International Organization of Employers, including its work in ILO, which deserved the greatest respect. However, General Assembly decision 49/426 must be strictly applied. The criteria contained therein were interrelated; it was not possible to focus on one and completely ignore the others. The delegations submitting the request for the International Organization of Employers to be granted observer status had confirmed that it was not an intergovernmental organization. The explanatory memorandum contained in annex I to document [A/74/291](#) made clear that the organization was composed of businesses as employers, and that Government had not part to play in them. The Russian Federation therefore considered that an exception to the General Assembly requirements would not be appropriate. The International Organization of Employers could nevertheless continue to participate actively in the work of the United Nations, since it had held consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1947.

108. **Mr. Alam** (Bangladesh) said that his delegation wished to sponsor the draft resolution, since granting the International Organization of Employers observer status would allow for fruitful cooperation between that organization and the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.