



General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
13 October 2023

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 October 2023, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Amorín (Uruguay)
later: Mr. Cimino (Vice-Chair) (Italy)

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23-18845 (E)



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

General debate (continued)

1. **The Chair** invited the Committee to continue its general debate on the theme “Building a sustainable recovery for all”.

2. **Ms. Al-halique** (Jordan) said that her Government had initiated a three-pronged reform process aimed at overhauling the country’s economic and political systems and its public administration. Economic modernization aimed to accelerate growth and improve the quality of life of all Jordanians. The political system was also being modernized and public administration was being decentralized, with local authorities taking on a bigger role. Services were also being digitized to enhance public participation.

3. Jordan hosted millions of refugees, providing them with access to services, opportunities and dignified lives. However, continued international support was required to consolidate those achievements. Although international assistance had been dwindling, her Government remained committed to working with partners to find ways to maintain the progress already achieved and protect those living in Jordan, while moving the country forward on its own sustainable development path.

4. At the recent Sustainable Development Goals Summit Jordan had presented ambitious plans for achieving the Goals, with a particular focus on food security, education, climate change and data. Its commitments were closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and built on her country’s second voluntary national review, which it had presented in 2022. Its climate commitments were focused on adaptation, mitigation, climate finance, women’s empowerment and decision-making processes, and related to several of the Goals. To improve food security, the Government was taking steps to make the country’s food systems efficient and future-proof.

5. In order to accelerate progress in the above-mentioned areas, Jordan was determined to strengthen its data systems and data awareness and to continue to improve its monitoring of progress towards the Goals, including through voluntary national reviews. Her country’s modernization efforts would continue to be based on sustainable development and the pursuit of a more equitable, greener and fairer society for future generations.

6. **Mr. Kim** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) said that epidemics, natural disasters, armed conflicts and environmental destruction were causing

great suffering and hindering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In order to restore socioeconomic stability and achieve international development, it was necessary to accelerate the reform of the international economic order established more than 70 years earlier to represent the interests of the Western world. Many countries were now rejecting international economic and financial organizations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), because they had long served only to satisfy the endless greed of certain countries. A few countries must not be allowed to control the world economy; the international community should reform the unjust system without delay to better serve the interests of developing countries.

7. Developing countries, in turn, should strengthen economic solidarity and cooperation among themselves, on the basis of the principles of sovereignty, equality and mutual benefits. Such cooperation would greatly boost their economic development and the welfare of their peoples. The global public health crisis of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had once again demonstrated how the needs and interests of developing countries were disregarded in the global arena. Their continued dependence on developed countries was the road to political and economic submission. Together, developing countries could overcome challenges, including climate change and the food and energy crises. They should raise their voices in opposition to unjust sanctions and blockade measures. In that connection, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea reaffirmed its support for the Havana Declaration on Current Development Challenges: the Role of Science, Technology and Innovation, which had been adopted at the recent Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 and China.

8. Under the leadership of its President, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea was achieving progress in various fields. Work had been undertaken to strengthen the technological systems used in the countryside; for instance, the irrigation system had been renovated, making it likely that his country would achieve its grain production goal for 2023. Environmental protection projects were being widely promoted. Technology to enhance disaster-prevention capacity had been developed. Children’s welfare and education was a top priority for his Government, and the education system was being improved continuously.

9. In the future, his Government would continue to enhance economic cooperation and exchanges with all nations which rejected aggression, interference, domination and subjugation. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea would also actively participate in

international efforts to protect life by enhancing preparedness for climate change, protecting the environment and taking steps to prevent natural disasters.

10. **Ms. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) said that her country had a clear objective for the current session of the Second Committee: to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of the commitments set out in the recently adopted political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly Sustainable Development Goals Summit). Colombia trusted that Member States would summon the political will needed to accelerate, through the resolutions of the Committee, the systemic reforms required to close the financing gap for the Goals, overcome the global crises and protect global public goods. As evidenced in her country's national development plan, protecting nature and combating climate change were high priorities for Colombia.

11. The root cause of the triple planetary crisis was an extractive model based on the use of fossil fuels and the accumulation of capital, which deepened inequalities within and between countries. Those worst affected by environmental degradation and climate change were those who had contributed the least to the crisis: developing countries and historically marginalized populations. Protecting the climate and nature was, therefore, a question of environmental, social, economic and intergenerational justice. Solutions must be multilateral and based on the transformation of the current global economic, financial and commercial models. The major emitters and the developed countries must decarbonize their economies and provide the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda.

12. The reform of the international financial system should include debt-for-nature and debt-for-climate swaps as a means to increase the fiscal space of developing countries. In addition, unused special drawing rights (SDRs) should be reallocated, and the countries in the most critical situations should be helped to pay off a significant portion of their debt in order to free up the public funds needed to finance climate action and achieve the Goals. It was also imperative to align the mandates of the international financial institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) with the purposes of the Goals and of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Lastly, it was necessary to establish criteria for measuring development and granting access to concessional financing that went beyond gross domestic product (GDP).

13. Making those transformations and leaving no one behind entailed the adoption of an approach based on human rights and intersectional and gender justice, with the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, girls, boys, adolescents, young people, Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent and groups in vulnerable situations.

14. **Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa) said that much of humanity was confronted by war and conflict, hunger, disease and environmental disasters. Those problems were coupled with a rise in inequality, poverty and unemployment and exacerbated by the current food, energy and financial crises. In those conditions, and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals seemed increasingly unlikely.

15. Cooperation and solidarity were needed to bridge the divide between wealthy and poor. Member States must regain momentum towards achieving the Goals, and address fundamental development challenges through targeted investment, technology transfer and capacity-building, including in key areas for Africa, such as industrialization, agriculture, energy, education, health, information and communications technology and water. The pandemic had weakened the public financing mechanisms and resource mobilization capacity of developing countries, meaning that they needed predictable, at-scale, additional and accessible financial resources to implement the 2030 Agenda. There was a need for policies to address the immediate crises facing developing countries, bridge the financing gap for the Goals and institute systemic reforms, including of the international financial architecture.

16. Developed countries should honour their commitments related to the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, including through the adoption of supportive trade policies. South Africa supported the Secretary-General's proposed Sustainable Development Goal stimulus plan, particularly his calls to tackle debt and debt distress, increase affordable long-term financing to \$500 billion a year and expand contingency financing.

17. Innovation and adaptation were needed to prevent the destruction of the planet. In that regard, it was important to advance all three pillars of the Paris Agreement – mitigation, adaptation and support. African countries needed increased financial support to both implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve their climate goals. South Africa therefore called on developed countries to fulfil their legal commitments, including to mobilizing \$100 billion a year to support the climate action of developing economies.

18. **Mr. Kanu** (Sierra Leone) said that the current global challenges continued to undermine hard-won development gains. Global action was needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and Sierra Leone therefore welcomed the theme of the general debate, “Building a sustainable recovery for all”.

19. The international financial architecture must be reformed to make it work for all. Developing countries should be allocated additional SDRs or all unused SDRs. Debt cancellation should be given further consideration where appropriate, especially for vulnerable countries. Measures including budget support, extended credit facilities with low lending costs and debt relief were critical, to provide developing countries with fiscal space and liquidity. Sierra Leone strongly supported the Secretary-General’s proposed Sustainable Development Goal stimulus, including the three key areas for immediate action.

20. Investment in climate change mitigation and adaptation must be an urgent global priority. Developing countries needed adequate access to climate financing and technology transfer. Sierra Leone remained concerned by the lack of available public climate finance and urged the developed countries to deliver on their commitments to provide \$100 billion a year in climate finance and to allocate at least half of all public climate finance to adaptation.

21. Official development assistance (ODA) to the least developed countries continued to decline, limiting liquidity and placing constraints on external solvency. In view of the challenges posed by the unfair global tax regime and illicit financial flows, it was imperative that the developed countries fulfil their ODA commitments and scale up the percentage of ODA for the least developed countries. Sierra Leone also called on the United Nations system and other development partners to provide socioeconomic and humanitarian support, including financial and technical support, to assist developing economies to recover and deliver on the Goals.

22. Despite persistent multidimensional challenges, Sierra Leone continued to work to achieve growth and stability. His Government’s strategy in that regard was focused on food security, the development of human capital, youth employment, technology and infrastructure, and reforming public services. Through the strategy, the Government aimed to elevate Sierra Leone to the status of a middle-income country by 2035. However, Sierra Leone could not achieve its development agenda in isolation; rekindled global solidarity and partnerships were essential. Sierra Leone

remained committed to mobilizing domestic revenue and enhancing its public financial management.

23. **Mr. Eyeberdiyev** (Turkmenistan) said that his country would again be taking the lead on the draft resolution on sustainable transport. The draft for the current session was entitled “Strengthening the links between all modes of transport to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, and was based on General Assembly resolution [72/212](#). As a follow-up to the Ashgabat process on sustainable transport and in accordance with General Assembly resolution [77/286](#), Turkmenistan was also organizing a high-level meeting to promote sustainable transport cooperation during the current session of the General Assembly, which had been timed to coincide with World Sustainable Transport Day on 26 November. Turkmenistan would also endeavour to further strengthen cooperation with the Group of Friends of Sustainable Transport.

24. Stable energy connectivity and energy resource mobility was another priority for his country. Turkmenistan had already sponsored a draft resolution entitled “Stable, resilient and reliable energy connectivity and energy resource mobility and its pivotal role in driving sustainable development”. It was considering hosting the Sustainable Energy for All Forum in 2025, to follow up on the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All and promote global efforts to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy sources. In line with those priorities, Turkmenistan intended to actively participate in the preparations for the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, to be held in 2024 in Kigali, Rwanda, and was considering hosting one of the preparatory meetings.

25. **Mr. Ndoye** (Senegal) said that a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic required first addressing the root causes of the current crises. Millions of people around the world were struggling to meet their basic needs, 10 per cent of the global population was living in extreme poverty, nearly half did not have access to the Internet and 600 million Africans did not have access to electricity. The inequitable financial system, under which the needs of the large majority of the world’s population went unmet, must be redressed. A substantial proportion of the global population was affected by the burden of debt and the impacts of climate change, had difficulty accessing credit and suffered under the diktat of the current obsolete economic and financial architecture.

26. The rise in interest rates and the difficult economic situation meant that many countries were at risk of a

debt crisis. Some 60 per cent of the poorest countries were already deeply indebted or at risk of becoming so. The sovereign bonds of the majority of poor countries would mature in 2024 and there was an urgent need to make arrangements for when that happened. Developing countries needed access to capital markets at sustainable rates and loans with long maturity dates and affordable terms in order to finance their economies. As a result of ratings agencies exaggerating the risk of investing in developing countries, those countries paid eight times as much as developed countries in borrowing costs, meaning that their insurance premiums were elevated and projects became more expensive. Measures aimed at reforming the international financial architecture in order to make it better reflect diversity and facilitate resource mobilization in developing countries must be strengthened. As the Group of 20 had shown by admitting the African Union as a fully-fledged member, success was possible when the political will was there.

27. Lastly, developed countries must honour their climate financing commitments, including to mobilizing \$100 billion a year for developing countries, doubling adaptation financing by 2025 and establishing a loss and damage compensation mechanism. Only through the aforementioned actions would an inclusive, just and equitable recovery be possible; and empathy for human beings and nature must be at the heart of those efforts.

28. **Ms. Carty** (United States of America) said that the Second Committee was beginning its work against a sobering backdrop of interrelated global challenges, including a worsening climate crisis, growing food insecurity, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and rising geopolitical tensions. The severe social, economic and development consequences of the illegal and unprovoked Russian war in Ukraine continued to take a horrific human toll and undermine progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The United States remained committed to the rules-based international order and called on all delegations to demonstrate the same commitment to the international system and the core pillars of the Charter of the United Nations: sovereignty, territorial integrity and fundamental human rights.

29. Since January 2021, the United States had invested more than \$100 billion to support development around the world, focusing on food security, education, health care and combating disease. The 2030 Agenda could not be implemented by focusing on only a few of the Goals, as they were all interrelated. For instance, Goal 5, on gender equality, was inexorably linked to economic growth, education and reducing inequalities, and progress towards Goal 2, zero hunger, was fundamental to ending poverty, supporting healthy populations and

advancing quality education. Since 2021, the United States had committed \$17.5 billion to address global food insecurity.

30. The Inflation Reduction Act was the strongest climate action in the history of the United States, and sent an unequivocal signal of her country's commitment to meet the 1.5°C goal under the Paris Agreement. The Government of the United States was working to quadruple its climate finance in order to help developing countries to reduce emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. The United States was confident that, in 2023, the developed countries were on track to collectively mobilize the pledged \$100 billion for climate action in developing countries.

31. The United States had a strong track record of investment in all the Goals, but progress required partnership. Her country was committed to working through the United Nations and other multilateral institutions, and to reforming and modernizing those institutions when necessary. In that connection, the United States was taking significant steps to reform the World Bank in order to expand its financing to low- and middle-income countries. Since 2022, the United States had successfully pushed for reforms that would unlock as much as \$50 billion in additional lending capacity over the next decade. It estimated that the multilateral development banks, as a system, could unlock an additional \$200 billion in new lending capacity over the same time frame through balance sheet measures that were already being implemented or were under consideration. In addition, the President of the United States had requested funding that would enable the World Bank to provide \$27 billion in new resources for projects that addressed climate change, fragility and pandemics and to support immediate crisis response in the poorest countries. Her Government was pushing for additional reforms on a rolling basis, including to optimize climate finance architecture, encourage private capital mobilization and address debt and macroeconomic stability – building on the recent successful negotiation on debt treatment for Zambia under the Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative.

32. The United States commended the progress made on reforming the United Nations development system. Her Government remained committed to the system and would support it to identify innovative solutions, balance ambition with pragmatism, strengthen transparency and accountability, and deliver results. As the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights approached, it was important to recall that sustainable development must be

firmly grounded in respect for human rights and gender equality.

33. **Mr. Galstyan** (Armenia) said that Armenia supported the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report entitled “Our Common Agenda” (A/75/982), and looked forward to preparing for the Summit of the Future, which could contribute to strengthening multilateralism and making meaningful progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

34. Working with development partners, Armenia had taken steps to align its national strategies and action plans with the Goals, with a focus on good governance and transparency, representative and accountable institutions, and zero tolerance for corruption. Its institutional reforms had already attracted investment and driven significant economic growth. Building on that success, and with a view to enhancing its national capacities, Armenia would present its third voluntary national review in 2024. Through the review process, it would aim to make progress in the areas of innovation, green economy, women’s empowerment and good governance.

35. Resilient global and regional trade and connectivity were critical to enabling a landlocked middle-income country like Armenia to realize its full economic potential and sustainable development. In the run-up to the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, Armenia, in coordination with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, was preparing to hold a ministerial meeting in Yerevan on 20 and 21 November 2023 on the theme “Enhancing equitable, affordable and inclusive transport connectivity as a driver for more sustainable and resilient economies in landlocked least developed countries”.

36. As the Committee was meeting, an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe was unfolding in Nagorno-Karabakh. On 19 September, following a 10-month blockade of the Lachin corridor and forced starvation imposed on the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan had launched a full-scale attack, indiscriminately shelling civilians in violation of their right to live freely and in dignity in their own homeland. Hundreds of civilians had been killed or wounded; many were still missing. As at the current time, more than 100,000 displaced persons had entered Armenia, leaving behind their homes, livelihoods, pastures, livestock and small business, and deprived of their means of subsistence at the start of the winter. Regional peace and

stability played a crucial role in sustainable development for all, especially those in vulnerable situations. Continuous acts of aggression against the sovereign territory of Armenia and the people of Nagorno-Karabakh had shattered the security environment in the region, undermining his country’s sustainable development efforts.

37. **Mr. Flores** (Honduras) said that Honduras remained in the shadow of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The recession had led productive enterprises to shut down, increasing unemployment and pushing Hondurans to emigrate. Nevertheless, Honduras remained committed to the 2030 Agenda in its entirety and, more than ever, to leaving no one behind.

38. The effects of climate change were visible in health, food and water security and migration. If climate change continued not to be taken seriously, the world would continue to lose development gains and the internal stability of nations, as well as world peace, would be at risk. Nature was inseparable from sustainable development, and Honduras remained concerned by the loss of biodiversity, which played an unquestionable role in the planet’s natural equilibrium. In that connection, science, technology and capacity-building had a large role in a sustainable and resilient recovery. Sustainable development required large-scale, coordinated action to ensure that guarantees of access to development were underpinned by a multilateral system based on the rules and principles of international law. Honduras looked forward to seeing the results of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

39. Middle-income countries were facing problems such as the effects of climate change, growing inequality and rapid urbanization, which were increasing hunger and poverty. Honduras was concerned by the reduction in access to affordable sources of financing, as timely financing was needed in order to build societies that were more sustainable and resilient, and in which natural resources, basic services and food security were responsibly managed. Middle-income countries were home to 62 per cent of the world’s poor, and there was an urgent need for reforms that would support fairer and more effective development cooperation for those countries. Such reforms should facilitate immediate measures to enable countries to avoid the middle-income trap and have access to finance, capacity-building and technology transfer, increased fiscal space and debt sustainability.

40. At the current session, the middle-income countries would have an opportunity to agree on

specific, updated measures on development cooperation that was tailored to their expectations, and to focus on establishing sustainable development indicators that complemented or went beyond GDP. Eradicating poverty required a renewed commitment and a focus on creating decent jobs and social protection. Honduras was therefore particularly interested in the implementation of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, and supported the Secretary-General's call, in his Sustainable Development Goal stimulus proposal, to increase the financing capacity of the multilateral development banks.

41. *Mr. Cimino (Italy), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

42. **Ms. Thompson Ramirez** (Panama) said that the Committee was beginning its work against a backdrop of increasingly frequent natural disasters and extreme climate events that had destroyed infrastructure and means of subsistence, displaced thousands of people and even resulted in lost lives in various parts of the world. Panama, as one of the 15 countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, had already experienced its first case of climate-related displacement – the population of Cartí Sugdup island in the indigenous Guna Yala region had had to be relocated as a result of rising sea levels.

43. The Sustainable Development Goals served as road map for the challenging transition from an economic and income-centred approach to a holistic approach that included the different dimensions that affected humanity's progress. Plan Colmena (Beehive Plan), a legally-established social policy focused on protecting the most vulnerable, was her country's primary strategy to advance towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. Plan Colmena was focused on the neighbourhoods, rural agricultural areas and indigenous areas where gaps intersected, affecting generation after generation. Those gaps were identified using the Multidimensional Poverty Index, which took into account non-monetary privations related to education, housing, access to basic services and the Internet, the environment, sanitation, work and health care. Under the Plan, the Government had prioritized the 300 worst-off villages in the country and had succeeded in reducing the rate of undernourishment and the country's poverty and extreme poverty indices, and had initiated local structural transformations through coordination and partnerships with public institutions, civil society, academia, the private sector and communities.

44. Panama had made a huge effort to conserve its marine spaces and had achieved the target of 30 per cent as protected areas nine years ahead of 2030. In 2023, it

planned to increase the proportion of coastal waters that were protected to 54 per cent. On 6 July 2023 Panama had become the first Latin American country to ratify the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, and during the recent high-level week it had signed the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction. Panama had established a carbon footprint reduction programme through its national strategy on green hydrogen and its derivatives. It had also launched an ambitious energy transition agenda with the aim of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 24 per cent by 2050.

45. Aware of the fundamental role of science, technology and innovation in growth, Panama aspired to create an inclusive digital economy and a more efficient and transparent public administration. Science and technology held enormous potential to improve people's quality of life through advances in health care, education and food security. Artificial intelligence was rapidly taking on a bigger role in different areas of people's lives. However, alongside such rapid progress came risks, and the rights and safety of all users must be protected to ensure that artificial intelligence served humanity.

46. It was imperative to establish a new global financial architecture. The assistance that developing countries needed was as varied as the countries themselves. It was important to promote women's access to resources and to ensure that they participated effectively in decision-making in all levels and sectors. Her delegation hoped that the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would enable an honest discussion, in which developing countries' voices were heard, in particular with respect to the operationalization of the loss and damage fund that had been agreed on at the twenty-seventh session.

47. Lastly, Panama hoped that the joint efforts of Member States during the current session would enable them to adopt resolutions that would help to translate multilateral political commitments into local actions, and establish the foundations for a genuine sustainable recovery and a dignified future for all.

48. **Mr. Al Nahhas** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that COVID-19, food insecurity, water scarcity, energy shortages, high inflation, climate change and natural disasters all posed obstacles to development. However, those problems were exacerbated by the illegal and immoral unilateral measures imposed on developing

countries. Even so, his country continued to believe in multilateral cooperation as the best way to meet development aspirations. The developed countries should make good on their commitments to the developing countries.

49. His country's development efforts had been set back by the devastating earthquake in February 2023 that had killed thousands of people, collapsed thousands of buildings and caused extensive damage to infrastructure. Unilateral coercive measures had made the death total higher than it needed to be by denying Syria the benefit of early warning devices that might have saved hundreds of lives and preventing it from acquiring heavy rescue equipment that might have pulled people from the rubble. Despite that catastrophe, his country remained committed to implementing its Syria 2030 post-war development programme, including by introducing structural transformations to ensure sustainability for future generations. The Syrian Arab Republic expected the United Nations to support its development efforts by bringing about an end to the unilateral coercive measures.

50. His delegation wished to reaffirm the importance of the annual resolution entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their Natural resources".

51. **Ms. Lora-Santos** (Philippines) said that ensuring that food was available, affordable and accessible was an existential and moral imperative. The agricultural sector was one of the main drivers of growth and employment in the Philippines. Her Government was working to attain food security for all Filipinos and to achieve modern, resilient agriculture through technical, capacity-building and financial support to farmers and fisherfolk. The Philippines remained committed to the United Nations Decade of Family Farming and to the outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

52. The science, technology and innovation ecosystem must be made more inclusive and fair. The previous week, her Government had launched its national innovation agenda and strategy for the period 2023-2032, which was aimed at enhancing innovation governance and promoting a culture of innovation. Other key science, technology and innovation programmes were aimed at supporting micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises and empowering communities. As one of the countries that was most vulnerable to disasters, the Philippines was also focusing on building resilience against the impacts of climate change.

53. Her country was committed to leading evidence-based climate action. There remained an urgent need to mobilize innovative and responsive climate finance, share best-available science, advance technology development and transfer, and build capacity for prevention, mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Funding for loss and damage must likewise be specifically addressed. The Philippines looked forward to welcoming delegates to the 2024 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in October in Manila.

54. Multilateralism could go a long way towards achieving universal health coverage, ending the tuberculosis pandemic and reaching agreement on a global pandemic treaty. Developing countries needed increased support to strengthen primary health-care systems through health promotion, information technologies, epidemiology and surveillance and reinforcement of subnational capacities and resilience against emerging infections. With equity as a core principle, Member States must jointly harness the power of new technologies and bolster innovation that enabled customized health-care services to reach those furthest behind.

55. The Philippines strongly supported the ongoing multilateral efforts to reexamine development cooperation and to address structural barriers in the international financial architecture. Specifically, it welcomed the efforts to develop multidimensional indices to measure growth, and, in turn, govern access to concessional financing. The Philippines appreciated the initiation of the mapping exercise on United Nations support to middle-income countries. It intended to build on those efforts to ensure that the specific challenges of middle-income countries were adequately addressed by the United Nations system, including the United Nations country teams.

56. The Philippines stood in solidarity with the other nations of the global South, and also sought to strengthen its valuable relations with its developed partners. It was committed to empowering women, youth, migrants, persons with disabilities and older people, as well as others in vulnerable situations. It would contribute constructively to the deliberations of the Committee, seeking to reach consensus in support of a brighter future.

57. **Mr. Momeni** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the world needed solidarity and multilateral cooperation more than ever, with the United Nations playing a leading role, to tackle multifaceted regional and global challenges. The provision of the means of implementation was critical, and developed countries

should fulfil their commitments related to financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building, without politicizing any intergovernmental process. Full realization of the right to development served the best interest of the international community and paved the way for the further promotion of all human rights worldwide. It was thus imperative to place all countries' right to development at the top of the agenda. Unilateral coercive measures were inhumane and violated basic human rights. Such measures not only undermined the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threatened freedom of trade and investment and violated the right to development, leaving behind more than 2 billion people in affected countries.

58. Much of the West Asian region suffered from a hotter and drier climate that was well above the average global temperature rise. It faced chronic droughts, water scarcity and other effects of climate change, in particular sand and dust storms. Unilateral coercive measures had exacerbated existing environmental problems in the targeted countries. The sanctions imposed on Iran limited its ability to attract foreign investment and hindered its access to the technology, goods and services needed to address environmental challenges. In cooperation with the United Nations, an international conference on combating sand and dust storms had been held in Tehran in September 2023, with the aim of enhancing regional and global cooperation to tackle the problem.

59. Iran was currently the fifth-largest refugee-hosting country in the world. In spite of the sanctions, it continued to provide health, education and food services to more than 5 million Afghans and more than 700,000 students and children living in Iran. Those foreign students and children placed a substantial burden on the country's education system. There was a need for more schools and more hospitals. International organizations should pay particular attention to the issue and strive to fulfil their related commitments.

60. Many intergovernmental processes would be negotiated in 2024, making it a particularly important year for developing countries. It was vital that, in negotiating all those processes, Governments fully take into consideration the different realities, capacities and levels of development of Member States, as well as their national priorities. An enabling international environment was a prerequisite for the Summit of the Future. Creating such an environment entailed upholding multilateralism and the crucial role of the United Nations; fully respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; restructuring the international financial architecture;

prioritizing the eradication of poverty; and ensuring the timely provision of adequate, predictable and sustainable means of implementation.

61. Lastly, unilateral coercive measures, including economic sanctions, were a threat to multilateralism, solidarity and cooperation. Such unwarranted and unlawful measures undermined the rights to development, health and life of the people of targeted countries, especially during natural disasters and global pandemics.

62. **Mr. Oddone** (Argentina) said that as a consequence of the various crises that the world was experiencing, a significant quantity of the gains already made towards the 2030 Agenda were being lost. It was urgent to consider which new tools would enable the international community to truly achieve the objectives it had set itself. The world situation was marked by many challenges, including harshening international financial conditions and a backdrop of growing vulnerabilities, debt and limited fiscal space. It was thus important to make progress in the establishment of mechanisms for the mobilization of sufficient resources for holistic development. Argentina welcomed the discussion on how to strengthen the multilateral development banks, which played a key role in providing affordable financing. It was also necessary to discuss alternatives for improving the quantity and quality of financing to provide relief to those countries which needed it, which necessarily included middle-income countries. The Secretary-General's proposed Sustainable Development Goal stimulus package contained ideas worth discussing. The urgently needed discussions on reforming the international financial architecture must result in a system that met the world's current needs and under which debt restructuring was efficient, predictable and equitable.

63. There was a need for an inclusive multilateral agreement which fully addressed sovereign debt restructuring, fostered sustainable and inclusive economic growth, protected the stability of the international financial system and upheld human rights. No country could pay its debt at the cost of the education, health or safety of its people. To reach the necessary agreement, Member States could build on the foundation of General Assembly resolution [69/319](#), on the basic principles of the sovereign debt restructuring process, and General Assembly resolution [68/304](#), on the establishment of a multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes. Progress was also urgently needed on specific tasks, such as the revision of the IMF surcharge policy, which was regressive and procyclical. In addition, it was necessary to move towards an inclusive global cooperation system

that used more complex criteria than simply GDP to measure development, and to establish a robust technology transfer system that would support inclusive and sustainable development.

64. Volatile food prices were affecting the quality of life of people all around the world. It was necessary to produce more and better food to meet the growing demand. However, it was not possible to address Sustainable Development Goal 2 without considering trade. International trade in agricultural products must be made more open, fair, transparent, equitable and predictable. WTO must be at the centre of the system, and efficient producer countries must be able to make the necessary investments to increase production and satisfy the growing global demand for high-quality, nutritious food. It was also important to eliminate agricultural subsidies, which, globally, amounted to 15 per cent of the total value of agricultural production and four times the amount of ODA provided by developed countries. The subsidies were distributed unequally and distorted the market, created inefficiencies and harmed both the environment and human health.

65. Climate change demanded urgent action. Argentina reaffirmed the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, in recognition of the fact that developed countries bore greater responsibility, both historically and at the current time. Developing countries could not be expected to set themselves more ambitious climate goals unless developed countries set themselves more ambitious targets for providing and mobilizing the means of implementation that would enable a genuine fair transition towards cleaner, less carbon-heavy and more resilient economies.

66. **Mr. Pereira Sosa** (Paraguay) said that the current crisis was an opportunity to implement recovery initiatives to accelerate the construction of a sustainable future for all, and to take measures to rectify the structural problems that had limited development thus far. The year 2023 had been one of intense negotiations and major international events. It was time for Member States to redouble their efforts to fulfil the commitments made in relation to the economy, international trade and the climate, among other areas, as well as to reduce the science, technology and innovation gap and accelerate technology transfer to developing countries. South-South and triangular cooperation had important roles to play, as complements to, but not substitutes for, North-South cooperation.

67. It was important to address the needs and specific challenges of the three most vulnerable groups of countries: landlocked developing countries, least

developed countries and small island developing States. As a landlocked developing country, Paraguay was prioritizing integration and regional connectivity. His Government sought to make Paraguay a key territory for the physical integration of Latin America, and had invested heavily in national and regional connectivity, supporting the construction of the Paraguay-Paraná waterway and planning the road corridor between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The corridor would not only benefit Paraguay, but would also significantly improve connectivity between major regions of neighbouring countries.

68. For decades, Paraguay had been promoting an energy mix based on clean and renewable energy. It had become a pioneer in regional energy integration and was resolved to increase its energy efficiency and sustainability. Member States should build on the momentum of 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 (United Nations 2023 Water Conference) and continue working to guarantee access to water and sanitation. As a landlocked developing country, Paraguay emphasized the importance for that group of countries of unhindered, efficient and effective access to the sea for all means of transport, on the basis of the freedom of transit. Sea access was of critical importance for international trade, economic growth and, in turn, sustainable development. Climate change must be addressed swiftly in order to avoid further damage to the planet. Countries must honour their commitments under the Paris Agreement, in particular their climate financing commitments, in order to support the mitigation and adaptation efforts of developing countries.

69. Paraguay would continue to work with all countries to respond to global challenges, and urged developed countries to comply with their ODA commitments and to forge new partnerships that would spur progress. The Committee had important work to do to end poverty in all its forms and to support sustainable development in its three dimensions.

70. **Ms. Buenrostro Massieu** (Mexico) said that progress towards most of the Sustainable Development Goals had been too slow or had even regressed. The achievement of the Goals must be promoted as an integral part of development policies and strategies. Given the magnitude of the challenges facing the world, there was a clear need for development financing and institutional capacity-building in the countries of the global South. Joint action, political will and

international cooperation were needed more than ever to promote the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

71. The eradication of poverty, including extreme poverty, was an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Her country had therefore taken steps to guarantee a basic set of rights to ensure effective and comprehensive assistance for those most in need. In recent years, 5 million people had been lifted out of poverty in Mexico. Her Government reiterated its commitment to seeking mechanisms and tools to alleviate the debt of developing countries, supporting the much-needed reform of international institutions and promoting the mobilization of international and national resources, such as efficient and inclusive tax schemes. Reaffirming its commitment to the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Mexico was proud to be a co-host of the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and joined the call of the global South and the Group of African States for progress in the design of a possible inclusive tax instrument or framework, and in the reform of the international financial architecture and of the governance of international financial institutions.

72. The theme of the current session of the General Assembly, “Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity”, was a key concept in her country’s efforts to combat the climate crisis. Making progress on pressing issues such as the protection of the environment, ecosystems and biodiversity and risk mitigation and reduction was a priority for her Government.

73. The Committee should strive to reflect the current situation and advances made in other forums, spaces and processes in its outcome documents. Although the delays in the implementation of many of those processes were well known, the Committee must not neglect to reflect the current state of such discussions in its documents.

74. Digital technologies could be catalysts for social and economic transformation. When properly harnessed, new technologies had the potential to increase efficiencies and catapult development. Reducing the digital gap and promoting digital connectivity, infrastructure, innovation and knowledge were priorities for her Government.

75. Sustainable development could not be achieved if half of humanity were denied their rights and opportunities. Gender equality must be recognized as not only a human right but also a fundamental requirement for building a more sustainable, prosperous and peaceful world.

76. **Ms. Hasanova** (Tajikistan) said that her Government had taken bold steps to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into national policies and development plans. As a landlocked developing country, Tajikistan faced challenges in fulfilling its promise to attain the Goals by 2030. Amid multiple global crises, immediate measures were needed to scale up efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, including development cooperation and reform of the international financial architecture. The efforts of the Secretary-General to address the financing gap for the Goals were welcome, and further discussions were needed on the proposal for a Goal stimulus.

77. As a mountainous country with rugged terrain, Tajikistan was one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. The loss of thousands of glaciers in the country over the past decade would have significant implications for future food security, water availability and ecosystems in Central Asia and beyond. Tangible measures, including the organization of expeditions to study glaciers, must be adopted to address the intense melting. Her country stood ready to work as part of the newly created group of friends of glaciers to implement General Assembly resolution [77/158](#), entitled “International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation, 2025”, and prepare for the international conference on glaciers to be held in Tajikistan in 2025.

78. Tajikistan would be a water champion at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and had initiated water-related resolutions at the General Assembly. The opportunities offered by the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028 and the Water Action Agenda, adopted during the United Nations 2023 Water Conference, should be fully harnessed to promote the timely implementation of Goal 6 and other water-related goals and targets. The United Nations 2028 Water Conference would be held in Tajikistan, at the end of the Water Action Decade. To support the preparations for that Conference, her Government was planning to host the third conference on the implementation of the Decade in Dushanbe in June 2024.

79. **Mr. Cruz** (Angola) said that the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development had provided opportunities for Member States to promote the decisions and policies needed to bring the achievement of the Goals back on track and to adopt pragmatic, inclusive and viable solutions for financing

socioeconomic development. Peace and social cohesion were central to creating an environment conducive to the achievement of the Goals. A renewed effort was thus needed to promote a culture of peace by strengthening multilateralism, fostering friendly relations among nations, defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development. The international financial architecture needed reform, given its structural flaws that compromised the mobilization of stable and long-term financing at the scale needed to combat the climate crisis and foster inclusive development.

80. Angola was currently facing its most severe drought of the past 40 years, with almost 2 million people facing food insecurity. The economic impacts of the drought across all sectors were estimated by the World Bank at more than \$749 million. To respond to climate change challenges, his Government had been implementing structural projects to improve the resilience of rural communities, benefiting more than 3.5 million people. One such project consisted of a system for capturing and transferring water from a river to several villages, thus guaranteeing better conditions for food production and livestock farming. In partnership with the United States of America, his Government had secured almost \$1 billion in financing for the construction of two large-scale photovoltaic solar energy power plants, which would provide access to clean energy.

81. Over the past five years, Angola had improved its macroeconomic management and public sector governance. Macroeconomic stability had been enhanced through a more flexible exchange rate regime, central bank autonomy, sound monetary policy and fiscal consolidation. Laws had been introduced to allow greater private sector participation in the economy, increasing the stability of the financial sector. Angola had joined the Debt Service Suspension Initiative and had negotiated favourable terms with its main creditors for servicing its remaining debt.

82. Having made investing in human capital and poverty reduction a top priority, his Government had made significant investments in health, education, energy and water, transportation and public works. Those investments had been complemented by the roll-out of an ambitious programme, financed by the World Bank and through the national budget, to provide temporary income support to poor households in rural areas. His Government had also launched an informal economy reconversion programme to support the transition of more than 9 million informal workers to the

formal economy, with the intention of recovering 65 per cent of the revenue lost to the informal economy.

83. **Mr. Al-Khalidi** (Iraq) said that recent events had shown how closely national economies were tied to the global economy. Countries needed to be aware that any economic measure taken by any party affected all others. Inclusive development was not possible without a robust economy, which was in turn not possible without peace and stability.

84. Iraq had presented its second voluntary national review in 2021. However, its efforts were being hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical-related market fluctuations – notably in commodity prices – that had severely impacted its national budget. Iraq welcomed the focus of the recent Sustainable Development Goals Summit on financing. It also wished to see greater representation for host country nationals in resident coordinator offices, and for developing countries in development agencies generally.

85. The effects of water scarcity, drought and sandstorms were plain to see in Iraq. His delegation called for implementation of international agreements on water in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Sustainable Development Goals 2, 6 and 7 on hunger, water and energy were priorities in his country's national development plans, which included, inter alia, empowering small rural food producers. The COVID-19 pandemic and other crises had highlighted the importance of secure and affordable nutrition. Having made great sacrifices in its war against terrorism, Iraq looked forward to further implementation of Goal 17 on revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development.

86. **Mr. Kuymizakis** (Malta) said that, against the backdrop of the triple planetary crisis and the impacts of the illegal aggression of Russia against Ukraine, the need to bring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals back on track was critical. Collective efforts to achieve the Goals should include assisting those most exposed to the impacts of climate change and the most vulnerable groups. Reform of the international financial architecture, accompanied by a green transition, was also critical. Malta called for increased support for and access to financing mechanisms that promoted social sustainability.

87. Malta had enshrined its commitment to the 2030 Agenda in its Sustainable Development Act. A sustainable development strategy for 2050 was being finalized with ambitious targets for the transition towards a climate-neutral green and blue economy and sustainable urban and human development. His Government remained focused on sustaining economic

recovery, promoting a circular economy, combating inequalities and reducing poverty. The European Green Deal and the Fit for 55 package remained key to his country's commitments to achieve positive environmental impacts.

88. As an island State, Malta was unwavering in its support for a healthy, safe and resilient ocean. During the high-level week of the current session of the General Assembly, Malta had signed the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity. Good ocean governance and sustainable coastal zone management were central to his Government's integrated approach to increasing cooperation for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region and beyond. Malta remained a strong supporter of addressing the vulnerabilities of small island developing States through the multidimensional vulnerability index for small island developing States and had been honoured to address that issue at the Security Council open debate on sea level rise during its presidency of the Council in February 2023.

89. His Government had increased the number of academic scholarships for students from small island developing States with the aim of equipping them with knowledge and skills to drive sustainable development in their own communities. As a result, Malta had received a United Nations Small Island Developing States Partnerships Award.

90. **Mr. Vorshilov** (Mongolia) said that the world economy was projected to grow by 3 per cent in 2023-2024, a substantially lower rate than the pre-COVID-19 pandemic 10-year average of 3.8 per cent. According to IMF, there would be a slowdown in the growth of low-income countries. Recent high inflation had been further exacerbated by the appreciation of the United States dollar, which had led to high prices of imported products owing to the nominal depreciation of currencies in small economies. Many central banks had elevated their policy rates, leading to tighter financing conditions and worsening debt distress in many countries. To ensure public debt sustainability, developing countries were consolidating their budgets by raising taxes and reducing expenditure.

91. His Government had responded to global challenges by swiftly introducing strategies and policies in the areas of post-pandemic recovery, fiscal and monetary matters, food supply and security, and health. Its nationwide programmes had helped to mitigate the negative social and economic impacts of the pandemic, while intensifying efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. As a result, the Mongolian

economy, which had shrunk by 4.6 per cent in 2020, had grown to its pre-pandemic level of 6.4 per cent in the first half of 2023.

92. During the presentation of its second voluntary national review, Mongolia had stated that reducing disparities between rural and urban development would ensure equal access to basic social services, and that ensuring accessible infrastructure for the entire population was paramount to achieving the Goals. The 2024 State budget had been announced under the theme of "Balanced development of the urban and rural recovery". At the recent Sustainable Development Goals Summit, Mongolia had announced its national commitments based on findings from the voluntary national review and consultations with key stakeholders.

93. Protecting and promoting the interests of landlocked developing countries within the United Nations was one of his country's priorities. As Vice-Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries in New York and Co-Chair of the intergovernmental preparatory committee for the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, Mongolia would continue to strive to make the Conference a success.

94. With the support of the International Trade Centre, Mongolia had successfully hosted the World Export Development Forum in June 2023. At the annual meeting of the landlocked developing countries national focal points network, organized on the margins of the Forum, participants had discussed the challenges faced by those countries and post-pandemic economic recoveries.

95. **Mr. Chindawongse** (Thailand) said that, almost halfway to 2030, the world was off target in terms of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. To overcome the crisis, transformative action driven by political will, reinforced by international solidarity and anchored in effective multilateralism was needed.

96. To ensure inclusiveness in development policies, the Goals should be localized and a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach should be taken to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda. His Government's efforts to localize the Goals were guided by its sufficiency economy philosophy, which was aimed at building sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities through community-based social innovation and entrepreneurship.

97. Enabling developing countries to deal with the unprecedented rise in external debt, inflation and rising interest rates required a systematic overhaul through

reform of global governance and international financial institutions. An international financial architecture that was fit for purpose and ensured the participation of developing countries was needed. Multilateral development banks should be strengthened to provide greater access to financing, including concessional loans for developing countries. Thailand called for the full and timely implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, and welcomed the call of the Secretary-General for a stimulus for the Goals of \$500 billion per year until 2030.

98. Enhanced efforts in developing countries to protect the planet would not be possible without adequate and predictable support. Developed countries should fulfil their commitments to provide \$100 billion in climate finance and to at least double adaptation finance for developing countries. The loss and damage fund established at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be fully operationalized at the twenty-eighth session. Resources for biodiversity should also be mobilized and increased. More countries should contribute to the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund. At the recent Climate Ambition Summit, Thailand had highlighted its national efforts to address climate change, including the adoption of a green finance mechanism and the implementation of a utility green tariff programme.

99. Developed countries should support developing countries in their transformative action. As a developing country, Thailand had engaged in South-South and triangular cooperation, and had established development cooperation programmes with more than 25 developing countries across regions. The outcome document of the Summit of the Future, to be held in 2024, should have sustainable development as a main element and should contribute to the full achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Goals.

100. **Mr. Miller** (Israel) said that entrepreneurship, technology and innovation were priority areas for Israel that could help to propel the Sustainable Development Goals forward on many fronts. Start-up businesses could help to transform the vitality of a nation's private sector and boost employment, especially for groups underrepresented in the workplace. The development of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises should be supported.

101. Challenges such as climate change, extreme weather events, economic downturn and conflict would affect the agrifood chain for the foreseeable future. To ensure food security, more food must be procured in a

sustainable manner, for which technology held the key. During the general debate of the General Assembly, the Prime Minister of Israel had spoken of the potential benefits of artificial intelligence and of the leading role of Israel in its development, while also warning of its potential to manipulate minds, decimate jobs and expand crime. The international community should get ahead of that technology and help to determine its development for the good of humankind.

102. The environment was a priority area for his Government. Technology and innovation were needed to help States to meet their targets for greenhouse gas emissions and to overcome growing shortages of fresh water. His delegation would support the inclusion of wording on the need to speed up the transition away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy sources in the draft resolutions of the Committee. His delegation would also support wording on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and on health care more generally. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing high-quality health care was a matter of equity both among and within countries and could affect broad-based economic recovery. Israel would support efforts to help all countries, especially developing countries, to build back better.

103. **Mr. Feruță** (Romania) said that the clear message from the Sustainable Development Goals Summit was that remedies needed to be integrated into policies to address the risks posed by climate change, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war of aggression of Russia against Ukraine. Consolidating partnerships, promoting multilateralism, strengthening resilience and adopting a human-centred approach were key for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

104. During the Climate Ambition Summit, the need to recommit at the highest level to accelerating the green transition towards the net-zero target had been reinforced. In the past 30 years, his country had reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 71 per cent. Romania hosted the largest renewables training centre in South-Eastern Europe. His Government was mobilizing ODA funds to implement projects on forestry and biodiversity conservation, and on the integrated management of river-sea systems to improve disaster risk reduction measures.

105. Romania was involved in international assistance missions, providing training and sharing best practices in responding to climate-induced natural disasters, including appropriate support for persons with disabilities. Sea-level rise created global problems and thus required global solutions, starting with acknowledgment of the security implications of that

phenomenon. Romania had been part of the core group of States that had promoted the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 77/276, entitled “Request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States in respect of climate change”. The recent adoption of the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity showed that it was possible to take joint action to mitigate global threats.

106. The tremendous potential of information technology and artificial intelligence in accelerating the achievement of the Goals must be acknowledged. The digital transition coupled with the green energy transition could advance sustainable development, provided an inclusive approach was taken and human rights were upheld. Education and the involvement of young people in decision-making were crucial to achieving the Goals. Access to equal opportunities for women and girls must be considered a priority in all areas of sustainable development.

107. **Mr. Leschenko** (Ukraine) said that the war against his country was significantly undermining progress in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals both nationally and globally. It had triggered a global cost-of-living crisis at a time when most economies were still trying to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Supply disruptions caused by the Russian war had significantly raised food and energy prices, affecting the most vulnerable sections of the population, primarily in the poorest developing countries of the global South.

108. In the year and a half since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, millions of Ukrainians had been forced to leave their homes to escape Russian shelling. Schools required bomb shelters for children. Humanitarian crisis, the destruction of energy and other civilian infrastructure, and catastrophic environmental losses were the face of both the war and the lack of progress, or regression, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

109. Alarming, many countries were changing their investment policies against the background of the war, which was forcing them to direct more funds towards national security and the military sector instead of towards financing the Goals and addressing climate change. The sooner the war ended and respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations was restored, the sooner the international community could focus more efforts on funding and promoting the Goals.

110. The urgent task for his Government was the reconstruction and restoration of Ukraine, which was a

global project that required a complex, long-term approach. Despite the catastrophic consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, his Government continued to carry out economic, social and environmental reforms. Ukraine was grateful to its partners for their efforts to attract investment for recovery and to initiate medium-term planning for financing the reconstruction, and called on everyone to join in the implementation of those ambitious and vital projects.

111. His country remained firmly committed to the achievement of the Goals both nationally and globally. Ukraine shared the concern of the international community, in particular the countries of the global South, regarding the need for global economic recovery and supported efforts to raise financing for sustainable development.

112. **Mr. Blanco Conde** (Dominican Republic) said that his country was firmly committed to promoting tangible measures to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. As a small island developing State, the Dominican Republic faced many crises and difficult situations that were slowing down its recovery for longer than expected. The effects of climate change threatened income generation in all countries and were pushing his country even further into debt. The sargassum problem, for example, was having significant implications for the tourism industry and forcing his Government to redirect resources that were already thinly stretched.

113. Building a sustainable recovery would require a multilateral commitment to achieve common aspirations on the basis of good will, solidarity and shared responsibility. Much could be built if differences were put aside. His delegation hoped that the Committee would demonstrate strong support for the multidimensional vulnerability index for small island developing States, to be used both nationally and by key financial actors in making decisions that would affect their development potential. It would not be possible to build without the funds to do so. The adoption of the index, which was universally applicable, would also lay the groundwork for the work that must commence on measuring development beyond GDP. Such timely initiatives were part of the toolbox that would help to build a resilient and sustainable world for future generations.

114. Information and communications technologies had the potential to bring productivity improvements and efficiencies, and generate new capabilities to deliver services and products. If used for good, such technologies could help to combat poverty, hunger and many other challenges. International cooperation was

essential in ensuring that developing countries had access to the most modern and innovative technologies.

115. **Ms. Hussain** (Maldives) said that the challenges facing the world were particularly acute for small island developing States, given their inherent structural and multifaceted vulnerabilities. The policy briefs of the Secretary-General on Our Common Agenda had provided guidance on fostering renewed global solidarity. The momentum generated by the Sustainable Development Goals Summit must be harnessed. As Co-Chair of the preparatory committee for the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, Maldives sought the support of all Member States to ensure that the new 10-year programme of action for small island developing States would be completely harmonized with the development priorities of those States.

116. To promote sustainable development for all, it was essential to address economic inequality and bridge the financial divide. Limited access to development finance had hindered the pursuit of sustainable development by small island developing States. Such States therefore required tailored solutions as part of an equitable recovery plan, with particular emphasis on debt relief. Her delegation strongly advocated the swift adoption of the multidimensional vulnerability index. International financial institutions and development partners should use the index as a tool to facilitate access to affordable financing and debt relief for small island development States. Member States must remain steadfast in upholding their ODA commitments. A clear distinction between development finance and climate finance must be maintained.

117. The achievement of the Goals must be accelerated. Her Government's development efforts were fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Maldives had presented its second voluntary national review, which had been focused on connectivity as an accelerator to achieving the Goals and its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which had been a remarkable success story. As part of carefully planned policy changes, priority had been given to the inclusion of all individuals, especially women, in financing and entrepreneurship. Such efforts were in line with her Government's recognition of the pivotal role of women and girls in achieving the Goals.

118. Action to safeguard the environment must also be accelerated. The loss and damage fund should be swiftly operationalized at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. At the global stocktake, Member States should strive for an ambitious outcome. A definitive road map to reduce

emissions was crucial. All States should ratify the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity, which represented a crucial milestone in the sustainable management of high seas and ocean resources.

119. The Committee must ensure that developing countries were not left behind in the digital transformation. The benefits of an increasingly digitized world should be equally accessible for all nations. Maldives had seen such benefits during the pandemic when it had shifted to e-platforms in education, health care, banking and public service systems, allowing essential services to continue and economic activities to flourish. The global community must promote an open, equitable, inclusive and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological development. Technology should be transferred on favourable terms, ideally on preferential or concessional terms.

120. **Mr. Abesadze** (Georgia) said that the war of aggression of Russia against Ukraine continued to jeopardize the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and to affect global supply chains and food and energy prices. His Government condemned in the strongest possible terms the war of aggression of Russia against its sovereign neighbour and expressed its full support for and solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. To overcome the crisis in the attainment of the Goals, the international community must continue to move forward in solidarity and pursue more global cooperation and multilateralism.

121. His Government was implementing an action plan for the Vision 2030 development strategy of Georgia, which was fully aligned with the Goals. His Government was also working to localize the Goals in all municipalities by 2025. Georgia remained committed to reinvigorating progress towards Goal 16. With the aim of establishing a transparent, accountable and efficient public administration, his Government was continuing work on public administration reform. Significant progress had been achieved in ensuring uniform, improved standards and approaches to public service delivery. To ensure transparency, a unified electronic system for government policy development was under development, with the aim of digitizing all stages of the policy planning cycle and bringing citizens closer to the decision-making process. Achieving Goal 8 was key to overcoming persistent inflation and heightened uncertainties. Georgia had recorded double-digit economic growth in 2021 and 2022, and growth had remained high, at 7.2 per cent, during the period from January to July 2023. Given the tremendous potential of

the green economy, his Government had begun to prepare a green growth strategy.

122. As part of its efforts to implement the Paris Agreement, Georgia had decided to increase its nationally determined contribution in 2025 and had set a new target for emissions reduction, increasing it from 35 per cent to 47 per cent. His Government had adopted a long-term low-emissions development policy, and the Parliament was developing a Climate Act.

123. Global digital cooperation and the protection of human rights online were of the utmost importance in the digital world. To shape the digital future for all, Georgia looked forward to the development of a global digital compact. As the Chair of the working group on technology and democracies of the Community of Democracies, Georgia would remain engaged in sustainable digital transformation processes.

124. Despite the above-mentioned development progress in Georgia, people living in the Russian-occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions of Georgia had been left behind and continued to be deprived of their fundamental rights and freedoms.

125. **Mr. Abudu-Birresborn** (Ghana) said that, during the high-level week of the current session of the General Assembly, world leaders had underscored the enormity of the multiple challenges facing the world, warned of the catastrophic costs of inaction and emphasized that global trust, commitment and solidarity were necessary for finding smart, transformational and systemic ways to address the current challenges and build resilience against future crises. Member States should heed the calls of their leaders.

126. The Committee must act to reverse the disintegration of its cohesion and forge greater unity and solidarity with a view to building peace and prosperity. Member States had a responsibility to save the planet from the prevailing existential crisis and pivot towards poverty eradication, economic growth and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To do so, they would need to work across national and regional lines and be prepared to subordinate narrow national interests to the collective global goals. The important and complex agenda items to be discussed during the session should serve as a reminder of the need to find sensible and consensus-based ways to work together for the greater good. His delegation looked forward to working constructively with all delegations in the common endeavour to keep the world safe, resilient and inclusive.

127. **Mr. Nena** (Lesotho) said that his country echoed the calls for the international community to recommit to

deliver on the pledges made under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to mobilize resources to assist developing countries in achieving their goal of fully achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Lesotho also wished to add its voice to the appeal of the Secretary-General to developed States to deliver the stimulus package for the Goals of \$500 billion per year until 2030, to take further action to tackle the high cost of debt and the rising risks of debt distress, and to massively scale up affordable long-term financing for development, especially through multilateral development banks.

128. Lesotho continued to call upon developed States to deliver on their \$100 billion goal in the form of climate finance to developing States, in particular least developed countries, to fulfil and implement the Paris Agreement. While the contributions announced by some developed States towards the second replenishment of the Green Climate Fund were welcome, all other developed States should announce their ambitious pledges to the Fund by the deadline of 5 October during the pledging conference in Bonn, Germany. Such pledges would translate into increased access to climate finance for the least developed countries, which in turn would enable them to effectively increase their climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation efforts over the coming four years.

129. His Government had taken bold steps to support the achievement of the Goals through national fiscal allocations and actions. In March 2023, Lesotho had hosted a high-level meeting on financing for nutrition and food security, aimed at inspiring political momentum to mobilize commitments and investments to combat hunger and malnutrition on the African continent. The Prime Minister of Lesotho, in collaboration with the United Nations country office, had launched the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. To address the adverse effects of climate change in the country and the region, and in line with its resolve to tap into its own resources to generate renewable energy, Lesotho would host an international water and hydrogen conference on 12 and 13 October 2023. His Government had sought to create a suitable environment for good governance, accountability and stability, with a view not only to boosting donor confidence but also to accelerating efforts to achieve the Goals.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.