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Chair: Mr. Rai (Nepal)

Contents

Agenda item 25: Operational activities for development (*continued*)

(a) Operational activities for development of the United Nations system

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Agenda item 25: Operational activities for development (*continued*)

(a) Operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/C.2/75/L.18, A/C.2/75/L.61 and A/C.2/75/L.62; A/C.2/75/CRP.4 and A/C.2/75/CRP.4/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61: Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

1. **The Chair** invited the Committee to take action on draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61, entitled “Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system”, submitted by Mr. Diome (Senegal), Rapporteur of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.18. He thanked delegations for their constructive participation in the countless hours of virtual negotiations held and asked them to recognize that the text presented for their adoption, while far from perfect, was a significant achievement and would serve to provide much-needed guidance for the United Nations development system in the years to come. He therefore urged all delegations to demonstrate their commitment to compromise by adopting the text as a whole, without a vote.

2. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had participated constructively throughout the negotiations on draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61, during which time it had made significant proposals and had demonstrated its readiness to compromise for the sake of consensus.

3. In the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the international community had an obligation to come together to provide assistance to ordinary people and to those countries most in need. In that vein, his delegation had introduced a proposal calling on all States to avoid the use of unilateral measures which, in the context of the work of the United Nations development system, unlawfully bypassed the Security Council and had a direct negative impact on the ability of States to purchase essential goods and medicines. His delegation had also drawn attention to the fact that humanitarian exemptions from unilateral restrictions had proven to be ineffective and were significantly complicating efforts to combat the pandemic. Furthermore, it had championed a balanced and realistic approach to climate and gender issues in the work of the United Nations development system.

4. However, his delegation regretted the fact that the vast majority of the arguments and proposals put forward by his delegation had not been taken into account in the draft resolution, including in its tenth preambular paragraph and in paragraphs 29 (b) and paragraph 30. The tenth preambular paragraph, for example, could currently be interpreted as promoting child labour, which was unlawful not only in the Russian Federation but in many other States.

5. **The Chair** said that draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61 had no programme budget implications. He reminded delegations that proposed amendments to the draft resolution had been submitted by Israel, as issued in document A/C.2/75/L.62, and by the Russian Federation, as circulated in document A/C.2/75/CRP.4/Rev.1. In accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Committee would first take a decision on the proposed amendments in the order in which they had been submitted.

6. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Israel) said that, given the importance of the resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, her delegation had hoped that Member States would not politicize development issues, and would choose language that could be embraced by all. Her delegation had therefore been disappointed when that was not the case, and had made perfectly clear throughout the negotiations that it would not be able to support paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61. The United Nations development system needed clear guidance and broad support for its work from Member States, and Israel had consequently not broken silence on the draft resolution, despite its consistent opposition to the politicized language in the aforementioned paragraph. Member States should distinguish clearly between development, which was the mandate of the Committee, and politics. She urged delegations to take a principled decision and vote in favour of the proposed amendment.

7. **Mr. Pierre** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in explanation of vote before the voting, said that draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61 was a single package which embodied a number of consensual agreements. The Group therefore opposed the proposed amendment and would vote against it.

8. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.2/75/L.62 to amend paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61.*

In favour:

Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tonga, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

9. *The proposal was rejected by 106 votes to 5, with 45 abstentions.*

10. **Ms. Maniscalco** (United States of America) said that the negotiations on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution had been complicated, and her delegation was pleased that they had concluded with a text that enjoyed broad support. However, it remained deeply concerned regarding the discussions on the reference to foreign occupation in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution. The United States wished to

disassociate itself from that paragraph because its political nature weakened the quadrennial comprehensive policy review as a General Assembly instrument for the provision of appropriate guidance to United Nations development system entities. It was unfortunate that the paragraph, whose inclusion in the 2016 resolution had generated much controversy, continued to distract Member States from the main purpose of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

11. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that the wording of paragraph 30 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#) was both unprecedented and counterproductive in terms of the further work of the United Nations development system. In the current draft, the Secretary-General was requested to ensure full and effective implementation of the United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action, a document drawn up by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in 2017. That document was strictly for the internal purposes of the United Nations Secretariat, had not been agreed or approved at the intergovernmental level and contained a number of contentious provisions, including on the link between climate and security.

12. The adoption of paragraph 30 in its current form would set the undesirable precedent of encouraging the use of concepts and approached that had not been approved at the intergovernmental level. In its proposed amendment, contained in document [A/C.2/75/CRP.4/Rev.1](#), his delegation therefore proposed, after the phrase "Requests the Secretary-General to", that the following words should be deleted from paragraph 30 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#): "ensure full and effective implementation, across the United Nations system, including its specialized agencies, funds and programmes, of the United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action as well as of the United Nations System-wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment, and of their future revisions, and". He called on all delegations to support the proposed amendment, which would allow the draft resolution to be adopted as a whole by consensus. Otherwise, no consensus on the draft resolution would be possible but that would not be the fault of his delegation. He also wished to know which delegation had requested a vote on the proposed amendment.

13. **The Chair** said that the vote had been requested by Germany and Guyana.

14. **Mr. Pierre** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in explanation of vote before the

voting, reiterated the Group's strong support for the text proposed by the facilitator of the draft resolution. Throughout the negotiations, the Group had viewed the outcome document as a package and had demonstrated the utmost flexibility and understanding of the positions of various delegations with a view to reaching a consensus. The Group stood by its work and remained committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Having invested significant time and effort in negotiating a consensual package, the Group could not support the lastminute amendment proposed by the Russian Federation and would vote against it.

15. **Mr. Koll** (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States in explanation of vote before the voting, said that his delegation had made it clear from the very beginning of the negotiations that the European Union would be promoting strong language on climate change, in line with the request of the Secretary-General for the United Nations development system to step up its efforts on critical priorities, including climate change.

16. His delegation had worked closely with interested partners throughout the negotiation process to find language that was acceptable to all, and it appreciated the concessions made by all participants. The European Union had also made concessions, having withdrawn many of its initial, ambitious requests in order to accommodate other countries' concerns and language proposals. Paragraph 30 was the carefully crafted outcome of intense exchanges that had been open to all negotiating parties, and, moreover, was part of a broader package that included other climate- and environment-related paragraphs.

17. Although the paragraph was acceptable as it stood, his delegation had envisaged much stronger language on the issues addressed therein. It was regrettable that paragraph 30 of the draft resolution was the subject of a vote, and the European Union called on all delegations that supported the facilitator's text to join it in voting against the proposed amendment.

18. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.2/75/CRP.4/Rev.1 to amend paragraph 30 of draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61.*

In favour:

Belarus, Russian Federation.

Against:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of),

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

Palau, United States of America.

19. *The proposal was rejected by 146 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

20. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that, following the rejection of his delegation's proposal, it was obliged to revert to its previous amendment, circulated as document [A/C.2/75/CRP.4](#), which contained the proposal to delete paragraph 30 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#)

21. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal by the Russian Federation to delete paragraph 30 of draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.61.*

In favour:

Belarus, Russian Federation.

Against:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria,

Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

United States of America.

22. *The proposal was rejected by 146 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.*

23. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that it was with deep regret that his delegation was obliged to request a vote on draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#) as a whole.

24. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#) as a whole.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia

and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Russian Federation.

25. *Draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#) was adopted by 167 votes to none, with 1 abstention.*

26. **Mr. Pierre** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the draft resolution established key system-wide strategic policy orientations and operational modalities for development cooperation, including at the country level, and would provide strong guidance to enable the United Nations

development system to support countries in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

27. However, the Group was concerned by the fact that the draft resolution continued to be undermined by delegations proposing amendments and requesting votes at the last minute. To implement the 2030 Agenda, it was essential that the United Nations development system address the special challenges facing developing countries, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States; the need for special attention to countries in conflict and post-conflict situations and countries under foreign occupation; as well as the specific challenges facing middle-income countries, in line with 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. It was unfortunate, therefore, that delegations had continued to call for a vote on a paragraph in the draft resolution that spoke to assistance to those most in need, despite the collective commitment to leave no one behind.

28. Throughout the negotiations, the Group had engaged constructively and in good faith, consistently seeking to incorporate delegations' diverse views. It was a matter of deep concern that many delegations had instead focused on the inclusion of topics of interest to them, in a way that undermined the mandate of the United Nations development system. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution was a development resolution, and, as such, the eradication of poverty must remain its overriding objective. In that regard, the Group fully supported the call contained in the text for strengthened action to accelerate progress on poverty eradication. Attempts had been made to introduce into the draft resolution, in an unbalanced manner, issues that were not directly related to development. Nevertheless, in a spirit of compromise, the Group had worked with all delegations to strike the right balance and find appropriate language to address those concerns.

29. The Group had also been disappointed with the approach taken to those in vulnerable situations, which was not inclusive enough. Selectively highlighting certain groups ran counter to the whole concept and integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda. The Group was pleased, however, that Member States had agreed to address the needs of countries in special situations, and those facing special challenges, including by providing support for middle-income countries. Their inclusion was a testament to Member States' commitment to move away from a one-size-fits-all approach, and an illustration of the significant progress that had been

made since the adoption of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution.

30. It was very important that the United Nations development system build developing countries' capacity to achieve long-term sustainable development, while also prioritizing national ownership and leadership and taking into account countries' differing development capacities. Therefore, in the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, the repositioned development system and its components, including the resident coordinator system, the country teams, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, and country programme documents, must focus on the delivery of support and services with full respect for national programmes, plans, priorities and needs. The system must continue to enhance transparency and accountability at all levels, including through the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the relevant executive boards. The Group was pleased that strong language on those issues had been included in the final text, and expected outstanding issues, such as the regional and multi-country office reviews, to be handled transparently, and in accordance with relevant guidance and mandates.

31. In conclusion, the Group wished to raise five specific concerns about the draft resolution. First, it was unhappy with the lack of flexibility to include provisions for qualified nationals to be recruited by United Nations development system entities with representation in the field, with particular attention to Professional and higher categories of staff. Qualified nationals would have invaluable knowledge of programme countries, and thus be able to support country teams to offer highly tailored support. Second, a lack of balance remained between core and non-core resources, especially in relation to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which would benefit from more flexible use of funding. Third, with regard to the Secretary-General's review of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, which was to be presented later in the current session, it was necessary to build on the progress on the repositioning of the development system by both assessing the improvements made and implementing any necessary corrections. Fourth, it was important to note that the concept of sustaining peace, as defined in General Assembly resolution [70/262](#) and Security Council resolution [2282 \(2016\)](#), had been negotiated and defined in a different context, based on the statement made by the Group in relation to the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution. Lastly, as the draft resolution was development-focused, the mention of humanitarian crises in paragraph 16 was

not justifiable, on the same grounds that their mention in the 2016 resolution had not been.

32. **Mr. Koll** (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that the draft resolution was a significant improvement on its predecessor in many ways. Human rights, gender equality and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus were dealt with in unprecedented depth, and other important issues, such as gender-based violence, disabilities, youth and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, were considered for the first time. He hoped that those improvements would support deeper reflection on the normative and operational work of the United Nations development system in the years ahead, and serve as a good basis for the discussions on the 2024 quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

33. Nevertheless, the European Union and its member States had various concerns about the text and the process leading to its adoption. Given the importance of the resolution, his delegation would have preferred a less hectic process that allowed for more in-depth discussion and reflection on priorities, desired and needed outcomes, systemic issues, meaningful guidance and even nomenclature. It was partly owing to the rushed process that the final text was less refined, clear and consensual than ideal.

34. His delegation had been particularly dismayed by the exchanges on human rights and gender equality, including those on gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. The fact that those concepts constituted the foundation of sustainable development and the basis for the activities of the United Nations development system apparently remained controversial, which did not bode well for the ambition to make the decade ahead one of action for the Sustainable Development Goals. Human rights were intrinsically linked to the issues discussed in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, and their consideration could not and should not be relegated exclusively to the Third Committee. In a similar vein, mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment across all aspects of the work of the United Nations development system remained crucial to the achievement of the Goals. The European Union and its member States therefore hoped that such narrow perceptions of what constituted key elements in promoting sustainable development would soon be overcome.

35. It was regrettable that the paragraph on youth proposed by his delegation had not gained the support that it deserved in the course of the negotiations. Young people were the world's future leaders and must feel

empowered to act on issues of global importance; it was therefore in the collective interest of Member States to engage and support young people to the broadest extent possible. It was equally disappointing that the adopted text did not do justice to the funding compact, which was one of the major prerequisites for the reform of the United Nations development system. It was regrettable that the collective responsibility for making the funding compact commitments a reality was not universally recognized. There was an increasingly urgent need to broaden the donor base beyond the traditional, limited circle of contributors in order to reflect the collective ownership of the system, ownership which was reflected in the process of developing programming documents, in particular at the country level. The need for those documents to reflect national development priorities and for the Governments of programme countries to be involved was unquestioned. However, it was equally important to hear the voices of all other stakeholders, including development partners, not only to embed strong national ownership, but also to ensure the coherence and coordination of country-level activities.

36. With regard to climate and the environment, the European Union and its member States remained opposed to the use of the words "can accelerate" in the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, to describe the relationship between climate change, biodiversity loss and sustainable consumption and production on the one hand, and poverty eradication on the other. The relationship was clear and undeniable – poverty in all its forms and dimensions could not be fully addressed without decisive actions to tackle the current environmental challenges. The same applied to the use of "as appropriate" in paragraph 29, with regard to the mainstreaming by the system of a more climate- and environment-responsive approach into all its activities. His delegation would have liked paragraph 29 (b) to refer to "low greenhouse gas emissions" rather than merely "low emissions", in order to reflect the language of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Climate and biodiversity were interlinked agendas that could not be dealt with separately; as such, his delegation regretted that it had not been possible to agree to include language on the importance of nature-based solutions in paragraph 30.

37. The European Union and its member States looked forward to seeing various aspects of the new quadrennial comprehensive policy review reflected in the strategic plans of the funds and programmes from the period from 2022 to 2025.

38. **Ms. Lindo** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that the

lack of consensus on the draft resolution after more than two months of deliberations was unfortunate. It revealed just how disjointed the vision for the United Nations development system was. For Member States, the development system was the United Nations on the ground. Through it, aspirations came to life, sought-after progress occurred and goals for both people and planet were realized. AOSIS therefore remained concerned by what seemed to be a deliberate movement to shift the system's focus away from development. When Member States had adopted the 2030 Agenda, they had committed to reaching the furthest behind first, prioritizing inclusivity, meeting countries where they were and taking a bottom-up approach. However, in the negotiations on the draft resolution, certain States had doubled down on favourite issues, showing a blatant disregard for the remit and scope of the development system. A one-size-fits-all approach to development would not work. Neither would a focus on only a few aspects of development. A comprehensive and holistic approach was required to attain true and lasting sustainable development.

39. The small island developing States welcomed the decision to focus on delivery on the ground in the new quadrennial comprehensive policy review cycle. Targeted support was essential for countries in special situations, which, by definition, were starting the race to 2030 from behind the line. Her delegation therefore welcomed the guidance to ensure support for them. A united approach was imperative for the development system to act effectively.

40. **Mr. Black** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that given the importance of the draft resolution and the impact it would have on the ground, his delegation was disappointed that the consensus had been broken. However, it was pleased that the great majority of Member States had come together to provide guidance to the United Nations development system for the next four years, anchored in the 2030 Agenda. Their work had resulted in important updates to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution, enabling the development system to further address human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, disability inclusion, climate and the environment and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Member States had further reinforced the systems and tools of reform at all levels and, linked to that, had underscored United Nations accountability for performance and results. They had pushed for a more coordinated development system that pursued joint action and collective outcomes across the humanitarian, peace and development pillars, and had made it clear

that the system must anticipate risks and crises, which would remain a worrying and persistent feature of the global landscape. He urged the development system to take the guidance provided by Member States seriously and to continue to work together to make the system fit for purpose.

41. Although it had not been possible to agree on language in the time allotted, Australia, Canada and New Zealand firmly believed that the collective assets of the United Nations should be harnessed to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on graduation from the least developed country category. Graduation decisions had far-reaching implications and must be based on the best possible evidence, with a view to recovery profiles and the sustainability of development trajectories. The United Nations development system could be doing much more to help countries navigate graduation, and it must be empowered to take that work forward.

42. **Ms. Maniscalco** (United States of America) said that her delegation had been pleased to vote in favour of the draft resolution, but wished to disassociate itself from paragraph 10 thereof. Through the draft resolution, Member States had set important strategic guidance and expectations for the repositioned development system, including the resident coordinator system, and had reiterated the importance of the Organization's development work, which must be carried out with the utmost transparency, impartiality, accountability and respect for human rights.

43. National ownership and leadership were key in setting country development goals and priorities, and United Nations entities must uphold the Organization's values and principles in their work in support of national efforts. The United Nations and Governments must embrace humanitarian principles and prioritize the needs of affected populations during humanitarian crises. That was essential for the United Nations to maintain its important role in assisting countries to build sustainable development capacity, self-reliance and resilience in the face of conflicts, humanitarian crises and complex emergencies. At the country level, broad stakeholder consultations were crucial, including on United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, which served as the basis for agency-specific country programme documents. System-wide accountability at all levels was essential to ensure that policy and programme documents received the widest support possible, complied with United Nations principles and international standards and norms, and, most importantly, produced tangible results that benefited people on the ground.

44. Her Government welcomed the fact that the funding compact's voluntary nature was made clear in the draft resolution. While her delegation largely agreed with the objective of the compact – to encourage development system agencies to work more closely to achieve greater mission coherence – it had concerns about several funding targets, as well as the lack of indicators on programme effectiveness and cost-savings. It was necessary to continue to discuss key aspects of the Secretary-General's regional proposal, including the structure and function of the regional collaborative platforms and the role of the regional economic commissions, to ensure that the proposal would contribute to the effective work of the new resident coordinator system and agencies without adding new layers of bureaucracy or costs. Her delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal for a system-wide evaluation office and looked forward to receiving further information and assurances of its independence and effectiveness.

45. Her Government remained concerned by the use of the term “right to development”, which did not have an agreed international meaning and therefore could not be considered a universal human right.

46. With regard to the use of the phrase “energy access and transition”, her delegation recognized that transitioning to clean energy entailed more than one pathway and more than one outcome. Countries would pursue different energy policies and mixes, depending on their national circumstances and priorities.

47. Regarding references to official development assistance, her Government believed that per capita income and creditworthiness should be the primary criteria to assess development and graduation readiness. It did not support the development of multidimensional eligibility criteria for concessional finance, as such criteria could be subject to manipulation and political influence.

48. With regard to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, United Nations development and humanitarian mechanisms should be reviewed and further strengthened. Recent allegations of widespread sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as public reporting about the failure of the Organization to protect whistle-blowers, were indications that the United Nations was not doing enough in those areas.

49. Regarding references to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the United States was committed to promoting women's equality and to empowering women and girls. Her Government agreed with many other countries representing every region in

the world that, as stated in the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family, there was no international “right to abortion”, nor any duty on the part of States to finance or facilitate abortion.

50. Lastly, the general statement delivered by her delegation on 18 November 2020 (see [A/C.2/75/SR.5](#), paras. 7 to 17) had detailed a number of additional concerns found in the draft resolution, including with regard to the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Paris Agreement, climate change, technology sharing and transfer, official development assistance and the concept of “building back better”.

51. **Ms. Mendoza Elguea** (Mexico) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, as the United Nations development system needed clear, timely and effective guidance that would enable it to implement the reforms spearheaded by the Secretary-General. The world needed multilateralism that yielded results on the ground through agencies that worked in an integrated, coordinated and coherent manner, listened to national priorities and, above all, succeeded in improving people's lives. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution was doubtless the most important product of the work of the Second Committee at the current session, and her delegation was pleased that significant progress had been made since the 2016 resolution.

52. Situations on the ground were complex, and the Committee therefore had a duty to provide guidance that was as clear as possible. The Secretary-General had called for innovation, improvements and coherence, and Member States must rise to the challenge and show themselves capable of making the necessary changes. Their unwillingness to reach agreement on such fundamental issues as gender equality, respect for human rights, climate change and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus was therefore worrying. In adopting the 2030 Agenda, Member States had put development at the heart of the work of the United Nations and had recognized the value of prevention and of tackling the root causes of problems. They had sought to realize the human rights of all, guarantee long-lasting protection of the planet and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Without those foundations, sustainable development was not possible.

53. Nevertheless, her delegation welcomed the fact that that majority of the negotiating parties had demonstrated pragmatism and that the Committee had managed to agree on 127 of the draft resolution's 140

paragraphs through virtual negotiations. The facilitator, in the remaining 13 paragraphs, had struck an acceptable balance between the different positions on the above-mentioned areas of work and had addressed fundamental development issues in such a way as to enable the agencies, funds and programmes to work in a coordinated manner, taking into account current challenges, to support countries' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. While more ambitious language would have been desirable in certain places, the adopted text represented a genuine compromise. Member States had kept the primary purpose of the resolution in sight, and her delegation therefore supported it fully.

54. **Ms. Szatmári** (Hungary) said that her Government sought to improve development policy coherence and avoid duplicative and unproductive practices through its international development cooperation strategy for the period from 2020 to 2025.

55. Regarding the language in paragraph 13 of the draft resolution, her delegation would have preferred a more general reference to vulnerable groups and people in vulnerable situations, rather than a list in which certain groups were randomly included and others omitted.

56. **Mr. Naemi** (Afghanistan) said that the time had come to take action, based on the realities on the ground, to address the particular challenges that were hindering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Those included not only development-related challenges, but the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and, in particular, terrorism and security threats.

57. **Mr. Nakano** (Japan) said that when used strategically, non-core resources could be just as critical as core resources for addressing specific needs on the ground. Projects financed with core resources and those financed with earmarked contributions should complement each other; neither type of project was more important.

58. His delegation welcomed the inclusion in the draft resolution of institution-building in the context of capacity-development. It was particularly relevant in conflict-affected countries because effective, accountable and inclusive institutions were key to nurturing people's trust in their Governments, and trust was a precondition for tackling the causes of social unrest and conflict. The United Nations development system could make a significant contribution in that area, in coordination with humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts.

59. The fact that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications had unfortunately only

been shared the previous night and not during the informal negotiations. In future, for the sake of transparency, important considerations such as programme budget implications should be discussed in detail in advance during the consultation stage.

60. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation's flexibility, arguments and readiness to negotiate on topics that were not priorities of the Russian Federation had not been recognized. The negotiations held at the current session had thus been inadequate, as other delegations had also noted, and that situation could have been rectified if delegations had listened to each other. The facilitator from Switzerland had appealed to delegations to continue their negotiations until the very end. Unfortunately, a number of delegations had simply given up negotiating, knowing that no consensus had been reached, which showed their approach to the values of the United Nations. It was also known, however, that market competition was behind the climate agenda and that interference in the internal affairs was behind the promotion of the link between climate and security. Delegations should have no illusions in that regard and such important political issues must continue to be discussed, not only in the context of the present draft resolution.

61. It was regrettable that consensus had not proven to be valuable to certain delegations. It was also unfair to call his delegation's amendments "last minute" when the Russian Federation had expressed its concerns about issues in paragraph 30 of the draft resolution from the very first day of negotiations and when it had proposed several solutions.

62. While he welcomed the fact that many delegations had mentioned the 2030 Agenda and other international agreements in the context of the current discussion, he noted that others had refused to quote language from those documents. The Russian Federation, for its part, remained committed to the 2030 Agenda and would continue to actively participate in providing assistance to developing countries and in implementing the 2030 Agenda. In doing so, however, it would not be guided by the politicized and narrow approaches that were unfortunately still reflected in the current draft resolution.

63. **Ms. Compston** (United Kingdom) said that her Government believed that the purpose of the resolution was to give clear policy guidance to the United Nations development system within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, and to consolidate progress made on reform to ensure a fit-for-purpose system. Sadly, the guidance

given was not as clear or as ambitious as her delegation would have hoped.

64. With regard to climate change, for the first time in a quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution, Member States had acknowledged the role of biodiversity, called on the system to reduce its own environmental footprint and mandated it to adopt a climate- and environment-responsive approach and support programme countries to meet their Paris Agreement commitments. However, to be commensurate with the climate crisis, that mandate needed to be stronger.

65. The year 2020 had marked the start of the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, a challenge made even greater by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately affected certain groups, including women and girls. More than ever, the United Nations development system must be refocused to ensure that no one was left behind. The United Kingdom had welcomed most Member States' desire to provide the system with stronger guidance on mainstreaming gender equality and the social, economic and political empowerment of all women and girls. A gender equality outcome in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework would contribute to ensuring that women and girls were at the core of development programming at the country level and received better targeted interventions. Member States had sought to take action to prevent violence against women and girls and to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse. The development system should have adequate financing for gender equality programming and robust gender equality expertise. Her delegation was deeply disappointed that the text fell short of a strong mandate on human rights, which were fundamental to development.

66. Member States had taken small steps in providing the guidance needed to improve the conflict sensitivity of the United Nations development system, but more joined-up planning and risk-informed analysis were needed to contribute to stronger conflict prevention in the field. It was unfortunate that many delegations had been unable to agree to better coordinated and more robust guidance on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Her delegation also regretted the lack of clear guidance on better coordination among multilaterals, notably between the United Nations and international financial institutions in fragile and conflict-afflicted States. The United Nations system should work collaboratively across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to contribute to greater sustaining peace and peacebuilding efforts.

67. Member States should have used the draft resolution to deliver a clear mandate on reform. Her delegation had sought to provide clear guidance on the importance of accelerating and improving harmonized business operations and the full implementation of the Management and Accountability Framework and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance. The United Kingdom urged Member States and the United Nations to continue to consider what adjustments might be required to funding compact commitments once the current commitments expired. The United Nations development system should continue to explore alternative financing models and funding tools to promote a more efficient and effective country presence. Her delegation looked forward to the resident coordinator review, which would provide an important opportunity to reassess how to accelerate progress on the reforms and to look ahead to future reforms. It was now imperative to implement the draft resolution and to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework.

68. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Israel) said that her delegation had been pleased to vote in favour of the draft resolution in order to address current global health and economic challenges with a strong, transparent and accountable development system. While supporting the draft resolution and its overall objective, Israel dissassociated itself from paragraph 10 thereof. Her Government remained concerned by the attempts to politicize the work of the Committee.

69. **Archbishop Caccia** (Observer for the Holy See) said that in order to guide efforts during the first half of the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution must build upon previous resolutions, correctly reflect agreed development commitments and provide overall coordination and clear guidance to enable the development system to make a difference on the ground. In view of the essential nature of the text, and especially in the current, unprecedented situation, its adoption by consensus would have been an excellent opportunity for Member States to reaffirm their commitment to multilateralism and, more importantly, to the integral development of the peoples whom the system was designed to serve.

70. His delegation welcomed the affirmation in the draft resolution of key development principles: that the eradication of poverty and hunger was, and must remain, the goal of the United Nations development system and its entities; that the system entities must fulfil their respective mandates and work in accordance with the development policies, plans, priorities and needs of

programme countries; and that countries in special situations must be given particular attention.

71. Nevertheless, certain aspects of the draft resolution were disappointing. A number of new paragraphs had been added concerning topics that fell outside the mandate of the Committee, and some delegations' constant attempts to alter the character of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution, which was and must remain development-focused, were worrying. Requesting the deletion of entire paragraphs on development issues, or seeking to overload the text with new and often divisive language that distracted from its development focus, did not serve the purpose of the resolution and undermined the Committee's consensus-based approach. In that regard, it was of particular concern that some delegations had been opposed to reaffirming that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions was an overarching objective of the 2030 Agenda.

72. In the light of those concerns, the Holy See had been pleased to see the retention of paragraph 38 of the draft resolution, on education; several paragraphs that addressed the challenges of countries in specific situations; and paragraph 94, stating that the focus of the resident coordinator system should remain sustainable development, with poverty eradication as its overarching objective.

73. His delegation's full statement would be available in the eStatements section of the *Journal of the United Nations*.

74. *Draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.18 was withdrawn.*

Completion of the Committee's work

75. **The Chair** declared that the Committee had completed its substantive work for the main part of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

76. **Ms. Spatolisano** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs) said that the Committee had delivered on its role of guiding implementation of the 2030 Agenda even as the COVID-19 crisis was testing every country in the world, threatening decades of development progress and undermining plans to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Member States' commitment and skilful work were essential to the Committee's contribution to a strong, sustainable recovery from COVID-19 and its socioeconomic impacts, a recovery that must be guided by the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The session had led to insight into recovering better through a more equitable global economy, more inclusive societies and greener

development, and had provided the Committee with lessons to build on and refine. Delegations had highlighted key elements of the response to the COVID-19 crisis, the possibility of a global debt crisis, the challenges of building sustainable infrastructure and the need to mobilize science and technology to respond to the pandemic and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. They had called for a disaster risk-informed and resilient recovery and emphasized the value of viewing the crisis as an opportunity to do things differently by shifting to more sustainable consumption and production patterns, adopting inclusive and resilient response and recovery strategies and collaborating to make a better world a reality.

77. Extreme poverty was rising for the first time in three decades, the impacts of climate change were becoming increasingly evident and the international community was veering further off track with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals. In the light of that situation, the Committee had drawn attention to the importance of integrated and coherent policy frameworks to shape poverty eradication efforts, as well as the need to transform food systems. The Committee's request to the Secretary-General to provide recommendations on the potential development of a multidimensional vulnerability index and its call for the continuation of work to address debt vulnerability and debt sustainability in small island developing States were a recognition of the dire situation confronting that vulnerable group of countries. The Committee had also offered policy guidance on information and communications technology, which was transforming lives, thereby supporting the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As a result of its deliberations on macroeconomic policy questions, the Committee had requested a special segment during the 2021 forum on financing for development follow-up to discuss a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic.

78. She congratulated the Committee on its adoption of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.61](#), through which it had provided impetus and guidance to enable the United Nations development system to support countries to recover from COVID-19, build back better and accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda, as well as capitalizing on the changes that had resulted from the repositioning reform. As the focal point for many intergovernmental platforms related to the Committee's work, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was committed to supporting its follow-up of the outcomes of the seventy-fifth session. The Committee could translate the results that it had achieved during the session into sustainable development through the

milestone events scheduled for 2021, including the “Our Ocean” Conference, the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport, the high-level dialogue on energy and the high-level meeting on water. As the world emerged from the pandemic, the ability to deliver affordable drinking water and adequate and equitable sanitation would likely determine the health and well-being of generations to come, as well as their ability to obtain an education, live productive lives with decent jobs and grow old.

79. The outcomes of the session would support collective action by informing the 2021 session of the Economic and Social Council, and the 2021 meetings of the forum on financing for development follow-up, the Development Cooperation Forum, the multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Now was the time to demonstrate the value of multilateralism and deliver hope, opportunities and sustainable development for all. Providing policy guidance required open dialogue with a focus on innovation and results. Through heightened solidarity, the United Nations system would keep its promises to people and planet.

80. **The Chair** said that the COVID-19 pandemic had affected both the substance of the Committee’s work and its working methods, and he congratulated delegations on their hard work under difficult circumstances. The Committee had focused its efforts on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution and the resolution on the meeting on the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028. He was pleased that the Committee had been able to find cross-cutting language on the impact of COVID-19 early on, and that the 35 substantive resolutions it had agreed upon contained assessments of the impact of the pandemic and action-oriented recommendations to guide potential responses. A focused approach had allowed the Committee to provide timely guidance on the impact of and recovery from the pandemic, and to finish the bulk of its work on time.

81. Discussions on the revitalization of the Committee’s work would continue in 2021 and would no doubt be based on lessons learned from the current session. While the timely conclusion of its work was a success in that regard, the Committee must do more to exercise its leadership role during the pandemic: the world needed revitalized multilateralism to emerge from the crisis. The global slowdown was continuing to take a toll on developing nations, especially those that

depended on exports, and many nations were seeing continued heavy increases in debt. In that regard, the theme of “Recovering better after COVID-19: Ensuring a more equitable global economy, inclusive societies and sustainable recovery” encapsulated the essence of the Committee’s work in 2020, and, in his view, in the years to come. As a year marked by tragedy came to an end, he reminded the Committee of the importance of hope and the power of collaboration, and thanked all those who had contributed to the Committee’s achievements at the seventy-fifth session.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.