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Official Records

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 85 (continued)

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/64/257)

Draft resolution (A/64/L.7)

Mr. Camp (United States of America): The United States would like to make a brief explanation of its position on draft resolution A/64/L.7 on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The United States has co-sponsored this draft resolution as an expression of its strong support for the Agency in all facets of its work and its determination to cooperate with other Member States to strengthen the Agency's capabilities.

However, we would like to note our reservations as to a particular resolution, on Israeli nuclear capabilities, GC(53)/RES/17, adopted at the IAEA General Conference in September. The United States believes that any effort to address the complexities at play regarding nuclear-related issues in the Middle East must be done in a comprehensive and non-politicized atmosphere.

The United States is committed to seeking multilateral solutions to global challenges, and it is a sponsor of this resolution as a symbol of its support for the Agency as an institution. The United States remains committed to working with other Member States to

support the IAEA in its dual mission of expanding peaceful uses of nuclear energy while preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for presenting the annual report on the work of the Agency. On behalf of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, we wish to give him our cordial, fraternal greetings. We also wish to acknowledge the presence of the Permanent Representative of Malaysia, Ambassador Hamidon Ali, who this morning introduced the draft resolution entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" (A/64/L.7), as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the IAEA. Venezuela supports the report and the draft resolution.

The IAEA has consolidated itself as a competent body for scientific and technical cooperation in the area of nuclear energy and for verifying compliance with the obligations contracted to in accordance with the respective safeguards agreements with member States.

My delegation expresses its concern at actions which seek to undermine the Agency's legitimacy. No other international body can assume the responsibilities which States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have given as sovereign States to the IAEA when it comes to nuclear matters.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



At times, when undue interference has occurred, there were serious violations of the principles of international law and international humanitarian law. Peoples have experienced acts of aggression and crimes against humanity and suffered from the destruction of their economies, their cultural development and their political and religious systems.

Last 24 September, the Security Council adopted resolution 1887 (2009) on non-proliferation. By attempting to take jurisdiction solely over questions of non-proliferation, the transparency required by the entire disarmament and non-proliferation mechanism is endangered, especially the technical process of verification.

My delegation rejects any initiative that attempts to ignore and delegitimize the multilateral disarmament regime previously negotiated in the relevant multilateral forums or that seeks to undermine the technical, non-political character of institutions created to deal with this matter.

The IAEA works on the basis of the inalienable right of States to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy in compliance with the international commitments made in accordance with article IV of the NPT. For this reason, we stress that any attempt to redefine the delicate balance of the rights and obligations contained in the NPT can result in undermining the system that the Treaty has established — a system which relies on general acceptance.

My delegation recognizes the laudable efforts of the IAEA to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear safety, radiation safety, safe transportation and the management of nuclear waste.

We wish to highlight the progress made in the various activities intended to maintain and increase security, including those having to do with the networks of information and communication for nuclear and radiation security and those oriented towards the strengthening of national regulatory infrastructures with jurisdiction over the control of radioactive sources.

As a signatory to the NPT, Venezuela has maintained active participation in established cooperation machinery. In 2007-2008, it chaired the technical cooperation body for Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Advancement of Nuclear Science

and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL), and it held the chair of the ARCAL representatives body, known as ORA, and the so-called tripartite forum.

Our country has benefited from technical and financial cooperation provided by the IAEA through ARCAL. Several projects moved forward within the framework of that cooperation in the biennium 2007-2008. We viewed as highly significant Mr. ElBaradei's visit to Venezuela last March, where he had extremely productive meetings with senior authorities in the energy, oil and science and technologies sectors. He was welcomed by Ms. Cilia Flores, Speaker of the Venezuelan National Assembly.

Our country was elected by acclamation as a member of the Board of Governors of the IAEA for 2009-2010 in elections held from 14 to 18 September. Venezuela will contribute to maintain the Agency as the single forum with jurisdiction over nuclear energy, and the promotion and defence of all of its objectives, including disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and verification, and the sovereign right to assist all States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Allow me to express again our appreciation of the efforts made by outgoing Director General Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei during the 12 years that he led this organization. We also wish to express the support of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for the new Director General, Mr. Yukiya Amano.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): This is the last time that Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei will submit the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the General Assembly. Allow us, at the outset, to express to him our deepest appreciation and gratitude for the exemplary efforts he has made to enhance the role of the IAEA and expand its activities, especially in strengthening its role in verifying information with the utmost credibility and honesty.

I would also like to commend the efforts of the Agency itself in assisting developing countries in the area of the peaceful use and development of nuclear technology. Libya reaffirms the right of all States to obtain nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, without discrimination, and to receive the assistance both of the IAEA and other countries able to extend such assistance.

We believe in the important role that the IAEA plays in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. At the same time, however, we regret that the role of the Agency is not universal, since it does not include oversight of the nuclear activities of nuclear-weapon States, a shortcoming for an Agency that should be universal and not exclude any States. We hope the international community can succeed in reviewing the IAEA's mandate so that it can oversee nuclear activities without discrimination, especially regarding the reductions in nuclear arsenals announced by nuclear-weapon States and aimed at achieving total and comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

Libya affirms the need to bolster the credibility of the IAEA in its vital role as the only specialized authority responsible for verification and implementation of the safeguards arrangements by member States within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in order to prevent channelling nuclear power away from peaceful uses towards use in nuclear weapons or other forms of nuclear explosives.

The IAEA is considered the international coordinator for technical cooperation in the nuclear field and must continue to play this role alone, with no competition. My country would like to take the path of dialogue and negotiation in dealing with certain pending issues with some States so that adequate solutions can be found through peaceful means. Libya affirms the need to designate regions free of nuclear weapons and to strengthen such regions. We also stress the importance of strengthening the NPT.

We are deeply concerned that there has been no progress in making the Middle East a region free of nuclear weapons, only because the Israelis, as the only entity in the region possessing nuclear weapons, continue to be obstinate in this regard. Unfortunately this country still refuses to place all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards regime. The international community must, therefore, deter this country and force it to place its nuclear facilities under international oversight. Such an intransigent position will keep the region in a constant state of tension and hamper the achievement of security and stability both in the region and around the world. In this regard, we welcome the resolution adopted by the IAEA in September on Israeli nuclear capabilities, and we call for its implementation.

Libya has excellent cooperative ties with the IAEA, and we look forward to continued cooperation so that Libya may gain maximum benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear energy after its voluntary disposal of its weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have now heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/64/L.7. Before giving the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before we take action on the draft resolution, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Sin Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea wishes to highlight the following position with regard to draft resolution A/64/L.7, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" (IAEA). The current draft takes note of the IAEA report and its resolution GC(53)/RES/15, adopted at the General Conference of the Agency, which refers to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

Regrettably, the IAEA has once again shown its prejudice and has taken an unfair position by urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and return to talks without preconditions. My delegation categorically rejects this. Such behaviour by the IAEA is nothing but intentional disregard of the nature of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. Acting in concert with one side, it places artificial obstacles in the way of resolving the issue.

My delegation would like to point out the following for the better understanding by United Nations Member States on the nuclear issue. First, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is a direct product of United States nuclear threats and its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United States nuclear threat against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is no fiction at all. The threat began as early as the Korean War of 1950 to 1953, and consequently inflicted on millions of Koreans the new sufferings of separated families. The United States has gone even further today to target the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea within its pre-emptive nuclear strike zone, making its threat all the more realistic.

Secondly, the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has now become so reckless that the United States wants to deprive our country, by means of force, of its right to explore and use outer space for peaceful purposes. Although the satellite launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was conducted pursuant to the relevant international legal procedures, the United States committed unprecedented hostilities such as singling out the launch only at the Security Council to condemn it and translate sanctions into concrete actions.

Thus far, the process aimed at denuclearizing the Korean peninsula had been undertaken on the basis of the principle of sovereign equality. Nevertheless, the hostile acts of the United States resulted in the breakdown of the whole process of dialogue and unavoidably pushed the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take strong countermeasures, such as conducting the second nuclear test.

The United States pushed the situation on the Korean peninsula to the brink of war by ignoring the repeated demands of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the conclusion of a peace treaty to replace the current armistice agreement and by deliberately staging nuclear war exercises with our country as the target.

Moreover, the United States, which had aggravated the tension on the Korean peninsula and systematically obstructed the process of improving inter-Korean relations and reunification, came recently to pledge to provide a so-called expanded deterrence to South Korea. That surely increases the tension on the Korean peninsula and darkens the perspective of denuclearization. It is not at all in harmony with the current climate of dialogue resumption and is making the security environment on the peninsula escalate into an unpredictable phase.

That being the case, the IAEA remains indifferent to the hostile acts carried out against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the United States, which have pushed our country into possessing nuclear weapons, reversed the situation on the Korean peninsula by worsening the confrontation and called into question the exercise by the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea of its sovereign right. This stance of the Agency can in no way be justified.

Thirdly, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains unchanged in its position aimed at denuclearizing the Korean peninsula and the rest of the world. The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula was the lifelong wish of our President Kim Il Sung. As we know from looking back to the origin of the nuclear issue, and as we have learned from the past process of dialogue, the prerequisite for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is, first and foremost, the termination of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has already made it clear that it is ready to participate in the multilateral talks, depending on the outcome of bilateral talks with the United States, and that such multilateral talks must also include the Six-Party Talks.

As we have reiterated time and again, the mission of the nuclear deterrence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is aimed purely at deterring war by safeguarding the peace and security not only of the Korean peninsula, but also of the region, from the nuclear threat and military attacks of the United States. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea does not pursue a nuclear arms race and will fulfil its responsibilities vis-à-vis the management and use of its nuclear weapons and with regard to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament while possessing those nuclear weapons.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stands in full support of and solidarity with the majority of United Nations Member States that aspire to a nuclear-free world and calls for the complete dismantlement of nuclear weapons. At the same time, we reiterate once again that the IAEA should observe the principle of impartiality in all its activities.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to request the Secretariat to duly and correctly reflect the aforementioned position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the official records of this meeting.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.7. I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Benin, Chad, the Dominican Republic, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.7?

Draft resolution A/64/L.7 was adopted (resolution 64/8).

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the representative of Israel, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Itzhaki (Israel): Israel asked for the floor to express its disappointment at the results of this year's General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Israel believes that this year's General Conference has impaired the ability of the Conference to constructively address issues pertaining to the Middle East.

Unfortunately, at the IAEA General Conference this year, States in the region failed to demonstrate the necessary will to promote regional talks on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, as demonstrated by the resolutions on the Middle East, including the one-sided, discriminative resolution on the so-called Israeli nuclear capabilities, which was adopted by a narrow majority. That resolution sought to divert attention away from the blatant cases of non-compliance by several Middle Eastern States with obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

It should be noted that, prior to and during the General Conference, Israel made every effort to regain a consensus on the Middle East package. Israel trusts and hopes that the unfortunate circumstances that have cast a dark shadow over the handling by the IAEA General Conference of the resolutions pertaining to the Middle East will not recur next year. Israel will continue to dedicate all its efforts to achieving a stable environment of peace and reconciliation in the Middle East. We call upon our neighbours to do the same.

Finally, Israel wishes to disassociate itself from the reference in the report with regard to the so-called

Israeli attack on the Dair Alzour site in Syria. That politically motivated reference contradicts the long-standing practice of the Agency's professionalism.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 85?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 116

Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/299)

Draft resolution (A/64/L.10)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Slavery and the 400-year-long transatlantic slave trade were abhorrent and inhumane and marked the lowest point in the history of humanity. The horrific and dehumanizing nature of the slave trade, whereby the captives were shackled and forced into detention and transported as human cargo and mere chattels across the Atlantic to the so-called New World, constituted the worst form of moral depravity on the part of the captors and is a source of shame for all of humanity.

That loathsome human disaster engendered the destruction of human possibility and necessitated the redefining of African humanity to the world. It poisoned the relations of Africans with others, who only saw African people through the stereotyping lens of slavery, thus hobbling any truly human relations among peoples.

Although that horrendous practice has been brought to an end, its effects and consequences continue to be with us. That remains true in spite of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the Slavery Convention Protocol in 1955, the Durban Declaration in 2001 and more. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related forms of intolerance are still rife today, 200 years after the abolition in 1808 of the slave trade.

At today's commemoration, therefore, we must resolve to take concrete steps not only to ensure that this dark aspect of human history never resurfaces

again, but that its consequences are fully addressed. Tangible efforts must be made to redress the imbalance caused by the slave trade. Lest we forget, the United Nations and the entire international community must continue to inform the world of this conscience-jolting chapter in our history.

In this regard, Member States may wish to support the voluntary fund established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/122 towards the erection of a permanent memorial in honour of the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

Let us also applaud the unbelievable magnanimity and generosity of the victims, who managed to retain their humanity and the ability to forgive in the face of indescribable suffering and dehumanization.

I now give the floor to the representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.10.

Mr. Bart (Saint Kitts and Nevis): I would like to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/64/L.10 the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, India, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Monaco, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, the United States of America and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

I have the honour, on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), along with the 54 members of the African Group and the other Members of the United Nations sponsoring this text, including those that I have just identified, to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.10, entitled "Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade".

The draft resolution before us today contains some procedural updates and also provides information on developments that have taken place during the course of the past year. We have maintained a focused text that serves a dual purpose. It speaks to the annual remembrance as well to as the initiative to erect a permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, both endorsed by the General Assembly.

The States members of CARICOM are justifiably proud that as a result of our initiative the United Nations acknowledged in 2006 that the system of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, which spanned the 1500s to the 1800s, represent one of the lowest points in the history of humankind. As we gather once again to contemplate the issue, we pause and recall the forced removal of more than 18 million people from Africa to the Americas, the Caribbean, the United States, Brazil and other parts of Latin America, as well as to Europe.

With this in mind, we deeply appreciate the designation of 25 March as the annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In this context and on behalf of the States members of CARICOM, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the update provided in his report in document A/64/299, on activities held earlier this year to commemorate the anniversary of the abolition of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

We look forward, Mr. President, to deepening our collaboration with you, the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and, in particular, the Department of Public Information, for similar commemorative activities on 25 March 2010, reflecting the solemnity that should be accorded to such events, with due regard for the dignity of a race and people that were mercilessly robbed of their human dignity and worth and plundered and pillaged under the pernicious system of slavery.

As we reflect on our shared history, CARICOM member States are mindful of the resulting legacy of social and economic inequality, hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice — a legacy that is linked to current economic and social inequalities worldwide and that continues to pervade the international community. We highlight with pride the fact that our initiative is a tangible outcome of the process of the Durban World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, as indicated in the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs. The General Assembly will note that for structural reasons we have sought to keep the Durban-related paragraphs together. As a result, we have moved the former sixth preambular paragraph of resolution 63/5 to its current place as the fifth preambular paragraph of the text before the Assembly today.

We have included a new paragraph, the eighth preambular paragraph, to highlight the fact that our

initiative, in terms of both the commemorative activities and the permanent memorial, complements the work being done at UNESCO. Here, I make special reference to the existing UNESCO International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, and the UNESCO Slave Route Project.

We are pleased with the progress made by the committee drawn from all geographical regions of the United Nations that oversees the permanent memorial project. Importantly, the States members of the Caribbean Community and the African Union are playing a primary role in advancing the work of the Committee under the chairmanship of Jamaica.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, the voluntary fund, the Permanent Memorial Fund, established in keeping with resolution 62/122, under the custody of the Permanent Mission of Jamaica, has now been closed, and the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial has been established under the auspices of the United Nations Office for Partnerships. We are convinced that the Trust Fund ensures enhanced transparency and accountability of the Fund's management in a manner that will be acceptable to all Member States. That new information is indicated in operative paragraph 3, and we are pleased to report that voluntary contributions received from Member States currently amount to \$346,118. Additionally, this week we were advised that the first private contribution of \$10,000 was made to the Trust Fund.

In response to enquiries about the budgetary implications arising from the adoption of this draft resolution, let me clarify that there are no such implications for the permanent memorial initiative. It is our hope that the permanent memorial will become a reality through the generous contributions received voluntarily from Member States, as well as the resource mobilization activities that will be organized by the Permanent Memorial Committee. On behalf of the group of CARICOM States, I wish therefore to acknowledge with appreciation the contributions and pledges already received towards the Trust Fund from Member States, while also encouraging Member States and other interested parties to join in this important effort.

One of several initiatives to mobilize resources for the permanent memorial was the appointment in May of this year of a Goodwill Ambassador to assist in

that effort, as indicated in paragraph 4. The Goodwill Ambassador is the businessman, entertainment mogul and philanthropist Mr. Russell Simmons. We anticipate that next year we will be in a position to provide a comprehensive report on his efforts and on the other fund-raising initiatives and their outcomes. At the same time, the importance of sustained voluntary contributions in order to achieve the goal of erecting a permanent memorial in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade cannot be overstated; hence the inclusion of a new paragraph, paragraph 5, to highlight that.

CARICOM continues to be appreciative of the invaluable support, technical advice and assistance received from the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and the members of the Committee for the implementation of the permanent memorial project. An important element to move the project forward is the launch of an international design competition to make this a truly global effort. We feel that UNESCO could undertake that on our behalf. It is to be noted that we are in a position to mobilize resources, et cetera, for UNESCO headquarters to run the initial phase of the competition, which, we envisage, could take place over a two- or three-month period. The intention is for UNESCO to collect a pool of applications, using its global network of field offices and National Commissions, and to provide the Committee with a short list of designs, from which an international jury can select the winning entry. That international jury would, of course, comprise individuals with some expertise in contemporary art, sculpture, design and/or related disciplines. The second phase of the competition would be convened by the Committee in New York. Initial discussions have begun with the organization, hence the references made in paragraphs 9 and 10.

Mr. Christian (Ghana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In view of UNESCO's unique experience with the Slave Route Project, its extensive history, its tradition of conducting international competitions, its international standing and its status as part of the United Nations family, we are convinced that such a partnership is imperative for this global project. Moreover, as part of the United Nations system, it makes it infinitely easier to deal with the organization in a seamless manner, rather than negotiating with an

outside entity, since the Committee is obliged to follow United Nations rules and procurement guidelines.

It is clear that racism, racial discrimination and prejudice continue to cast a destructive stain on many societies across the globe, and the genesis, as well as the linkages with slavery and the transatlantic slave trade are undoubtedly established. In that context, in paragraph 11, we seek to continue our collaboration with the Department of Public Information to take appropriate steps to enhance world public awareness of the commemorative activities and the permanent memorial initiative, as well as to continue to facilitate efforts to erect the permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters.

The horrific and dehumanizing nature of slavery and the slave trade, whereby the captives were forced into detention and transported as human cargo, continues to jolt the conscience. The horrific images of human beings emasculated, sold and robbed of their culture, their skins branded by hot irons, recall and reinforce the depths of man's inhumanity to man. Consequently, we have reiterated the request made in resolutions 61/19 and 63/5 for Member States that have not already done so to develop educational programmes, including through their school curricula, designed to educate and inculcate in future generations an understanding of the lessons, history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade.

Through the present draft resolution, the General Assembly will request the Secretary-General, in collaboration with and building upon the work undertaken by UNESCO through the Slave Route Project, to continue the outreach programme in order to inculcate future generations with an understanding of the causes, consequences and lessons of the transatlantic slave trade and to inform of the dangers of racism and prejudice. The General Assembly, by its adoption of this important draft resolution by consensus, will acknowledge the continued impact of slavery and the horrific transatlantic slave trade on the African diaspora and its descendants, many of whom are in this Assembly today.

In conclusion, the group of CARICOM member States sincerely thanks the many sponsors and supporters of the current draft resolution and now calls upon the General Assembly to give its unequivocal support to its adoption within the forthcoming week. In closing, I take this opportunity to remind the General

Assembly of the theme of the permanent memorial initiative: "Acknowledging the tragedy, considering the legacy, lest we forget".

Mr. Kapambwe (Zambia): The African Group is pleased to take part in this important debate on agenda item 116, entitled "Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade". We also lend our support to the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.10, relating to the permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, at the time of its introduction and adoption by the Assembly.

Allow me at the outset, to convey our appreciation and commend the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for their commitment and efforts in ensuring that we continue to reflect and examine the past injustices that had an adverse impact on our history. But, more importantly, we celebrate the resilience of the human spirit to survive such adversity and the efforts that ensued to bring this unfortunate period of history to an end.

Resolution 62/122 designated 25 March as the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This year the United Nations observed the second International Day to commemorate the victims of the slave trade, which was celebrated under the theme "Breaking the Silence: Beating the Drum". The occasion was marked by a cultural evening of dance and concert and other events, including documentaries and discussions with producers. A briefing by NGOs was designed to raise awareness about the slave trade and its aftermath. Other activities were also organized throughout the year, targeting various communities. Through education, therefore, present and future generations will learn about the causes and consequences of the slave trade and will be cautioned about the dangers of racism and prejudice, which unfortunately confront us to this day.

We commend the Department of Public Information for implementing resolution 63/5, which called for a programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade.

The slave trade had a tragic impact on the African people and continent. Its scars still remain. It is indeed our collective responsibility — and more particularly that of Africans and those of African descent — to commemorate the abolition of slavery and to recall its

historical legacy in order to ensure that this unfortunate episode in our history is not forgotten and will never recur. The African Group therefore welcomes the important initiatives that have taken place since the adoption of the previous year's resolution, including: the establishment of a committee of interested States to oversee the permanent memorial project, with member States of the Caribbean Community and the African Union playing a primary role in collaboration with UNESCO, representatives of the Secretariat and other institutions; the establishment of a Trust Fund for the Permanent Memorial; the appointment of a Goodwill Ambassador to, among other things, garner international attention to the dangers of slavery and its legacy of discrimination, raise awareness through media outreach and mobilize the necessary resources.

Several countries have contributed to the Trust Fund for the Permanent Memorial. I am glad to report that several African countries are among the contributors. In this regard, the African Group would like to congratulate all those who have contributed and we invite other countries to contribute to this worthy project.

The African Group remains firmly committed to this project. As we indicated last year in this Assembly, the Permanent Memorial will serve to remind us of the heroic actions of the slaves and other abolitionists, who in the face of grave danger and adversity stood up to be counted. It will also serve as an educational resource and a statue of lifelong learning, a reconstruction of the past moulding the future and a constant reminder of how vulnerable humanity is.

Regrettably, in spite of international efforts in developing the normative framework to guard against human rights abuses, we continue to face challenges in the implementation of various human rights instruments, in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. New forms of slavery, such as human trafficking and sexual exploitation, are also emerging. There are also several incidences of bias and hate crimes in our societies. It is therefore incumbent upon us to firmly stand up to and reject any and all notions of supremacy or supremacist ideology. We have to guard against such vices and the danger of slipping back into the past. We must strive to be our

brother's keeper and work relentlessly towards unity and development, by which all persons may be guaranteed a life of dignity.

By adopting this draft resolution, we shall further be pointing out the importance of gaining a better understanding of slave trade and slavery in general. We shall be committing ourselves to ensuring that information relating to the slave trade and slavery is available and disseminated as appropriate to all sections of society, in particular in institutions of learning, so that they too can join efforts in the promotion of a cohesive society based on knowledge and understanding of our history and so as to ensure that society does not slip back into the brutality of the past. By encouraging learning about slavery, we will reduce the danger of making in the future the same mistakes we made in the past.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the African Group's support for draft resolution A/64/L.10 and to express support for the efforts by the United Nations system and countries to create awareness of issues relating to slavery and the transatlantic slave trade over the past year. It is our sincere hope that more will be done in the coming year to honour all those gallant victims of slave trade, the brave abolitionists and the collective international efforts that led to the abolition of the slave trade and slavery.

Mrs. Kolontai (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Slavery and the transatlantic slave trade have been among the most flagrant violations of human rights. The transatlantic slave trade was an exceptional phenomenon in the history of slavery — exceptional because of its duration, scope and legal basis, including its legitimacy embodied in law. There can be no doubt that the result of the transatlantic slave trade was the destruction of a wide range of languages, cultures and religions of millions of enslaved Africans. It has left a legacy of racism and stereotypes.

The Republic of Belarus endorses the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery" (A/64/299). We agree with the view that, despite the fact that the transatlantic slave trade enjoys considerable attention in world history, we still do not know enough about its long-term results as they are felt in today's world or about the important contribution that slaves made to the building of the socio-economic prosperity of the countries that enslaved them. We

believe that the problems of history must be solved by filling gaps and enhancing the awareness of the descendants of those who were enslaved and other people as to the historic aspects of that tragedy, as well as to the threat inherent in racism and racial discrimination. We are certain that these goals can be effectively served in the outreach programme proposed by the Secretary-General in cooperation with UNESCO.

We welcome the holding this year of a number of activities together with the United Nations on the theme, "Breaking the Silence: Beating the Drum". Those activities have enabled us to shed light on the history of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and stimulate a discussion of the reasons, consequences and legacy of the slave trade.

We support the efforts of the member States of the Caribbean Community and the African Union to erect at the United Nations a permanent memorial to those who have suffered from slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and to name a goodwill ambassador to coordinate these activities. We welcome also the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution that, inter alia, proclaimed 25 March the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (resolution 62/122).

Today, we commemorate the abolition of the slave trade but we must recognize the fact that the struggle against slavery continues. Two hundred years later, millions of people are still being taken from their homes and families to be transported hundreds or thousands of miles and sold into slavery. According to International Labour Organization data, at least 12.3 million people, adults and children, are subjected to forced labour, or are forced to work to pay off debts or to offer sexual services. It must be acknowledged that illicit human trafficking is nothing other than a contemporary form of the slave trade that cannot be ignored.

Bearing in mind the experience and potential of the United Nations, Belarus has in fact advocated for the creation of a thematic global partnership against human trafficking and slavery in the twenty-first century. This partnership is still an informal mechanism that took shape at the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking held in February 2008. For such a mechanism to be effective, it would have to take some sort of institutional form as part of, for instance, a global plan of action adopted by the General Assembly to combat human trafficking. In the Third Committee at the sixty-fourth

session Belarus has proposed a draft resolution to improve coordination of efforts to combat human trafficking. We believe that the implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution, one of which contains a call for active participation in drafting a global plan of action to combat human trafficking, would be a significant contribution to the international efforts aimed at eliminating this shameful contemporary phenomenon. We call upon States to join the sponsors in supporting this draft resolution.

As we support the noble goal of ending contemporary forms of slavery and recognize the need to coordinate a United Nations approach to dealing with that problem, the Republic of Belarus has also joined the sponsors of the draft resolution to erect a permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade (A/64/L.10).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that no one should be held in slavery or kept in servitude and that slavery and the slave trade should be banned in all its forms. Our duty is to see to it that such a situation never arises again in the future.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the representatives of Saint Kitts and Nevis, who spoke on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and of Zambia, who spoke on behalf of the 54 members of the Group of African States.

It is an honour to participate in the discussion on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, particularly as I represent the country, and indeed the region, from whence the idea to include this issue on the United Nations agenda originated. It is with a distinct sense of honour and pride that, given our historical realities and ancestral links, I draw attention to the strong partnership that has developed between the member States of CARICOM, on the one hand, and the Group of African States, on the other, as we jointly seek to make the erection of a permanent memorial at the United Nations a reality. It is on this basis that our 68 member States jointly co-sponsor the annual resolution under this agenda item (A/64/L.10).

Although much had been said about the tragedy of slavery and its horrific nature, neither the grave humanitarian injustice of the pernicious system nor the attendant human rights abuses have ever been properly addressed at the global level. Additionally, the legacy of hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice, have, among other

things, given rise to social and economic inequalities that exist in many countries today.

For these reasons, the intention is to secure continued international recognition and acknowledgement of the tragedy of slavery, which represents a dark period in the history of humankind; to educate and inform current future generations about the causes, consequences and lessons of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade; and to inculcate new values in successive generations so that this mammoth historical tragedy is never repeated.

Let me solemnly state that, as chairman of the committee established to oversee the initiative, I will now take a few moments to provide an overview of some of the work we have been undertaking behind the scenes with a view to implementation. During the course of 2009, our focus has been on establishing the administrative framework and on mobilizing resources. Against this background, the committee concluded a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) and outlined a broad framework for collaboration, with a view to implementing the decision to erect a permanent memorial. Just recently — about a week ago — and following very lengthy and detailed consultations, the committee came to an agreement on a budget.

As stated in the draft resolution (A/64/L.10) to be adopted by the General Assembly, voluntary contributions are encouraged from Member States and other interested parties. However, in order to achieve the target of approximately \$4 million, the project will also target corporations, philanthropists and other private individuals.

It is with that in mind that the committee appointed a goodwill ambassador to assist with the dual objective of raising international awareness and mobilizing resources. In the next couple of weeks, with the assistance of UNOP, we will also establish an advisory board to follow through on the previously stated objectives. In the not-too-distant future, we also intend to find a mechanism through which we can obtain contributions from ordinary citizens around the world, since we believe this project to be a truly global effort.

During the course of this month, our first fund-raising event will be held at the Ana Tzarev Gallery, here in New York. Members of the public will be invited to participate in a silent auction of paintings exhibited under the theme “Grace of Africa” to raise funds for the

initiative. A high-level grand gala event is scheduled for February 2010, in keeping with the celebration of Black history month, and a number of other creative events for raising funds will also be held during 2010. Information on these activities will be shared with Member States, as appropriate.

Since we last discussed voluntary contributions by Member States in this Hall, the Citibank account under Jamaica’s control has been closed. We worked in tandem with the United Nations Office for Partnerships to establish the Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, to which the funds from Citibank and interest accruing thereto were transferred. As mentioned by the Permanent Representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis and reflected in the draft resolution before us today, the number of countries that have made voluntary contributions now stands at 34 and that the amount contributed has reached \$346,118. We are equally pleased that the first private contribution of \$10,000 was recently made to the Trust Fund.

May I thank the Governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Haiti, Luxembourg, Libya, Malaysia, Malta, Mozambique — which contributed on behalf of the Southern African Development Community — Namibia, Portugal, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Turkey, the United Kingdom and my own country, Jamaica, for their contributions. We envisage that other countries will follow in their footsteps in making contributions to the Trust Fund for the Permanent Memorial. I would also like to make special mention here of Denmark and the Netherlands, which have made pledges to the Fund.

Let me take this opportunity to encourage Member States to lend support to the permanent memorial initiative within the context of UNESCO. As we seek to take steps towards implementation of the decision to erect the permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters, we feel that collaboration with UNESCO headquarters is of critical importance to the conduct of the international design competition. This view was already specifically mentioned in the statement made by the Chairman of CARICOM, the Permanent Representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Jamaica and other CARICOM member States have been given a mandate by the Council of CARICOM

Foreign Ministers to engage the Caribbean diaspora in this initiative. Accordingly, the Permanent Memorial Committee will undertake steps to do so in the first quarter of 2010. We anticipate that this engagement will extend to other sections of the African diaspora, and indeed to non-governmental and other civil society groups within the African continent. In so doing, we hope to connect with and secure the support of Africans and persons of African descent under the theme we have selected: “Acknowledging the tragedy, considering the legacy, lest we forget”.

In closing, I note that the lingering consequences of the transatlantic slave trade continue to impact the descendants of the victims even today. It has far-reaching implications at the international level and therefore deserves global recognition and acknowledgment. Consequently, the placement of the permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters will be an appropriate symbol of what the United Nations represents — the promotion and preservation of the dignity and worth of all human beings — principles that are central to the Charter of the United Nations.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): During his first visit to Africa in 2003, President Lula acknowledged our historic debt to Africa and referred to the millions who were victims of the transatlantic slave trade. Many of them had Brazil as their destination.

This tragedy has marked our history, but it has also left a positive legacy through the extraordinary contribution of the Afro-descendant population to Brazilian society. We are proud of our African heritage, which has permeated our culture in all its aspects. We are furthermore particularly committed to promoting social equality for the Afro-descendant population and combating racial discrimination in our country and elsewhere. At the regional level, we have sponsored many initiatives, including an enhanced convention on the fight against racism in the Organization of American States.

The remembrance of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade should also remind us that a worldwide consensus on the relevance of that date is not enough. We should spare no effort to achieve genuine equality of rights for all. Prejudices of all sorts still defy us. Individuals, enterprises, non-governmental organizations and States must work together to eradicate intolerance and, in

particular, to fulfil the provisions of the Durban Declaration.

The Brazilian Government has put in practice many of the measures contained in the Declaration and its Programme of Action. The promotion of racial equality is consistent with basic features of Brazilian culture and an integral part of our own social and economic development process. Issues such as the interaction among different ethnic groups and the history of Afro-Brazilian and African cultures are increasingly being incorporated into school curricula. They are now part of policies intended to promote social integration. Special attention has been devoted to traditional Afro-Brazilian communities known as the Quilombola communities, with positive results having been achieved in the promotion of their rights during the past few years. These policies are aimed at redressing the injustices suffered by the victims of racial discrimination.

I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery (A/64/299). We appreciate his continued efforts and the Secretariat’s contribution to promoting the initiative of creating a permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters to acknowledge the tragedy of slavery and the slave trade. The report calls for the implementation of an outreach programme aimed at educating present and future generations about the causes, consequences, lessons and legacy of a transatlantic slave trade that endured for 500 years and to communicate the dangers of racism and prejudice. Brazil fully supports those goals. We would also like to recognize and commend the leadership of Jamaica in this matter.

Brazil is honoured to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/64/L.10, just introduced by the Permanent Representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis. We welcome the commemoration since 2008 of 25 March as the annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. We also welcome the appointment of a Goodwill Ambassador to help raise awareness of the legacy of slavery and help in other activities supported by the Permanent Memorial Committee. As a member of the Committee and initial contributor to the Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, Brazil is fully committed to efforts to raise awareness and re-engage international attention on the horrific nature of slavery, the transatlantic slave

trade and its legacy of discrimination, while honouring the victims.

In 1910, Brazil lost Joaquim Nabuco, a statesman and a leading voice of the abolitionist movement in Brazil. The centennial of Nabuco's death will remind us of the struggle for the abolition of slavery in Brazil. Nabuco campaigned against slavery in the House of Representatives and established the Brazilian Anti-Slavery Society in 1880. As a columnist for the *Journal of Commerce* of Rio de Janeiro, Ambassador Nabuco once wrote:

“Slavery is a word which may have lost all its meaning for certain people, but which marks, like a red-hot iron, a sign of degradation on the foreheads of others.”

Almost 100 years after his death, his example still inspires us to redouble our efforts to eliminate racial discrimination. One step in that direction would be the full implementation of the Durban Declaration. More importantly, we hope that the General Assembly will continue to play a prominent role in advising future generations of the consequences, lessons and legacy of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and the dangers of racism and prejudice.

Mr. Núñez Mosquera (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The bloody historical chapters written by the transatlantic slave trade, which are undeniably part of our contemporary history, can be neither justified nor ignored. In Cuba, as in almost the entire Latin American continent and the West Indies, we can clearly see the traces of the slave trade, the fruit of the colonizing drive and greed of European traffickers who used slave labour to build their colonial empires. Five centuries ago, as part of that cruel trade, approximately 1.3 million African slaves arrived on our island, most of them from sub-Saharan Africa.

We Cubans are proud of our African roots. The identity of the Cuban people is the fruit of the transcultural forces set in motion by the arrival of the Lucumi, Carabali, Congo, Ganga, Mina, Bibi, Yoruba and other African ethnic groups in the colonial society of that time. We are a mixture of Hispanic and African roots. The cultural wealth of my country and the idiosyncrasy of my people are also expressions of the cultural heritage of African peoples. They enriched us with their wisdom, their traditions, their languages, their religious beliefs, their music, their temperament and their rebellious spirit. Those slaves who rose up against

exploitation and fled the lash of the overseer to become fugitives laid the foundation for the freedom-loving spirit of my people. The courage and daring of those runaway slaves nourished Cubans' deep-rooted sense of independence. Africa is an indissociable part of our existence. For Cubans, Africa is an extension of our homeland.

We are therefore proud to proclaim today that the people of Cuba are direct natural heirs of the gallantry, valour and culture of resistance of Africa, which fought heroically for centuries to confront challenges that persist to this day.

The slave route was an intrinsic part of the ruthless exploitation and impoverishment of Africa and the cruel discrimination that its descendants endured too long in the Western hemisphere. The former colonial capitals must honour their historical debt to those who suffered under slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for centuries.

This is all the more true in the midst of the worldwide crisis we are facing today as a result of an international institutional order built on the impoverishment and exclusion of many countries, including those that were victims of slavery. We affirm that the former colonial capitals cannot disassociate themselves from their past through some sort of self-imposed historical amnesia now that those who were rich in years past are even more powerful today and the overwhelming majority of nations are relegated to squalid underdevelopment.

We recognize the importance of the activities being carried out by the Department for Public Information in conjunction with Member States, particularly members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the African Union, to plan future commemorative events on this subject. We also support the initiative to build a permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade at United Nations Headquarters. We commend the role of UNESCO in distributing educational material on this topic and the efforts of the United Nations information centres.

Many are the efforts being carried out by Member States to promote the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. Unfortunately, a small number of countries decided to unilaterally withdraw from the collective action of the international community in the fight against racism during the Durban Review Conference held in Geneva in April 2009. Such

behaviour undermines the efforts of the international community to develop communities of understanding and to fight intolerance, objectives that were reiterated in the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted in Durban in 2001 and the outcome document adopted at the Review Conference.

Shortly after the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959, Cuba began to pay off — in a modest way — its enormous debt to those hundreds of thousands of African slaves who made Cuba their homeland and dedicated their lives to its independence. Over 381,000 Cuban soldiers and officers have fought selflessly to defend the sovereignty and integrity of brotherly African countries over almost three decades. We returned from Africa with only the remains of our fallen comrades and the honour of having fulfilled our duty. Almost 2,400 Cubans are currently serving in 35 African countries to foster development there in areas as diverse as public health, education, agriculture, sports, construction and others.

Cuba will continue to contribute, as it has to date, its human capital and its experience in cooperation with many African countries. Through its comprehensive health programme alone, almost 1,120 Cuban doctors and medical personnel are working in 23 African countries. Their services reach a total of over 48 million individuals. There are currently over 2,200 youth from 45 African countries attending our universities and polytechnic institutes, and to date almost 32,000 young Africans have graduated from our universities in various specializations.

We call not for paternalism towards Africa, but for equality of opportunity. Above all, Africa needs and deserves solidarity and respect. For all these reasons, and as in previous years, Cuba firmly supports and sponsors the draft resolution (A/64/L.10) on this subject presented to the Assembly by the CARICOM member States.

Mr. Webb (United States of America): The United States is proud to be a sponsor of the draft resolution regarding a permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade (A/64/L.10).

On 19 June 1865, over 140 years ago, Union soldiers rode into Galveston, Texas, to carry the news of the end of the United States civil war. With their arrival, word finally reached the frontiers of the United States that the war had ended and that the slaves of the Confederacy were free. The ratification of the thirteenth amendment to the United States Constitution later that

year guaranteed the end of slavery in the United States. We continue to struggle with overcoming the legacy of slavery as we pursue our efforts to eliminate racial discrimination.

Speaking at the conclusion of his trip to Ghana this summer, President Obama reflected on seeing his daughters walk through the doors at Cape Coast Castle, a place where men, women and children were sold into slavery, saying:

“It was a remarkable reminder that while the future is unknowable, the winds always blow in the direction of human progress.”

The United States remains committed to this progress, to educating our youth about the slave trade and to honouring both the victims and the efforts of those who sought to end this despicable practice. We are happy to sponsor this draft resolution.

Mr. Sardinha (India): As the representative of India, I am indeed honoured to address the Assembly on the subject of the follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

Two years ago, when resolution 62/122 on the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade was adopted by consensus by the General Assembly, India was proud to sponsor it. We are again happy to co-sponsor the follow-up draft resolution (A/64/L.10) that has been presented by the Caribbean Community today. In this connection, I would also like to welcome the Secretary-General's report on the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery (A/64/299).

Slavery is one of the greatest scars on the history of nations and humanity. For one man to enslave another is truly a crime of the highest degree. It is therefore imperative that we commemorate the great struggles and battles that have been fought to get rid of this scourge. A Greek historian noted of ancient India that “it is remarkable in India that all Indians are free, and no Indian is a slave”. However, this changed after we were colonized and India was forced to endure a form of indentured servitude for nearly 200 years. The agony of slavery and the degradation that it leads to are therefore well understood by us.

The transatlantic slave trade ravaged African and Caribbean nations to satisfy the rapacious economic greed and exploitation of the colonizers. The effects of

its violence and of the human suffering it inflicted are still visible today.

Lest we forget, it is important that the international community take at least a first step in the right direction by paying homage to the victims of slavery and the slave trade and by acknowledging the tragedy. We are humbled and honoured to be part of the initiative to erect a memorial in honour and memory of the various victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. The permanent memorial will be a small commemoration of the millions of victims who suffered silently, with no hope of freedom, before they disappeared into the night.

The memorial will not only serve as a hallmark to which we may pay our respects, but will also be a reminder for the international community to raise awareness about the issues surrounding the great evil of slavery, of which the transatlantic slave trade was one of the most abhorrent manifestations.

We welcome the establishment of the Committee led by the Caribbean and African countries to oversee the permanent memorial project. In this context, we feel that it would be befitting for UNESCO to undertake the task of launching the international design project for the permanent memorial.

We also recognize the importance of education to current and future generations about the history, causes and impact of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. We support the initiatives undertaken by the United Nations and recognize that the appointment of the Goodwill Ambassador is a step forward in spreading awareness about this important issue.

We welcome the initiatives undertaken by States in reaffirming their commitment to implementing paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, aimed at countering the legacy of slavery and contributing to the restoration of the dignity of the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

Slavery and the slave trade are symptomatic of the evils that are still manifested in the form of racism and xenophobia. Our work at the United Nations will not be complete unless we can abolish all forms of slavery, including its present manifestations. This requires that we work together in a spirit of international cooperation to rid our world of these modern forms of slavery.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

At the request of the sponsors, action on draft resolution A/64/L.10 will be taken at a later stage, to be announced.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 116.

Agenda item 75 (continued)

Report of the International Criminal Court

Draft resolution (A/64/L.9)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 75 at its 29th and 31st plenary meetings, held on 29 and 30 October 2009, respectively.

I give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.9.

Mr. Schaper (Netherlands): I have the honour to introduce, under agenda item 75, draft resolution A/64/L.9, entitled "Report of the International Criminal Court". In addition to the 93 countries listed in document A/64/L.9, which contains the text of the draft resolution, the following countries have indicated their wish to be included as sponsors of the resolution: Chad, the Dominican Republic, Georgia, Mongolia, San Marino and Timor-Leste. This brings the total number of sponsors to 99.

On 29 October, the President of the International Criminal Court, Judge Sang-Hyun Song, presented the fifth annual report of the International Criminal Court (A/64/356) to this body. We had a very constructive and in-depth debate then, and I would like to highlight a few elements.

First of all, the debate once again made clear that the establishment of the Court was the most significant development of the past decade in our long and ongoing struggle to eradicate impunity — a struggle that continues. For success in this struggle, universal adherence to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) will be crucial.

We are therefore very pleased to welcome the countries that have recently become parties to the Rome Statute: Chile and the Czech Republic. It is our sincere hope that others will join soon. We look forward to welcoming many more States as parties to the ICC by

the 2010 Review Conference, which will be held in Kampala.

Secondly, the International Criminal Court's annual report and the debate in the Assembly last week also underlined the role of the Court in our common efforts to build an international community characterized not only by the rule of law and respect for human rights, but also by peace and security. Sustainable peace cannot be achieved if perpetrators of the most serious crimes are not brought to justice. Peace and justice are complementary requirements.

Thirdly, as the President of the International Criminal Court pointed out, the biggest obstacle to the conduct of judicial proceeding remains the lack of arrests and surrender of suspects. The cooperation of States, international organizations and civil society is essential to the Court's functioning, in relation not only to arrests and surrender, but also to the provision of evidence, the protection and relocation of victims and witnesses, and the enforcement of sentences.

We are therefore pleased that the United Nations continued to assist the Court over the past year in its endeavours through implementation of the Relationship Agreement. We also welcome the assistance provided thus far by the States parties and the non-States parties, and call on all States to continue to support the Court's efforts in this regard.

Last but not least, the President of the Court, in his address to the General Assembly, stressed the fact that the hallmark of the Court is its independent judicial nature. At the same time, that judicial institution operates within the political world and it needs States to not just cooperate with it, but also to respect, to protect and to enhance its judicial independence.

Allow me now to turn to the draft resolution itself, which serves three main objectives. First, it provides political support for the International Criminal Court as an organization and for its mandate, its aims and the work it carries out. Secondly, it underlines the importance of the relationship between the Court and the United Nations on the basis of the Relationship Agreement. As the President of the ICC rightly pointed out last week, both the United Nations and the ICC have an equally central role in enhancing the system of international criminal justice. Lastly, the draft resolution serves to remind States and international and regional organizations of the need to cooperate with the International Criminal Court in carrying out its tasks.

The Netherlands hopes that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus and that it will lead to even greater support for the Court in the fight against impunity and its attempts to hold the perpetrators of serious crimes accountable for their actions.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/64/L.9.

Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats?

Ms. McLeod (United States of America): The United States is not in a position at this time to join in the adoption of draft resolution A/64/L.10. If a vote had been called on the draft resolution, we would have abstained. We emphasize, however, that the United States remains steadfastly committed to promoting the rule of law and helping to bring violators of international humanitarian law to justice, wherever the violations may occur, and will continue to play a leadership role in righting these wrongs. As we have emphasized, we cannot ignore the terrible crimes that have occurred in places like Darfur and the massive human suffering that the world has witnessed.

Mr. Sanusi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country will join the consensus on draft resolution A/64/L.10, keeping in mind the general inclination of the majority of the Member States. However, Libya reaffirms its position on the Rome Statute and its reservations with regard to its content.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position before the Assembly takes action on the draft resolution.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.9. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.9?

Draft resolution A/64/L.9 was adopted (resolution 64/9).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 75?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.