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Chair: Ms. González López (El Salvador)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Bachar Bong

Contents

Agenda item 140: Programme planning

Agenda item 139: Proposed programme budget for 2025 (*continued*)

Introduction of the proposed programme budget for 2025

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 140: Programme planning (A/79/6 (Sect. 2), A/79/6 (Sect. 3), A/79/6 (Sect. 4), A/79/6 (Sect. 5), A/79/6 (Sect. 6), A/79/6 (Sect. 8), A/79/6 (Sect. 9), A/79/6 (Sect. 10), A/79/6 (Sect. 11), A/79/6 (Sect. 12), A/79/6 (Sect. 13), A/79/6 (Sect. 14), A/79/6 (Sect. 15), A/79/6 (Sect. 16), A/79/6 (Sect. 17), A/79/6 (Sect. 18), A/79/6 (Sect. 19), A/79/6 (Sect. 20), A/79/6 (Sect. 21), A/79/6 (Sect. 22), A/79/6 (Sect. 24), A/79/6 (Sect. 24)/Corr.1, A/79/6 (Sect. 25), A/79/6 (Sect. 26), A/79/6 (Sect. 27), A/79/6 (Sect. 27)/Corr.1, A/79/6 (Sect. 28), A/79/6 (Sect. 29), A/79/6 (Sect. 29A), A/79/6 (Sect. 29B), A/79/6 (Sect. 29C), A/79/6 (Sect. 29D), A/79/6 (Sect. 29E), A/79/6 (Sect. 29F), A/79/6 (Sect. 30), A/79/6 (Sect. 31), A/79/6 (Sect. 34) and A/79/16)

Agenda item 139: Proposed programme budget for 2025 (*continued*) (A/79/6 (Introduction), A/79/6 (Sect. 1), A/79/6 (Sect. 2), A/79/6 (Sect. 3), A/79/6 (Sect. 4), A/79/6 (Sect. 5), A/79/6 (Sect. 6), A/79/6 (Sect. 7), A/79/6 (Sect. 8), A/79/6 (Sect. 9), A/79/6 (Sect. 10), A/79/6 (Sect. 11), A/79/6 (Sect. 12), A/79/6 (Sect. 13), A/79/6 (Sect. 14), A/79/6 (Sect. 15), A/79/6 (Sect. 16), A/79/6 (Sect. 17), A/79/6 (Sect. 18), A/79/6 (Sect. 19), A/79/6 (Sect. 20), A/79/6 (Sect. 21), A/79/6 (Sect. 22), A/79/6 (Sect. 23), A/79/6 (Sect. 24), A/79/6 (Sect. 24)/Corr.1, A/79/6 (Sect. 25), A/79/6 (Sect. 26), A/79/6 (Sect. 27), A/79/6 (Sect. 27)/Corr.1, A/79/6 (Sect. 28), A/79/6 (Sect. 29), A/79/6 (Sect. 29A), A/79/6 (Sect. 29B), A/79/6 (Sect. 29C), A/79/6 (Sect. 29D), A/79/6 (Sect. 29E), A/79/6 (Sect. 29F), A/79/6 (Sect. 30), A/79/6 (Sect. 31), A/79/6 (Sect. 32), A/79/6 (Sect. 33), A/79/6 (Sect. 34), A/79/6 (Sect. 35), A/79/6 (Sect. 36), A/79/6 (Income sect. 1), A/79/6 (Income sect. 2), A/79/6 (Income sect. 3), A/79/7 and A/79/89)

Introduction of the proposed programme budget for 2025

1. **The Secretary-General** said that he was introducing the proposed programme budget for 2025 in a context of many challenges and with a strong sense of urgency. Against a backdrop of major global shocks, the United Nations, with its unmatched convening power, was more needed than ever.
2. The Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations represented commitments to updating and reforming international cooperation to make it more networked, effective, fair and inclusive. In many ways, the 2025 programme budget proposal reflected the priorities set out in those landmark agreements, as it demonstrated the Organization's renewed commitment to fulfilling its mandates to advance peace, sustainable development and human rights. At the same time, the United Nations would continue to cement its reforms, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. The Organization also had an essential part to play in the new digital age. For example, it had reached a milestone in adopting the Global Digital Compact, as the Compact included the first truly universal agreement on the international governance of artificial intelligence, with the United Nations at its centre.
3. In December 2022, the General Assembly had lifted the trial period for annual budgeting, and had formalized the change to an annual budget period. The format of the programme budget had stabilized. The programme plans reflected the Organization's increased results orientation. The 350 results frameworks continued to move further towards demonstrating the impact and positive change of the Organization's work on the ground. In addition, the planned targets had become more ambitious. More than 65 per cent of quantitative planned targets were now aimed at achieving an increase of 10 per cent or more in performance. That was an increase from less than 30 per cent for the 2018–19 biennium, 45 per cent for 2023 and 60 per cent for 2024. The Organization had reduced duplication in the strategies and

deliverables, while maintaining the same level of programmatic information. Every programme manager was expected to scrutinize every dollar spent and planned to be spent. That would allow the Organization to optimize resources for mandate delivery and focus even more effectively on results.

4. Turning to the overall resource requirements in the proposed programme budget for 2025, he said that, in order to implement its mandates fully, the Organization would require a total of \$3.6 billion dollars. That included a total of 10,494 posts, a net increase of 115 posts, excluding special political missions. Those additional posts were required to implement new mandates or strengthen existing mandates. The proposed budget also included \$711 million for the continuation of 36 special political missions for 2025. That reflected a decrease of \$31 million compared with the previous year, primarily because of the discontinuation of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. In line with the usual practice, the Fifth Committee, later in the session, would consider additional proposals for construction, revised estimates – including in support of the implementation of the Pact for the Future and for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) – and programme budget implications resulting from new or revised mandates. The Secretariat would continue to make every effort to find efficiencies, while recognizing that any further cuts to support departments risked jeopardizing policy, operational and communication support to the Organization's programmatic work.

5. He wished to highlight five specific elements. First, he proposed to continue investing in sustainable development, and was seeking a funding increase of approximately \$4.5 million for that purpose. That was the sixth consecutive proposed annual increase under the development pillar. The regular programme of technical cooperation would be a key beneficiary of the increase, which would further strengthen the direct support provided to Governments to help advance their development efforts. The proposed increase of \$2 million for the regular programme of technical cooperation represented a rise of more than 45 per cent since 2019. Although the proposed increase for the regular programme of technical cooperation would be evenly split among all entities, an additional \$0.5 million was proposed for the provision to the States members of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) of technical assistance and advice on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. The budget proposal also included an increase of \$1 million for the Development Account to enhance and expand targeted, country-level capacity development support and disseminate to more countries the results of the projects financed under the Account. He also sought increases of \$0.6 million for the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and of \$0.75 million for the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

6. In addition, he wished to strengthen the United Nations development system through structural changes to help ensure sufficient and predictable funding, and enhanced accountability. The resident coordinator system had faced a chronic funding shortfall since its inception. A sustainable and predictable funding mechanism for the system, through partial financing from the regular budget, was therefore essential. His proposal for the provision of assessed funding to the system was under review by the Committee, and a decision on that topic must be reached. Member States' expectations of the resident coordinator system were growing, and the effects of the funding gap were felt every day. For example, recruitment for 78 posts across 52 countries had been suspended. He was also seeking to put the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-wide Evaluation Office on firmer footing with regular budget funding. That would further enhance transparency and ensure the

effective, independent evaluation of the United Nations development system at the country level – the Office’s *raison d’être*.

7. Second, with regard to human rights, the proposal included an additional \$8.3 million to support the work of the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic and ensure that it would function at full capacity in 2025. An increase of \$8 million was also being sought to assist the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in more effectively implementing its mandates, especially at the regional level. In addition, on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and guidance from the General Assembly, the proposal included the resource requirements that would arise from anticipated mandate renewals by the Human Rights Council later in the year. The presentation of those resource requirements at the start of the session, together with the resource requirements for the periods for which mandates had already been approved, rather than separately later in the session, would provide Member States with a more complete picture of the resources being sought for OHCHR, in addition to reducing fragmentation and increasing transparency. He wished to emphasize that such consolidation, which amounted to \$28.8 million, represented a change in presentation rather than an increase in resources.

8. Third, he was proposing to boost support for the unprecedented humanitarian challenges in Gaza, with approximately \$3.5 million in additional resources. That included an increase of nearly \$2.5 million for UNRWA, which complemented the additional \$30 million approved for 2024. UNRWA was a lifeline for Palestine refugees, and a crucial factor for regional stability.

9. Fourth, in order to advance peace and security, he was proposing an increase of \$2.5 million for disarmament, including the establishment of nine posts to implement activities requested by the General Assembly. He was also seeking an increase of \$1 million to intensify the vital work of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. Following the landmark decision of the General Assembly, he would address the persistent funding challenges facing the Peacebuilding Fund due to its exclusive reliance on voluntary contributions by approving a \$50 million grant for the Fund’s Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility starting in 2025.

10. Fifth, to strengthen capacities in the areas of investigation and ethics, he was seeking an increase of approximately \$2 million for the creation of 3 temporary positions for the Ethics Office and 10 temporary positions for the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

11. With the structural aspects of the reforms now well consolidated, continued joint efforts were essential to achieve the cultural change required to deliver results. The 2025 budget strived towards the shared vision for a United Nations 2.0 through the development of a forward-thinking workforce culture, empowered by cutting-edge skills.

12. Gender equality and geographical representation remained priorities, and he was working non-stop to ensure that the Organization’s workforce reflected its membership. The decision of the General Assembly to increase the number of geographical posts had made it possible to reduce the total number of unrepresented, underrepresented and overrepresented countries. A total of 120 countries were now within range, compared to 103 as at December 2023. The Organization was also revising its strategy for equitable geographical distribution to focus on attracting more staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries. Through the resident coordinator system and the United Nations information centres, targeted outreach strategies had been launched in such countries, in particular in many underrepresented

developing countries. He was also striving to expand opportunities for recruitment on as wide a geographical basis as possible for all posts.

13. All those efforts were yielding results. For example, the number of resident coordinators from the global South had increased from 41 per cent to 57 per cent since the start of the reform of the United Nations development system. Gender parity had been successfully maintained at senior levels and, on the basis of current projections, would be reached at the organizational level before 2028. More must nevertheless be done to achieve parity in every entity and at every level. Work was also under way on the next phase of the system-wide disability inclusion strategy, and progress was being made in combating racism and racial discrimination at work.

14. The budget proposal reflected the Organization's ambition to respond to new threats and opportunities. To enable the United Nations to fulfil its promises, Member States must also honour their commitments to the Organization. Ultimately, the effectiveness of programme delivery and of the use of financial resources in 2025 would depend on the availability of cash.

15. He therefore hoped that the current trend of declining liquidity would end. The level of available cash at the start of 2024 had been only about \$67 million, compared with \$700 million in 2023, a situation that made the Organization extremely vulnerable to adverse changes in the patterns of payment of assessed contributions. In addition, the Organization had had to return \$114 million as credits to Member States as part of the 2024 assessments, which meant that it would collect less than the budget approved for 2024, even if all Member States paid in full in 2024. The depletion of the regular-budget liquidity reserves at the end of 2023 had therefore necessitated the imposition of stringent cash-conservation measures from the very beginning of 2024. Unless the liquidity reserves were fully replenished at the end of 2024, cash-conservation measures were again likely to constrain budget implementation in 2025.

16. He had therefore proposed that the General Assembly temporarily suspend the return of credits for 2023 against the 2025 assessment, with the understanding that the credits would be held in a reserve and released to Member States as soon as conditions improved. That was critical in order to minimize the risk of a negative impact both on programme delivery and on the ability to fulfil even non-discretionary commitments to personnel and third-party partners in 2025. He once again urged Member States to meet their financial obligations in full and on time. He also thanked Member States that had paid in advance or earlier than before, and had made adjustments to their internal processes in order to continue to pay earlier. He would continue to monitor the situation and reach out to Member States to request them to pay in full and inform him of their plans so that the Organization's spending could be adapted as needed. However, when programme delivery was repeatedly constrained by liquidity, past spending patterns became less reliable indicators of the Organization's real needs.

17. The outcome of the Summit of the Future had opened pathways to new possibilities and opportunities for securing a peaceful and liveable future for everyone on the planet. Against that backdrop, he looked forward to the Committee's support for his 2025 programme budget proposal. He welcomed the opportunity to engage with Committee members at the current meeting, and assured them that senior managers would continue to support the Committee's deliberations on the budget proposals.

18. **Mr. Velázquez Castillo** (Vice-Chair, Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC)), introducing the report of CPC on its sixty-fourth session ([A/79/16](#)), said that the Committee's sixty-fourth session had been its first five-week session to begin in mid-May and end in mid-June, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [77/267](#).

The report contained conclusions and recommendations reflecting the responsibility of CPC to review the Secretary-General's work programme and to assist the Economic and Social Council in the performance of its coordination functions within the United Nations system.

19. In considering programme questions, CPC had examined 28 programmes of the proposed programme budget for 2025, and had made specific recommendations on 12 of them. With regard to the remaining 16 programmes, CPC had recommended that the General Assembly review, at its seventy-ninth session, under the agenda item entitled "Programme planning", the programme plans of programmes 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28. CPC had also examined and made recommendations on three OIOS reports relating to the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by CPC at its sixty-first session.

20. In considering coordination questions, and in the context of discharging its function to assist the Economic and Social Council in the performance of its coordination functions within the United Nations system, CPC had considered the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2023. In addition, it had considered and made recommendations on the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations system support for Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want ([E/AC.51/2024/5](#)).

21. **Mr. Bachar Bong** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the first report of the Advisory Committee on the proposed programme budget for 2025 ([A/79/7](#)), said that the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations were presented in two chapters: chapter I contained general observations and recommendations on cross-cutting issues, and chapter II contained specific observations and recommendations on the various budget sections, including under post and non-post resources. The Advisory Committee had also provided many forward-looking observations and conclusions in its financial performance report on the programme budget for 2023 ([A/79/312](#)), and in various other reports before the Committee.

22. The Advisory Committee noted that, excluding the additional proposals to be considered in the course of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General was proposing a programme budget for 2025 amounting to \$3,626 million before recosting, including \$711 million for special political missions, representing an increase of \$10.7 million, or 0.3 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2024.

23. With regard to posts and personnel matters, with the exception of special political missions, a total of 10,494 posts were proposed for the 2025 regular budget, reflecting a net increase of 115 posts, or 1.0 per cent. The Advisory Committee noted that, as at 31 May 2024, of the 10,379 posts that had been approved for 2024, 1,478 posts had been vacant, including 30 posts which had been vacant for 24 months or longer, and trusted that they would be filled as soon as possible.

24. The Advisory Committee noted that the overall budgeted rate for 2025 was 11.1 per cent for the Professional and higher categories and 9.1 per cent for the General Service and related categories, which was similar to the approved vacancy rates for 2024. The Advisory Committee stressed that projected vacancy rates should be based on accurate budgetary assumptions and realistic recruitment projections for posts and positions, as well as the actual vacancy rates experienced during the previous periods, taking into account the retirement forecasts and the liquidity situation.

25. Since the launch of the system-wide strategy on gender parity in 2017, the overall percentage of women staff across budget sections had reached 51. However, further efforts were needed to achieve equitable geographical representation. The Advisory Committee wished to highlight some aspects that could affect geographical

representation and had been reviewed by the Advisory Committee. The case of staff receiving special post allowances and being “temporarily” assigned to higher-level positions for lengthy periods, while keeping a lien on their posts, had an effect on the recruitment process. The Advisory Committee also noted that, from 2018 to the current time, significant numbers of Junior Professional Officers had been hired. Most, across all budget sections, came from specific countries. That situation was further exacerbated by the lack of clear criteria for the conversion of general temporary positions and extrabudgetary posts to regular budget posts. The Advisory Committee trusted that the new recruitment system, as well as mobility, would adequately address the challenges identified.

26. In addition to post and non-post resource requirements, the report covered a number of key cross-cutting issues. The Advisory Committee underscored the importance of cost-effectiveness and of a culture of efficiency in the Organization, including in the context of spending and staffing reviews, and, in that regard, stressed the need to effect a cultural and behavioural change, and to develop a well-designed methodology and standards, objective tools for measuring quality and quantity, and identifiable and realistic benchmarks and time frames. In addition, a clear plan and time frame, as well as uniform and specific guidance, should be established for spending reviews by all entities funded under the regular budget.

27. Greater efficiency could be achieved by establishing, for example, a mechanism for the consolidation of information on all sources of funding and on cooperation among all relevant entities, including the resident coordinator system, in implementing the programmes of action for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The Advisory Committee also trusted that future proposed programme budgets would contain information on system-wide initiatives aimed at consolidating efficiency gains and improving coordination. While such efforts were essential to ensuring the Organization’s fitness for purpose, the Advisory Committee noted that the liquidity situation and the necessary temporary measures taken in that regard would have a significant impact on expenditure and mandate implementation if the situation was not resolved in a timely manner.

28. In the area of information and communications technology, the Advisory Committee underscored the authority, responsibilities and accountability of the Chief Information Technology Officer, and made specific comments on related aspects, such as the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere and artificial intelligence, both in chapter I of its report and in the parts of its report relating to the various budget sections, while highlighting the importance of ensuring that information and communications technology-related proposals complied with all relevant budget instructions and were duly reviewed by the Office of Information and Communications Technology.

29. The Advisory Committee also emphasized the need to strengthen the governance and transparency of voluntary contributions, including the oversight mechanism for their use, and to include, in an annex to the introduction of future budget submissions, detailed information on cost recovery, separately from extrabudgetary contributions, by type and service under the relevant budget section, while disaggregating expenditure-related information by section, post level and funding source.

30. The Advisory Committee wished to highlight a number of its conclusions in connection with the various sections of the proposed programme budget for 2025. With regard to section 1, the Advisory Committee was of the view that the proposed requirements in the amount of \$2.7 million for the conversion of post and non-post resources of the System-wide Evaluation Office from extrabudgetary to regular-budget

funding were not sufficiently justified and recommended against the conversion of such resources at present. However, subject to the General Assembly's decision on the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates relating to the proposed programme budget for 2024 for the resident coordinator system (A/78/753), the Advisory Committee recommended the approval of the proposed amount of \$13.4 million representing the Secretariat's share of the cost-sharing arrangement in the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

31. With regard to section 24, the Advisory Committee noted the trend of increases in the proposed programme budget for OHCHR. Mandate implementation, while important, should be efficient, and the consolidation of resources and establishment of a core capacity for the Office, in accordance with General Assembly guidance, should have resulted in efficiencies. In addition, a system for tracking expenditure related to the revised estimates reports and to the proposed programme budget was still needed in order to monitor resource utilization and efficiencies. With respect to the proposal to establish new posts in regional presences in specific field locations, there should be more clarity on the organizational structure of headquarters and regional offices, including on the appropriate post level for leadership of regional offices, reporting lines and oversight.

32. With regard to sections 23 and 35, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly discuss, at the appropriate level and platform, and on the basis of a report of the Secretary-General, the effectiveness of the regular programme of technical cooperation and of the Development Account, and the predictability of the funding for, the soundness of the management of, and the number of entities involved in the work performed under those mechanisms, in order to strengthen the mechanisms' role and ensure their efficacy in supporting countries in need in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

33. With regard to section 27, the Advisory Committee noted that annual reports containing information on the extrabudgetary resources of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs were submitted to the General Assembly for information purposes and that the Office's extrabudgetary funds were audited by the United Nations oversight bodies. While recalling the engagement and limited guidance of Member States, including through the Office's donor support group, and taking into account the potential for reputational risks, such as those related to implementing partners, the Advisory Committee would keep under review the consideration of strengthened accountability and oversight mechanisms for the Office's extrabudgetary resources.

34. With respect to section 28, the Advisory Committee noted a lack of comprehensive, precise and clear information on the overall resources for public information and communication across the Secretariat, on the division of labour between the Department of Global Communications and communication resources in various entities, and on the ways in which the current coordination arrangements maximized the effective and efficient use of resources. In addition, the independent and impartial review of the Department requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 77/262 should be grounded in a clear strategic vision and an in-depth analysis of the workforce and workload of all existing communication-related resources within the Department and across the Secretariat. The review should also be aimed at improving and modernizing the Secretariat, in particular the Department's operating models; strengthening complementarity and coordination between the Secretariat and non-Secretariat entities to achieve greater impact and efficiency gains, including through a more equitable distribution of the United Nations information centres and other resources; and, ultimately, assisting the Department in communicating United Nations activities and messages globally, efficiently and effectively.

35. With regard to section 29A, the Advisory Committee considered that the roles of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and of the Department of Operational Support, including in terms of the second and third lines of defence, should be clearly delineated with respect to spending reviews, human resources management and asset management to avoid overlapping of functions, gaps in responsibilities and a negative impact on accountability. In addition, the roles of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and of OIOS in terms of the third line of defence and associated resources should be clearly delineated; the upcoming review of the administrative instruction on evaluation in the United Nations Secretariat ([ST/AI/2021/3](#)) might present an opportunity to address that issue.

36. The Advisory Committee noted that, while section 33 was intended for financing annual and small-scale requirements, the proposals for 2025 related to large and multi-year projects identified through capital investment planning, such as the global standardization upgrade of conferencing systems at Headquarters. The Advisory Committee was of the view that any exceptional decision to include large and multi-year projects under section 33 should be proposed and approved by the General Assembly in the context of capital investment planning.

37. The recommendations contained in the Advisory Committee's report, which excluded special political missions, entailed an overall reduction of \$21.3 million in the proposed programme budget for 2025, before recosting. Notwithstanding the valuable support provided by the Secretary-General and his team to the Advisory Committee during its consideration of the budget proposal, strengthened efforts were required to ensure the timely submission of complete and accurate documents, including supplementary information and written responses.

38. **The Chair** drew attention to the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the programme budget implications of recommendations contained in the report of CPC ([A/C.5/79/2](#)), to the related report of the Advisory Committee ([A/79/7/Add.7](#)) and to the relevant introductory statements, which were available on the Fifth Committee's website.

39. **Mr. Kwoba** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the programmatic nature of the United Nations regular budget could not be altered, as it was a special feature of the Organization's intergovernmental character. The Group therefore reaffirmed its unwavering support for the prerogatives of CPC as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council for planning, programming, evaluation and coordination. The role of CPC should be strengthened, and CPC should continue to provide substantive recommendations on the programmes formulated by the Secretariat. In that regard, the Group noted that a number of programmes were without recommendations from CPC.

40. The Group called for the implementation of General Assembly resolution [78/244](#), in which the Assembly had decided that the incoming Presidents of the General Assembly and Chairs of the Fifth Committee were to reach out to and support the Chairs of the Main Committees to ensure that the Main Committees considered programmes on which CPC had not provided recommendations, as appropriate, and that conclusions and recommendations on those programmes were issued to the Fifth Committee in a timely manner.

41. The Secretary-General had proposed a programme budget of about \$3.6 billion for 2025, before the envisaged "add-ons". Mandates must be adequately financed. The Group was nevertheless concerned about the level of financing allocated to the Organization's priority areas relating to the promotion of sustained economic growth

and sustainable development, and to the development of Africa. Over the previous five years, there had been little to no change in the level of resources allocated to the development pillar, whereas under other pillars the level of resources allocated to a single aspect had increased by almost 64 per cent.

42. The development pillar should be strengthened, and the Group would work to ensure the availability of adequate resources for bodies integral to the development agenda. In particular, the Group supported the provision of appropriate resources for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, ECA, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. The Group also recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution [72/279](#), had mandated that efficiency gains be redeployed for development activities.

43. The functioning and impact of the regular programme of technical cooperation and of the Development Account must be thoroughly discussed. Those two mechanisms received considerably low levels of resources and lacked the more coordinated structure necessary to enable them to respond to needs on the ground rather than the demands of Secretariat entities. The Group aspired to increase the Secretariat's relevance to the people who most needed the United Nations, especially those from the global South. The Group also strongly supported UNRWA and would work to ensure that it was provided with the necessary resources at the present, critical juncture.

44. The Summit of the Future, held in September 2024, had provided a valuable opportunity for the international community to turbocharge the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and renew its commitment to multilateralism. In that regard, the Group was deeply concerned about the financial constraints imposed on the Organization as a result of significant arrears in the payment of assessed contributions, most of them attributable to the single largest contributor. That situation had considerably affected the implementation of the programme budget for 2024, and the approval of the proposed programme budget for 2025 would be meaningless if the Organization lacked the liquidity required for mandate fulfilment. He proposed that, in the event of a liquidity crisis and at the beginning of the General Assembly's general debate during the high-level week, a representative of the Secretariat deliver a statement on the financial constraints faced by the Organization, as they deserved the attention of all delegations.

45. The principles of equitable geographical representation and gender parity remained a core concern of the Group. The objective of the Committee's work at the current session was not only to implement decisions and provide adequate resources for mandate fulfilment, but also to ensure quality of life for all.

46. **Ms. Chua** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the proposed programme budget for 2025 was being considered at a time of rising global challenges, geopolitical tensions and emerging threats, phenomena that had a disproportionate effect on developing countries, hindering their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

47. The Organization's mandates must be adequately funded. Over the years, artificial constraints, including arbitrary cuts to the proposed programme budget and the deliberate withholding of contributions, had been imposed on the United Nations. Such actions undermined the Organization at a time when Member States' joint efforts were required to strengthen multilateralism in order to address global challenges,

including by ensuring that regional commissions and the resident coordinator system had adequate funding to help developing countries to meet their socioeconomic development goals.

48. The Pact for the Future, adopted in September 2024, set out Member States' ambitions for a better future, including in the areas of sustainable development, digital cooperation, and peace and security. Although the Pact was imperfect, Member States could take pride in the fact that it had been adopted by consensus on the basis of their collective input, following painstaking negotiations held over a two-year period. Member States must now support the Pact's implementation by ensuring the availability of adequate resources for that purpose, thereby facilitating the delivery of results.

49. At the same time, it was important to promote transparent accounting and the efficient and responsible utilization of the Organization's resources. ASEAN noted the Advisory Committee's observation regarding the apparent high degree of automaticity in post and non-post resource proposals, and agreed that more could be done to evaluate the resources necessary to carry out the mandates set by the General Assembly and other organs.

50. ASEAN noted that the initial estimates for the financing of special political missions under the proposed programme budget for 2025 amounted to \$711 million, accounting for almost 20 per cent of the proposed programme budget. The views of ASEAN on the funding and backstopping of special political missions were well known. ASEAN looked forward to further discussion of those issues, which were particularly pertinent in the light of the reviews of the United Nations peace and security architecture.

51. **Ms. Samson** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Türkiye and Ukraine, and, in addition, Andorra and Monaco, said that the United Nations had reached a historic moment following the adoption of the Pact for the Future, which demonstrated the importance of multilateralism in advancing collective efforts to shape the future. The Committee had a fundamental responsibility to ensure that the United Nations had the means to fulfil the ambitions set forth by Member States. The European Union and its member States would therefore seek to ensure the timely adoption of the proposed programme budget for 2025.

52. It was a matter of regret that CPC had been unable to reach consensus on 16 important programmes. The role of CPC should be upheld, not diluted and transferred to other Main Committees of the General Assembly. The European Union and its member States therefore reiterated their call to CPC members to actively seek consensus, strengthen the political will for compromise and provide recommendations on all programme plans, as mandated by the General Assembly.

53. The Secretary-General should ensure that the programme budget provided an accurate and comprehensive picture of the resources needed to fulfil the Organization's mandates in an efficient, effective and financially responsible manner. The Organization's budget covered an array of priorities that were key to the Organization's effectiveness. It was therefore essential that all three pillars of the United Nations be treated equally. The European Union and its member States thus welcomed the efforts to adequately fund OHCHR and consolidate its resources, and to address the chronic underfunding of human rights issues. In that regard, they looked forward to the Secretary-General's assessment and report on the need for increased funding for United Nations human rights mechanisms, as called for in the Pact for the Future.

54. The European Union and its member States had heard the Secretary-General's call to enhance peacebuilding in order to adapt the Organization to contemporary pressing needs, and supported his efforts to ensure the proper functioning of the resident coordinator system. The European Union and its member States had put forward a thoughtful and balanced proposal on funding for the system, and would spare no effort in working towards a sustainable solution. They also supported the Secretary-General's vision for a culture of accountability and performance at the United Nations. In particular, the planning and budgetary process could be further improved to provide him with the flexibility needed to effectively use strategy and management methods to pursue performance and results.

55. The commitment to adopt the proposed programme budget must be met by an equal commitment to fulfil financial obligations to the Organization. The European Union and its member States would continue to support the United Nations, while ensuring that any proposed measures did not impose a burden on those that consistently met their obligations. They therefore called on Member States to pay their contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

56. The Committee should lead the Organization to success by helping it to address the enormous challenges it faced. The European Union and its member States would spare no effort for a consensual outcome on the commitments made in that regard. Lastly, they were grateful to the Organization's staff for their unwavering dedication and hard work to deliver its mandates.

57. **Mr. Roshdy** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that, as the General Assembly began its second session following the adoption of the annual budget cycle, the Group would support efforts to realize the anticipated benefits of that cycle, namely, a results-oriented culture, the participation of programme managers, agile and efficient planning, the comprehensive presentation of reports, and accountability and transparency at all levels of the Organization. The Group also attached particular importance to ensuring that programme planning remained intergovernmental in nature and that the sequencing of the consideration of programmes was appropriate.

58. The lack of an agreement by CPC on 16 programmes at its sixty-fourth session represented a setback in relation to its sixty-third session, at which it had been unable to reach agreement on 10 programmes. The Group was concerned at the continued inability of CPC to conclude its session with consensual outcomes and was alarmed at the increased number of programmes on which consensus could not be reached. The Group also attached great importance to the work of CPC.

59. The Group therefore looked forward to the full implementation of all elements of General Assembly resolution [77/267](#). With regard to the 16 programmes that remained open after consideration by CPC, the Group underscored the need for the President of the General Assembly and the Chair of the Fifth Committee to reach out to, and support, the Chairs of the Main Committees, in order to ensure, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [77/254](#), that the relevant Main Committees considered those programmes and provided related conclusions and recommendations.

60. The Group noted that the Secretary-General was proposing a programme budget of \$3.6 billion for 2025, including \$711 million for special political missions, representing an increase of 0.3 per cent as compared with the appropriation for 2024. The current multidimensional global challenges – in the form of peace and security challenges, increasing humanitarian needs, setbacks in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and a lack of progress in climate action – demanded a strong and effective United Nations playing an even greater role than before. For that reason, the Organization must retain optimal organizational capability, a global

reach and a competent workforce whose composition ensured equitable geographical representation.

61. However, the Organization could not deliver on its promises or mandates if it was grappling with financial constraints. In that connection, the Group was advocating the allocation of resources commensurate with the challenges of the day and with the growing expectations placed on the United Nations. The recent adoption of the Pact for the Future, with its ambitious and wide-ranging objectives, clearly attested to the political commitment of Member States to the United Nations and its future. That commitment could nevertheless not be fulfilled without the necessary resources. Member States must therefore pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions, in order to mitigate the Organization's financial distress.

62. The Group would thus participate actively in the Committee's deliberations to appropriate the required funding for all relevant items, including those relating to ECA, United Nations support to Africa through Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Development Account, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), construction and property management, and the resident coordinator system. The Group also looked forward to discussing the programme budget implications of the Pact for the Future.

63. **Ms. Chanda** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that the programme budget of the United Nations represented an investment in peace and security, development and human rights; reflected the collective commitment of the Member States to work together to meet global challenges; and constituted the backbone of the Organization's activities. Without adequate resources, the mandates set by Member States could not be implemented, and such resources could not be made available unless Member States assumed their responsibilities by paying their contributions in full, on time and without conditions. The two delegations therefore called upon other Member States to fulfil their commitments.

64. In the Pact for the Future, the Secretary-General was requested to assess the need for adequate, predictable, increased and sustainable financing for the human rights pillar. Switzerland and Liechtenstein welcomed the strengthening of the human rights pillar, as planned under the proposed programme budget for 2025, and would work to ensure that the pillar received the resources necessary to fund the related mandates. In that connection, sufficient resources must be allocated to the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic to enable it to implement its mandate from the Member States.

65. In addition, conflict prevention and mediation were fundamental matters requiring appropriate funding if they were to achieve their full potential. The same was true of the matter of accountability, with the two delegations strongly supporting the prosecution of the most serious crimes. The International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 and the International Court of Justice played an essential role in that regard and should receive the resources necessary to perform their responsibilities.

66. The delegations wished to highlight the importance of the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva, which was entering its final phase. In particular, they looked forward to the opening of the conference rooms in the Palais des Nations, as it would strengthen the international community's ability to act collectively and effectively, reaffirming the importance of multilateralism. The strategic heritage plan was thus itself a contribution to multilateralism, and the delegations thanked Member States for their support for the project.

67. Member States' ability to exchange views was essential. Departments must therefore have adequate resources and mandates, including in the virtual domain, to facilitate the organization of meetings in New York, Geneva, Vienna or Nairobi. Member States had set themselves ambitious targets, but the United Nations staff were the driving force behind the Organization's success. The two delegations thanked them for their tireless work, especially in the field, particularly given the difficult conditions under which such work was often performed. They also expressed condolences to the families of deceased United Nations employees and hoped for a speedy recovery for those who had been injured.

68. **Mr. Vinhas** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, said that, despite their diversity, Community members shared a common language, history, values and appreciation for multilingualism and the United Nations system. They fully supported efforts to strengthen the Organization's management in order to enable it to fulfil its mandates. In particular, the resident coordinator system, which operated in eight States members of the Community, could foster coordination and support for the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Community members were therefore committed to contributing to the discussions on financing for the system, in coordination with the various other groups to which they belonged.

69. The Committee played a crucial role in ensuring that the United Nations had the resources necessary to fulfil the objectives approved by Member States. The budgetary process must be continuously strengthened and must be underpinned by Member State oversight, efficient management, adherence to financial regulations and transparency in the use of resources. That would, in turn, require adequate liquidity. For their part, Community members would continue to make every effort to pay their contributions on time, bearing in mind the economic realities they faced and their individual capacities to pay. All Member States should fulfil their financial obligations to the Organization.

70. The fourteenth Conference of the Heads of State and Government of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, held in Sao Tome and Principe in 2023, had been focused youth and sustainability, thereby contributing to the commitments made under the Pact for the Future, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda. Community members would support the implementation of the Pact by ensuring that the necessary resources were secured for that purpose. In addition, given the importance of special political and peacekeeping missions for conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, such missions should receive adequate funding to enable them to implement their mandates.

71. The States members of the Community were united by the sea and the Portuguese language, the fourth most common native language globally and the most spoken language in the southern hemisphere, with 27 million speakers worldwide, as well as an official and working language of 32 international organizations. Multilingualism was not only a matter of equity but also a means of ensuring more representative and inclusive decision-making. As the discussions on the Organization's regular budget progressed, the Community would work towards a truly multilingual and multicultural United Nations system. It also hoped that Portuguese would become an official language of the Organization.

72. Speaking in his national capacity, he said that, since 2019, Portugal had voluntarily foregone the 20 per cent discount to which it was entitled on its peacekeeping contributions, having joined Level B and paid its full assessment rate. It would do the same during the 2025–2027 period.

73. **Mr. Lu** (United States of America) said that, while the level of the proposed programme budget for 2025 was being presented as essentially equal to that of the

2024 programme budget, a number of “add-ons” to the proposed programme budget had not yet been factored in. Accordingly, the level of the proposed programme budget for 2025 without “add-ons” represented an increase of \$120 million as compared with that of the 2024 budget without “add-ons”. Such a comparison provided a more realistic overview and enabled an informed analysis of the proposed programme budget.

74. His delegation appreciated the work done by the Advisory Committee, which would guide the Fifth Committee’s discussions. In accordance with its usual practice, the United States would directly ask the Advisory Committee questions in order to better understand its recommendations and rationale. He requested that, in addition to answering Member State questions in writing after the relevant consultations had taken place, the Chair of the Advisory Committee answer such questions verbally in the meeting room, as had been done by previous Chairs of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee should also engage with the Secretariat before finalizing its recommendations in order to ensure that their full implications were understood, as that would make them stronger, more robust and more technically sound, thereby facilitating action by the Fifth Committee.

75. Procedural rules were essential to the Organization’s smooth operation. He was therefore concerned that, although the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations specified that any decision taken by a committee on a proposal involving programme budget implications must take such implications into account, CPC had agreed to include a paragraph resulting in programme budget implications in its report on its sixty-fourth session (A/79/16) without having been informed of those implications. That situation was unacceptable.

76. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Japan) said that, at the main part of its seventy-eighth session, the Committee had been able to conclude its deliberations before Christmas by reaching a compromise in order to provide the United Nations with sufficient time to prepare for the 2024 financial year. It had also secured sustainable financial resources for the Peacebuilding Fund, and a related proposal had been included in the proposed programme budget for 2025. The Committee’s responsibility at the current session was to continue to provide guidance and adequate resources for the United Nations to enable it to act at a time of profound global transformation.

77. His delegation had noted the continued upward trend in the level of the regular budget, with a \$3.6 billion budget having been proposed for 2025 in order to strengthen efforts to achieve sustainable development, promote human rights, support humanitarian assistance and maintain international peace and security. The Organization had an increased role and had generated high expectations. His delegation would carefully assess the overall level of the proposed programme budget on the basis of technical evidence and budgetary discipline in order to ensure accountability and oversight, while providing the United Nations with sufficient resources for mandate implementation. There was also a need to ensure that the Organization remained vibrant and innovative, and to rationalize any posts and mandates that might be outdated. With that in mind, his delegation continued to look forward to discussing the Organization’s reform and rejuvenation strategy.

78. **Mr. Alnasr** (Qatar) said that Qatar continued to fulfil its financial obligations under the regular budget in full and in a timely manner in order to ensure the availability of sufficient funds for mandate implementation and overcome the liquidity crisis. It would continue to ensure the availability of adequate and predictable resources to advance the Organization’s work.

79. Qatar highly valued the Secretary-General’s efforts to support humanitarian action in Gaza by proposing the provision of additional funding to UNRWA under the proposed budget for 2025. The chronic deficit in the Agency’s budget must be

addressed. Moreover, the Agency's responsibilities had increased significantly over the previous year, particularly given the serious humanitarian crisis in Gaza. UNRWA played a critical role in the response to that crisis, in addition to providing assistance to millions of vulnerable refugees in the Palestinian territories and neighbouring countries.

80. His delegation commended the tangible progress achieved by the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism in implementing its mandate and welcomed its comprehensive approach. It endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to provide, under the proposed programme budget for 2025, the necessary financial resources to enable the Mechanism to fulfil its mandate.

81. Qatar supported the proposed programme plan and programme budget for 2025 for the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to enable it to follow up on and implement the outcomes of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in support of the 2030 Agenda. It also welcomed the fact that, over the previous two years, the General Assembly had approved financing for the establishment of additional posts in the Office of Counter-Terrorism in order to enable it to fulfil its mandate to ensure the balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

82. Qatar also welcomed General Assembly resolution [78/257](#), in which the Assembly had approved the provision, starting 1 January 2025, of \$50 million per year for the Peacebuilding Account in order to support United Nations efforts to prevent the eruption, escalation, perpetuation and recurrence of conflicts in several developing countries, and to place the affected countries on a path towards recovery, reconstruction and development. In addition, at the current session, Qatar looked forward to providing the resident coordinator system with the resources it required, given its vital role in the United Nations development system.

83. **Ms. Buenrostro Massieu** (Mexico) said that the Pact for the Future had confirmed the need for robust multilateralism to effectively address the many global challenges faced and to advance collective efforts to build the inclusive, prosperous and peaceful future to which the international community aspired. Such an endeavour necessitated joint initiatives by the entire United Nations membership, as well as a common and revitalized vision for the future requiring each State to assume its share of responsibilities, convinced of the need for its full participation to ensure the appropriate functioning of the United Nations system. The importance of addressing the causes and effects of the simultaneous crises faced, together with the devastating impact of prolonged conflicts, threats to human rights, developmental disparities between countries and regions, and the persistence of fragile humanitarian situations worldwide undeniably justified the scope of the programmes of the United Nations and its challenging work, which in recent years had been performed against a backdrop of increasing financial constraints and uncertainty.

84. The Committee must adopt, in a timely manner, an adequate, sustainable and responsible programme budget for 2025 to enable the Organization to fulfil its mandates effectively and efficiently. The proposed programme budget for 2025 was ambitious and results-oriented, and represented an increase in relation to the appropriation for 2024, with further resources proposed in the areas of sustainable development, human rights, humanitarian assistance in Gaza, evaluation, investigation, ethics, and the maintenance of international peace and security, in addition to the resources for construction projects, resolutions with programme budget implications and estimates relating to the Human Rights Council. In the future, the Committee should be presented with consolidated and more realistic budget proposals in order to achieve a better programmatic and financial balance, thereby

guaranteeing effective action and the delivery of significant results under all categories of the regular budget so as to ensure the rational, effective and responsible management of resources.

85. **Mr. El Morabet** (Morocco) said that his delegation fully supported the proposed programme budget for 2025, as it reflected the priorities and challenges that must be addressed by the Organization in an appropriate and targeted manner.

86. The future budgetary implications of the Pact for the Future must be highlighted. The Pact, which charted a path towards a more sustainable and equitable future, would entail the mobilization of United Nations resources. The Organization must be provided with the financial and human capacities necessary to implement its mandates, especially in a global context characterized by many successive and multidimensional shocks.

87. Adequate financial resources must be made available to enable UNRWA to fulfil its mandate. Moreover, appropriate financing should be provided to the resident coordinator system, given its essential role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, as such financing would help to improve coordination on the ground and accelerate progress towards the Goals, particularly in Africa. As Morocco attached great importance to transparent and effective financial management, it supported initiatives to strengthen governance and optimize the use of resources, thereby ensuring that each dollar spent contributed to the success of established objectives.

88. **Mr. Lokaale** (Kenya) said that Kenya remained firmly committed to international peace and security, and had invested in the promotion of stability in the surrounding region and beyond, including by contributing troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions, regionally led peace operations and non-United Nations security support missions. In that regard, and considering the Organization's primary role in maintaining international peace and security, Kenya fully supported the provision of adequate financing for all United Nations peacekeeping operations.

89. Peace and development were mutually reinforcing and inextricably linked. However, progress was on track for only 17 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goal targets, remaining minimal or moderate for nearly half of the targets, and having stalled or been reversed in the case of over a third of the targets. Inadequate and unsustainable means of implementation – especially financing, technical support, and capacity building – obstructed efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. The proposed programme budget for 2025 should therefore be aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

90. Addressing environmental challenges such as climate change and sustainable urbanization remained critical. Support for the work of UNEP and UN-Habitat would help to counter the effects of biodiversity loss and rising pollution for the benefit of people and the planetary ecosystem.

91. As the host of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, Kenya appreciated the efforts made to modernize the Office's conference facilities to enable it to provide services to Member States. His Government was committed to supporting the Office in fulfilling its mandate.

92. **Mr. Alqudah** (Jordan) said that he was grateful to the Commissioner-General and staff of UNRWA for their diligent efforts and the sacrifices that they had made in order to enable the Agency to carry out its humanitarian duty on the world's behalf in the light of the multifaceted and serious challenges that UNRWA was facing in the Occupied Palestinian territory. He also thanked the Secretary-General for providing support to UNRWA, particularly given the tragic circumstances faced by the Palestinian people and the incitement campaigns directed against his principled humanitarian position in support of the Agency.

93. No other organization could replace UNRWA, as it provided not only humanitarian assistance but also healthcare and education services, as well as other essential services, for millions of Palestinians. Over the decades, UNRWA had demonstrated the centrality of its role and that it was impossible to dispense with the services that it provided so effectively and efficiently to refugees in all its areas of operation. Jordan condemned the draft decisions being considered by the Israeli Knesset, as they targeted the very existence of UNRWA and the Agency's immunity and facilities in occupied Palestinian territories. Those decisions constituted a grave breach of international law and stripped the Palestinian people of rights and vital services that had been guaranteed by the international community. The international community must therefore reject those draft decisions and ensure respect for the General Assembly resolutions relating to the mandate and services of UNRWA. The international community must also uphold its humanitarian responsibilities towards the Palestine refugees by providing UNRWA with financial support in its five areas of operation in a systematic and institutional manner, in order to ensure the effectiveness of its activities.

94. **Mr. Alateek** (Saudi Arabia) said that, despite many calls by Saudi Arabia for a ceasefire, the instability in his country's region had been worsening. For the United Nations to be able to assume its responsibilities, it should be provided with the necessary resources under the 2025 programme budget. His delegation was in favour of the proposed increase in the 2025 programme budget to \$3.6 billion. The proposed budget reflected the significant challenges faced and would bolster the maintenance of stability through United Nations peacekeeping efforts. The Organization's financial resilience was also crucial. Saudi Arabia supported the work of UNRWA in providing vital services to people in need, as well as the role of the International Court of Justice in advancing justice and resolving international conflicts in line with international law. Those institutions were pillars of stability and peace throughout the world.

95. Countries must make their contributions in full, on time and without conditions, in the light of the financial challenges faced by the United Nations, specifically the liquidity crisis. The timely payment of such contributions would enable effective and efficient mandate implementation. Saudi Arabia had reviewed its internal oversight measures to ensure that it could make its financial contributions to the regular budget; it was also the fifth largest contributor to the regular budget. Lastly, Saudi Arabia supported sustainable development and improvements in living standards, and called for effective partnership between the United Nations and its Member States.

96. **Mr. Al-mansour** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of the United Nations and supported the provision of sufficient funds to enable it to implement its mandates efficiently and effectively. United Nations budgetary resources must be managed efficiently and wisely to attain development and peace, instead of being wasted on funding politicized and illegitimate mechanisms that targeted specific countries. Moreover, it was regrettable that some Member States used pressure and political and financial polarization in order to fund through the regular budget such mechanisms as the so-called International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 and the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic. His delegation did not recognize such mechanisms and opposed the inclusion of funding for them in the regular budget. Furthermore, it rejected the inclusion of references to such mechanisms in the 2025 reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee. Such mechanisms had no mandates and were marred by severe shortcomings, as repeatedly highlighted by his delegation.

97. Support must be provided for the mandate of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and for its role in peacekeeping and detecting the hostile violations committed by the Israeli occupation. His country stressed that the activities of UNTSO must be confined to surveillance, monitoring and reporting, and that the mandate of UNTSO would conclude following the end of the Israeli occupation and the achievement of just and comprehensive peace, in accordance with the relevant international resolutions. His delegation rejected any efforts to undermine the mandate of UNTSO or to politicize its work, as well as any comingling of its work with the work of other missions and agencies operating within and outside the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, the staffing level of UNTSO should be preserved, and years-long efforts to gradually reduce that staffing level should end. Furthermore, the budget of UNTSO should be increased to enable it to fully implement its mandate.

98. **Ms. Al-Siyabi** (Oman) said that the United Nations was facing many challenges, specifically related to the liquidity crisis. Member States must therefore cooperate closely with the Secretariat in order to address their arrears, as such cooperation would ensure the implementation of the Organization's programmes and plans, thereby advancing sustainable development. In addition, UNRWA must be provided with the necessary resources to enable it to resume its vital humanitarian activities in the Middle East, particularly in the light of the current circumstances, which demanded increased efforts to assist the most vulnerable.

99. International cooperation was crucial for achieving sustainable development and promoting economic growth. In Oman Vision 2040, emphasis was placed on the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises for strengthening the economy and providing job opportunities, outcomes that, in turn, contributed to advancing development at the national and international levels. It was therefore necessary to promote small and medium-sized enterprises and global trade as pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals, as that would bolster global economic stability and efforts to surmount the economic challenges facing the Organization. Oman stood ready to cooperate with other Member States and the Secretariat to achieve the Goals.

100. **Mr. Nguyen** Hoang Nguyen (Viet Nam) said that, in view of the multidimensional challenges faced by the world and the fact that less than 20 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals were on track to be achieved by 2030, in reviewing the proposed programme budget for 2025, Member States must give priority to the allocation of resources for the development pillar. In that regard, Viet Nam supported measures to ensure adequate funding for the Development Account and the regular programme of technical cooperation. It also supported the Secretary-General's efforts to reposition the United Nations development system. A comprehensive review of the resident coordinator system was essential to identify a suitable funding model that was aligned with the strengthened role and operational effectiveness of the system in each country.

101. Viet Nam acknowledged the Secretary-General's proposal to temporarily suspend the return of credits for 2023 against the 2025 assessment owing to the significant arrears in payments owed for 2024. That proposal was nevertheless not a fundamental or sustainable solution to the issues of funding and liquidity. Member States should therefore make every effort to pay their assessed contributions in order to help the Organization avoid the continued imposition of austerity measures.

102. With regard to the scale of assessments for the regular budget, in its report on its eighty-fourth session ([A/79/11](#) and [A/79/11/Add.1](#)), the Committee on Contributions had indicated that the assessment rate of Viet Nam would rise by over 70 per cent during the period 2025–2027, the highest increase in the history of the country's membership in the Organization and among the highest increases established for any country for the upcoming scale period. While that situation reflected his country's economic growth in recent years, it also entailed significant budgetary implications, given that Viet Nam was a developing country with limited resources. Viet Nam was

nevertheless committed to fulfilling its obligations on time and in full. It also stood ready to discuss with other Member States a periodic review of the methodology and the potential application of different ceilings based on levels of development.

103. **Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) said that Costa Rica was grateful for the efforts made to improve the results-based budgeting methodology. Annual programme planning and the concrete demonstration of results represented progress towards greater efficiency and transparency. She welcomed the fact that more than 65 per cent of the quantitative targets under the proposed programme budget for 2025 were aimed at achieving an increase of 10 per cent or more in performance, a development that reflected growing ambition.

104. The pillars of the United Nations deserved equal priority and adequate financing. Costa Rica therefore appreciated the Secretary-General's proposal relating to the regular programme of technical cooperation, the Development Account, disarmament activities and OHCHR. In a tumultuous global context, it was necessary to further strengthen the Organization's capacities in the area of human rights, which remained weaker than the other pillars.

105. Costa Rica was concerned that the budget negotiations were often sectarian in nature, running counter to the three pillars. Such an approach was counterproductive and undermined the comprehensive vision of the Charter of the United Nations. Member States must refrain from such divisive tactics and adopt a perspective based on the interconnection of peace, development and human rights.

106. **Mr. Tun** (Myanmar) said that, as a least developed country, Myanmar relied on external support for many activities, including efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It therefore welcomed the adoption of the Pact for the Future and expected to achieve productive results on the basis of adequate resources.

107. Four years after the illegal attempted military coup in Myanmar, its people had experienced significant suffering as a result of the military junta's atrocities, which amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Over 5,800 people had been brutally killed by the junta. Over 3.4 million people, mostly women, girls and children, had been displaced, and over 18.6 million people, mostly women and girls, were in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. In addition, over 100,000 homes had been burned down or destroyed, and nearly half the population was living below the national poverty line. The National Unity Government was therefore working together with ethnic resistance organizations and various individuals to end the illegal coup and the military dictatorship and to build a federal democratic union.

108. The United Nations, in particular the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, were crucial in identifying a sustainable solution to the crisis and ensuring justice for people, especially victims, in Myanmar. The Committee should therefore provide adequate funding to the Special Envoy, the Special Rapporteur and the Independent Investigative Mechanism to enable them to implement their mandates in an effective and timely manner.

109. Decisive and timely measures must be urgently taken by the international community, especially the United Nations and its Security Council, to address the unspeakable tragedy in Myanmar. The Organization and its Member States must pay serious attention to the country's aspirations and calls for action to end the military dictatorship and facilitate the development of a federal democratic union.

110. **Ms. Sameer** (Maldives) said that the proposed programme budget for 2025 was deeply connected to the aspirations of people worldwide, who expected the United Nations to deliver results. In particular, the people of the small island developing States expected the United Nations development system to deliver results.

111. The resource allocations for the Small Island Developing States Units in the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs must take into account the added responsibilities mandated under The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity, adopted at the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States. In addition, the Organization's resources must be used efficiently and accountably. The Maldives therefore echoed the Advisory Committee's call for budgetary and financial data to be presented more completely and clearly. Such data should also illustrate any variances in appropriations and expenditures over at least the previous three years.

112. Her delegation remained deeply concerned about the estimated depletion of the regular-budget liquidity reserves by year-end. Member States should comply with their financial obligations in full and on time, as the Organization's capacity to fulfil its commitments depended on their contributions. The Maldives was in favour of a United Nations budgetary process that was efficient, transparent and responsive to evolving needs and challenges.

113. **Mr. Soberón Guzmán** (Cuba) said that Cuba supported the role of the CPC in ensuring the correct formulation of the Organization's programmes. As the number of programmes without recommendations had increased during the most recent session of CPC, cooperation within CPC should be enhanced at its future sessions.

114. It was regrettable that, even before the proposed programme budget for 2025 had been approved, it was clear that it could not be fully implemented due to the high level of payments owed by the Organization's largest contributor. With regard to the level of resources proposed, more could be done to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially given the high risk of failure in that regard. Cuba called not only for increases in the level of resources allocated to section 23, Regular programme of technical cooperation, and section 35, Development Account, but also for thorough discussions by the Committee on ways to enhance the impact of both sections on developing nations. Those sections of the regular budget were the most likely to have a direct impact on the people of the countries that needed it the most, while the remaining sections were essentially designed to cover the costs of Secretariat personnel. Cuba stood ready to adopt a budget that was in line with the needs of people in such countries.

115. **Mr. Young** (United Kingdom) said that the Pact for the Future charted a path for the world to address the critical challenges it would face in 2025. While the programme budget implications of the Pact would be made available later in the session, the core budget proposal for 2025 already provided for tangible global improvements. Specifically, the United Kingdom welcomed the emphasis placed on human rights and UNRWA, areas of chronic need in which funding could have a clear impact.

116. In reviewing the proposed programme budget for 2025, his delegation would seek to ensure the efficient provision of resources for the Organization's mandates, enabling effective implementation. While the Secretariat's efforts in that regard were welcome, the budget proposal before the Committee offered only a partial picture of the resources requested. The forthcoming revised estimates and programme budget implications, including for the Pact for the Future, would inevitably further increase the level of such resources. His delegation therefore encouraged the Secretariat to promote a culture of efficiency not only by tweaking future budgets by submitting incremental requests, but also by using spending reviews and staffing reviews to ensure that the Organization had the right resources in the right places. That would

make it possible to channel every dollar contributed to the United Nations towards enhancing implementation and addressing the challenges of the future.

117. The counterparts to the programme budget were the programme plans. The United Kingdom was deeply concerned that CPC had reached consensus on only 12 of the 28 programmes, the lowest number in five years. That impasse represented a failing of the multilateral system and placed additional pressure on the Fifth Committee during an already busy session. All parties should swiftly conclude the discussions on the matter and work together to ensure a more positive outcome from CPC at its sixty-fifth session. As 2025 marked the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, he hoped that the 2025 programme budget would enable the Organization to continue to effectively and efficiently pursue peace, human rights, development and the rule of law.

118. **Mr. Najafi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, given the importance his delegation attached to intergovernmental guidance for mandate implementation, he wished to address the matter of programme planning. CPC had an essential role to play in ensuring the correct interpretation of the Secretariat's mandates. Although his delegation valued CPC, its negotiating process had faced challenges in recent years, with some programmes having been labelled as non-negotiable owing to Member States' adoption of entrenched and hard-line positions, a phenomenon that had put an end to the relevant discussions. Such positions were detrimental not only to the Organization but also to the spirit of multilateralism. Most of the programmes that had not been approved had been blocked by so-called redlines linked to imperative mandates, redlines that the United Nations itself had recognized as threats to multilateralism.

119. Unilateral coercive measures must be addressed, as they had had serious consequences for Member States – in particular for refugees, owing to specific human-made phenomena – in areas such as health, education, scientific development, the empowerment of women and youth, and economic and social development. The lack of progress in the discussions on such measures had had a tangible impact, particularly on developing countries, which were disproportionately affected by such measures. It was necessary to avoid marginalizing the voices of developing nations, especially on issues such as refugee protection, international humanitarian assistance and sustainable development. It was also imperative to recognize the interdependence of global challenges such as climate change and migration, which required coordinated international responses. His delegation valued the essential role of CPC in the United Nations programming and budgetary processes and would play a constructive role in its future sessions.

120. **Ms. González** (Uruguay) said that her delegation was committed to discussing matters based on the mandates set by the relevant bodies. The Committee had a responsibility to provide the resources required to ensure the full and effective implementation of such mandates.

121. Uruguay attached particular importance to the promotion of human rights, peacekeeping missions and matters underpinned by complementarity between sustainable development and environmental protection. It was therefore focused on the allocation of resources to such entities as OHCHR; UNEP; the Department of Peace Operations; the regional commissions, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). Uruguay remained committed to guaranteeing the availability of adequate resources for bodies essential to the strengthening of the development pillar. Moreover, given the value of the resident coordinator system, its continuity and stability should be ensured.

122. At the current session, the Committee would review the funding proposals before it with a view to ensuring their compatibility with the needs of, and the limitations faced by, developing countries. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 78/252, full, effective and efficient mandate delivery must always be the overriding factor in determining the Secretariat's resource requirements commensurate with it and its overall staffing structure. That imperative was compatible with the need to find ways to identify efficiencies and avoid duplication of efforts, including through improved coordination and cooperation among departments and entities.

123. While welcoming the fact that the overall percentage of women staff across all sections of the regular budget had reached 51, with respect to equitable geographical representation, Uruguay noted with concern that one quarter of the Organization's Member States were underrepresented or unrepresented. In addition, given the importance of ensuring the equal treatment of the six official languages, Uruguay appreciated the launch in March 2024 of the United Nations Strategic Framework on Multilingualism, aimed at implementing the General Assembly resolutions on the matter.

124. Uruguay had demonstrated the importance that it attached to CPC through its continued interest in being a member of the Committee and by trying to seek middle ground in order to reach agreements. CPC was exceptionally valuable, as it remained the only legitimate body through which Member States could supervise and guide the Secretariat's efforts to interpret mandates.

125. **Mr. Laputin** (Russian Federation) said that, regrettably, the annual budget remained a challenge for Member States. The Committee's agenda had become significantly overloaded in recent years. In the absence of tangible merits under the one-year planning system, there had been a significant increase in the workload not only of delegations but also of the Advisory Committee, CPC and the Secretariat itself. The shortcomings of the one-year cycle had become evident and were adversely affecting the Secretariat, in particular, owing to the lack of liquidity under the regular budget. Specifically, as a result of the transition to a one-year budget, the Secretariat had, on its own initiative, relinquished the right to issue assessments two years in advance, a development that had had a negative impact on the liquidity situation of the United Nations. His delegation called for an objective assessment of the merits of the biennial budget cycle and a return to that planning system as a result.

126. The Russian Federation was disappointed that the regular budget was no longer adopted by consensus. It did not support programme 6, Legal affairs, as it contained references to illegitimate so-called investigative mechanisms for Syria and Myanmar. Beyond the fact that illegal structures had been established in violation of the prerogatives of the Security Council, his delegation was also concerned about the Secretary-General's requests for resources for those structures, even though sufficient extrabudgetary funding was available.

127. Another challenge was the Secretary-General's proposal to allocate funds for the so-called Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic under section 24, Human rights. He noted that the Government of Syria had neither requested the assistance of, nor consented to cooperate with, that body, which represented yet another means of exerting political pressure on Damascus. Given the refusal of the Government of Syria to cooperate with that entity, any expenditure in that regard seemed to be a complete waste of Member State resources, especially in view of the well-known difficulties related to the Secretary-General's receipt of contributions from Member States and the annual budget planning system.

128. Another issue related to the Secretary-General's requests for regular-budget funding for resolutions and decisions of the Human Rights Council, which had become a tool used by the collective West to encroach upon State sovereignty and

justify its political, economic, financial and ideological domination. Such abuse must end. The Russian Federation would put forward its position on the matter under a separate agenda item.

129. His delegation advocated the allocation, without reductions, of the resources requested by the Secretary-General, in order to implement the recommendations contained in the report of CPC (A/79/16). The Secretary-General's proposal for additional funding for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would enable the Secretariat to properly carry out the decisions of CPC. The Russian Federation trusted that the negotiations would remain as transparent as possible and that the Fifth Committee's working methods would be maintained.

130. **Ms. Jiang** Hua (China) said that programme planning and the proposed programme budget were pertinent to the overall work of the United Nations and essential to full mandate implementation. Member States should play a leading role in reviewing programme plans, and the functions of CPC should be fully reflected in the process. At the current session, open programmes should continue to be reviewed in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly.

131. Finance was the foundation of United Nations governance, and Member States should be able to fully participate in the Organization's budgeting process. China appreciated the Secretariat's efforts in that regard and hoped that it would engage early with Member States on budgeting in order to further enhance the clarity of the proposed programme budget and provide sufficient information. In recent years, the programme budget had grown rapidly. However, in the previous five years, the level of resources allocated to development had grown more slowly than that allocated to security and human rights. The allocation of budgetary resources should therefore be further optimized to ensure the prioritization of development resources, enabling the provision of support for developing countries' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. China hoped that the Secretary-General could maintain the programme budget at a reasonable level and continue to pursue cost-effective and efficient practices.

132. Attention should be paid to improper budget management, the loss and waste of resources, low operational efficiencies and other issues reflected in audit reports. In addition, the Secretariat should rigorously strengthen internal oversight and comprehensive budgetary performance, enhance transparency in the use of extrabudgetary resources, and improve supervision and management to ensure that resources were used in line with the Organization's mandates and rules.

133. China had always paid its contributions to the United Nations in full and had supported the Organization's work through practical actions. Her delegation remained ready to engage constructively with all parties to jointly promote the implementation of the Organization's mandates, in a spirit of unity, cooperation and consensus.

134. **Ms. Montilme** (Haiti) said that her delegation was paying particular attention to section 17 of the proposed programme budget for 2025, relating to UN-Women, which was essential in promoting women's rights worldwide. Specifically, she wished to highlight the programme of work of UN-Women for 2025, as well as the strategies developed to follow up on its activities in areas such as governance, participation in public life and the elimination of violence against women and girls. Haiti called for women to be empowered so that they were at the centre of United Nations sustainable development initiatives.

135. Ninety-eight per cent of the funding for UN-Women was derived from voluntary contributions from Member States, which were determined to adopt laws that supported the work of UN-Women. She noted the proposal to provide UN-Women with approximately \$10 million to enable it to complete its programme of work. Haiti also appreciated the voluntary contributors to UN-Women, as they represented its

main source of financial support, and encouraged them to continue to make contributions. Member States each had a responsibility to provide UN-Women with the financial and material resources it required to fulfil its mandate.

136. Gender equality and women's empowerment were not only objectives to be achieved but also essential conditions for a better future for all. Haiti was therefore committed to working with the other Committee members to provide the Organization with the resources it required to implement its mandates.

137. **Ms. Alawadhi** (United Arab Emirates) said that the regular budget, the efficient use of resources, and Member State contributions were essential to the work of the United Nations, as they helped to improve its financial situation and enabled it to fulfil its mandates effectively, particularly in the light of the liquidity crisis. The timely payment of regular-budget contributions was crucial in that regard.

138. Following the adoption of the Pact for the Future, her delegation remained committed to international and regional cooperation, and was advancing its partnerships with the United Nations in order to achieve a sustainable, prosperous and secure future for all. As the war on Gaza continued and the violence expanded to include the Occupied Palestinian territory and other countries in the region, UNRWA must be provided with sufficient financial resources for 2025 to enable it to fulfil its mandate. Moreover, the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza should be provided with the funding necessary to enable her to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and alleviate civilian suffering, as mandated by Security Council resolution [2720 \(2023\)](#).

139. **Mr. Lagdameo** (Philippines) said, with respect to the programme budget implications arising from the report of CPC ([A/79/16](#)), that the Philippines welcomed the recommendation of CPC on advancing the elaboration of a specific response plan to facilitate sustainable development cooperation and inclusive support for middle-income countries, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [78/162](#). His delegation also noted the Advisory Committee's recommendations on ways to seek synergies and achieve greater efficiency in the elaboration of that response plan.

140. There were 108 middle-income countries worldwide, accounting for 75 per cent of the world's population, including 60 per cent of the world's poor. Providing support tailored to the specific challenges and diverse needs of such countries could contribute to ensuring that no one was left behind.

141. The Philippines supported the role of the CPC in enabling Member States to ensure that the activities of the various United Nations programmes were aligned with the mandates underpinning those programmes. It was necessary to improve the ability of CPC to reach consensus and attain productive outcomes for the benefit of Member States.

142. The Committee was considering funding for the resident coordinator system under the proposed programme budget for 2025. The Philippines fully supported the system's work in assisting Member States in their development efforts and in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. For its part, the Philippines had been working closely with the system under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the Philippines for 2024–2028, in line with its national medium- to long-term development plans.

143. With 2030 approaching, and given the lingering impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and various other challenges, an effective resident coordinator system would be crucial in coordinating the in-country work of the United Nations development system. The Philippines thus supported the Secretary-General's efforts to reinvigorate the system and was open to considering the funding proposal for the system, in order to promote enhanced accountability, ownership and solidarity

among Member States. However, the Organization must strengthen the system in the same spirit of transparency and accountability that underpinned United Nations reforms, leveraging national expertise and best practices, and subjecting the system to collaborative review and monitoring. The Philippines was among the few developing countries that consistently contributed to the special purpose trust fund for the resident coordinator system, further demonstrating its support for the system.

144. **The Secretary-General** said that he was grateful for the relevant and substantive comments made by Member States, which indicated not only their strong commitment to multilateralism and the United Nations, but also their detailed knowledge of the challenges faced by the Organization and the steps being taken to address them.

145. The logic underpinning the formulation of the regular budget should be distinguished from the consequences of the liquidity situation. The regular budget was formulated in order to respond, in the most financially effective way possible, to the mandates set by the Organization's intergovernmental bodies. The liquidity crisis, rather than being caused by uncontrolled expenditure, stemmed from the fact that significant levels of Member States contributions had not been – or had not yet been – paid. The volume of arrears at the end of 2023 had been \$859 million, \$290 million of which had been received in 2024. A total of \$290 million in contributions for periods before 2024 had still not been paid, and a portion of that total would probably never be paid. At the same time, unpaid contributions for 2024 currently amounted to \$1.5 billion, or 40 per cent of the 2024 regular budget. It was therefore highly likely that the volume of arrears at the end of 2024 would be similar to that recorded at the end of 2023, a situation that would result in a very difficult cash situation at the start of 2025.

146. He was therefore proposing an unorthodox measure whereby, instead of being returned to Member States, any unspent funds for the previous year – while continuing to belong to Member States – would remain frozen in a reserve and released to Member States as soon as the liquidity situation permitted. It was normal that Member States should receive their share of the unspent funds under regular budgets to which they had paid their contributions in full. However, the United Nations rules went further still: even countries that had not paid their contributions in full – and were therefore responsible for the existence of unspent funds – were entitled to receive their share of such funds, a situation that was completely absurd. He nevertheless appealed to Member States to recognize that the Organization would begin 2025 in a very difficult cash situation and to therefore accept the unorthodox measure he was proposing, which, rather than depriving Member States of the right to the resources that belonged to them, would enable those resources to be frozen until the financial situation improved. If such a measure was not taken, the Organization would face a situation in which it was continuously required to return funds that it had not spent because it had not received adequate funds, causing its overall level of resources to spiral downward to zero.

147. He wished to note that the level of expenditure for 2024 should not be used as a basis from which to analyse the proposed programme budget for 2025, as that level of expenditure had resulted from a lack of resources rather than an unnecessarily high level of budgeted expenditure. Member States sometimes proposed cuts to future programme budgets on the basis of low levels of expenditure in previous years. However, the source of the problem was the liquidity situation and not the programme budget.

148. He fully agreed that a much larger share of the programme budget should be devoted to development. In particular, he agreed with the representative of Cuba that the United Nations should spend less money on its staff and more money on direct

support to Member States. He himself had taken that approach when, as Prime Minister of Portugal, he had reduced the percentage of the budget represented by staff costs in order to increase social expenditure, and, as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, he had dramatically reduced the percentage of the budget represented by staff costs and dramatically increased that represented by direct support for beneficiaries and Member States. The problem lay in the rigidity of the structure of the programme budget and the fact that, although new mandates were set each year, the number of mandates established in previous years was maintained. He therefore strongly appealed to Member States, in the General Assembly, to review past mandates, as enormous savings could be made if such mandates – and the posts created to fulfil them – were considered to be no longer relevant. The resources generated could then be used to provide direct support to Member States.

149. Within the existing framework, sincere efforts had been made to increase the level of resources allocated to development. For example, at the beginning of his term, the level of resources allocated to the regular programme of technical cooperation had been \$33 million; its current budget was \$48 million, representing an increase of 70 per cent. Although the increase in funding for development currently requested under the 2025 proposed programme budget was \$4.5 million, the General Assembly's approval of the proposal relating to support for the resident coordinator system would raise that increase to \$150 million. The Organization would do its best in all areas to invest as much as possible in its development pillar. He thanked Member States for their important comments on a number of specific matters and would request his Secretariat colleagues to take them fully into account.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.