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Summary record of the 21st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 1 May 2018, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) . . . . . (South Africa)

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18-06917 (E)

In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 8: Integration segment (*continued*)

Session 2: Panel discussion on "Technology and disaster risk reduction"

1. **Ms. Grignon** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations and Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-second session), moderator, said that natural disasters and extreme weather events threatened the survival of communities around the world. Such events, which were exacerbated by climate change, had a detrimental effect on human health, biodiversity and economic activity, and placed significant stress on national institutional systems.

2. According to a report produced by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) entitled "Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", women and children were 14 times as likely as men to die during a disaster. The needs and voices of women and children must be taken into account when designing sustainable disaster risk reduction solutions. The Commission on the Status of Women was concerned that natural disasters and environmental degradation were exacerbating the inequalities and disadvantages faced by women and girls. The Commission was also concerned about the low number of women and girls studying and working in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

3. Member States, in collaboration with other actors, must take steps to ensure that the planning, delivery and monitoring of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies, including technology-based approaches, were attuned to the needs of women and girls. Women affected by natural disasters must be empowered to participate effectively and on equal terms with men in decision-making and leadership processes. Countries should invest in women and girls and adopt gender-responsive strategies leveraged by technology to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience.

4. The Council was about to hold a panel discussion that would provide an opportunity to exchange lessons learned on the use of technology and innovation in the field of disaster risk reduction. She asked the panellists what specific disaster risk reduction measures had been put in place by States, including in the context of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. She also asked about national experiences in using technology and innovation to strengthen resilience and inclusion in an integrated and gender-responsive manner.

5. **Mr. Shohiyon** (First Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense, Tajikistan), panellist, said that to ensure the implementation of the Sendai Framework, Tajikistan had created a national disaster risk reduction platform that brought together line ministries and observers from international organizations and donor countries. In addition, the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense was taking measures to address the four priority areas of the Sendai Framework.

6. An inter-agency working group had been established to develop a disaster risk reduction strategy for 2018–2030. The Government was pleased that international organizations and development partners had contributed to the development of the strategy, as coordinated and coherent international assistance, including capacity-building, was essential to effective disaster risk reduction.

7. Tajikistan was prone to natural disasters such as floods, mudslides, earthquakes, strong winds and rockfalls. Such events, which were exacerbated by climate change, were a threat to biodiversity, economic activity and human life; in 2017, they had caused 300 deaths and millions of dollars' worth of damage. To reduce the country's vulnerability, comprehensive strategies based on the latest technology were needed. Access to timely information, innovative solutions and early warning, prevention and ecosystem protection systems had an important role to play in improving resilience to disasters, particularly in rural and mountainous regions.

8. Tajikistan had had a successful monitoring and early warning system in place for over 50 years. In 2000, the World Bank had spearheaded a project to reduce the impact of landslides using remote sensing technology. In addition, research was being carried out on the formation of hail, which damaged crops. While Tajikistan had an early detection system in place for dangerous weather events, it needed to be modernized. An online platform for technology assistance established as part of efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda could facilitate the exchange of information and innovative initiatives.

9. The Government was implementing disaster risk reduction projects with the assistance of partners such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, United Nations agencies and donor countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland. The aim was to improve early warning systems, monitoring and crisis management using the latest information and communications technology (ICT). Tajikistan would

continue to develop technology and innovative mechanisms and to strengthen national and regional institutions and policies in the area of disaster risk reduction, including climate adaptation, training and improved cooperation.

10. **Mr. Jackson** (Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that the Agency's Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy was an innovative road map intended to bridge the gap between disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. The Strategy was aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements at the national and regional levels, increasing knowledge management, enhancing effectiveness at the sectoral levels, and building community resilience. It had four cross-cutting themes, namely, gender, climate change, environmental sustainability and ICT. While the Strategy had been developed at the regional level, it was implemented nationally through a mechanism intended to ensure that all stakeholders, including civil society, worked together and pooled their resources.

11. To improve disaster resilience, it was essential to provide social protection for the most vulnerable in society, safeguard infrastructure, promote economic diversification, address environmental protection issues and strengthen operational readiness. Recalling that the Agency was mandated to act as a regional clearing house for disaster-related information and research, he said that a virtual platform called the Caribbean Risk Information System had been established to facilitate analysis, research and evidence-based decision-making, and to strengthen risk management and climate change adaptation efforts. In addition to risk management data, the platform contained hazard maps, live monitoring tools, progress indicators and geospatial tools and data sets.

12. The Agency had entered into partnerships with universities and cutting-edge private sector firms to develop initiatives such as Spatial Edge, which provided real-time analysis of cyclones. Efforts were being made to improve information gathering and dissemination using mobile technology, crowdsourcing and online portals. The Agency was also using technology to engage remotely with donors and political actors. As the Agency had limited resources, it had come up with inventive, cost-effective solutions, such as attaching surveillance cameras to airplanes to assess the damage caused by natural disasters. Other initiatives included the Dewetra platform, which integrated various information sources, including sensors and cameras, to improve disaster preparedness, mitigation and response, and CaribViz, which assessed the potential impact of earthquakes. Looking ahead, the Agency would seek to better utilize the Internet of things, blockchain technology, unmanned vehicles, satellite information and artificial intelligence. However, it faced a number of challenges, including political prioritization, financing and capacity distribution.

13. **Ms. Triyanti** (Representative of the Young Scientists in the Science and Technology Advisory Group of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2017 to 2018), panellist, said that the work of the Science and Technology Advisory Group was intended to support evidence-based policymaking and ensure that science and technology played a role in disaster risk reduction efforts at the global, regional and national levels. While technology could certainly help to improve resilience and ensure sustainable development, rapid technological development could cause economic and environmental damage. She cautioned against seeing technology as a product, rather than a tool, and prioritizing cutting-edge technology over other forms. When applying technological solutions, there was a need to consider whether communities could afford and maintain the technology in question.

14. Education had a key role to play both in the development of new technologies and innovations, and in the communication of such developments to the public. In building capacity, the specific skills needed for technological innovation should be identified. That could be best achieved by acknowledging the interdisciplinary nature of science and encouraging scientists from different fields to work together. In addition, scientists should work with policymakers, young people, women and indigenous communities to gain new perspectives. Intergenerational discussion was particularly crucial.

15. **Mr. Sokona** (Special Advisor on Sustainable Development at the South Centre and Honorary Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy at University College London), panellist, said that disasters were the result of both natural and human factors, with risk expressed in terms of potential losses of life, assets or income. The central role of technology in disaster risk reduction and management was well established, but technology was a broad concept. There was a tendency to focus on the physical aspects of technology (equipment and infrastructure), but the soft dimensions (planning, knowledge transfer and capacity-building) and the organizational aspects (ownership, institutional arrangements and the sustainability of solutions) were equally important. While institutions tended to operate as silos, the issues they sought to address were cross-sectoral; innovation was therefore essential. Institutions must find a way to bring together local, national and

global policymakers, knowledge-based institutions and universities, and practitioners at all levels, from farmers to ministers.

16. Disaster risk reduction measures should be context-specific. The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, of which he was a Vice-Chair, examined the various technologies used to address extreme weather events, from cutting-edge innovations to local and indigenous solutions, which could be extremely effective. Technical capacity-building, financing, political interest and priority-setting were key. If States focused solely on the physical aspects of technology without taking into consideration the soft and organizational dimensions, they would be left with technology that they could not use effectively. Institutional mechanisms and access to knowledge brokers would be crucial to ensuring that knowledge reached those who needed it.

17. **Mr. Yaakob** (Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Forum on Forests at its thirteenth session), discussant, said that the adoption of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 had been a milestone for the Forum. The thirteenth session of the Forum would be an important opportunity to promote the implementation of the strategic plan and to provide inputs for the forthcoming session of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, where Sustainable Development Goal 15 would be discussed. At the thirteenth session, the contribution of forests to accelerating the achievement of the Goals and to supporting global efforts to create sustainable and resilient societies would be highlighted.

18. Some 30 per cent of the Earth was covered by forests and 1.6 billion people relied on forests for energy and food. Forests had a key role to play in disaster risk reduction. When sustainably managed, they prevented land degradation and desertification and reduced the risk of flooding and landslides, thereby contributing substantially to climate change mitigation. Target 1.4 of the strategic plan was to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of forests to natural disasters and the impacts of climate change. The question was how to sustainably manage forests. While financial support was important, technology also had a vital role to play, through tools such as satellite imaging, mapping and data gathering.

19. **Mr. Sokona** (Special Advisor on Sustainable Development at the South Centre and Honorary Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy at University College London) said that forests certainly had an important role to play in preventing land degradation and desertification and in ensuring food security, as recognized by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

20. **Ms. Triyanti** (Representative of the Young Scientists in the Science and Technology Advisory Group of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2017 to 2018) said that mangrove forests could help to reduce the impact of tsunamis. Such ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation methods could be highly effective, but had to be carefully managed to ensure the commitment of local communities.

21. **Mr. Jackson** (Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency) said that there was undoubtedly a correlation between forest cover and the extent of damage after climate change-related events. As many forested areas in the Caribbean were privately owned, Governments needed to engage with local communities and encourage the adoption of ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction.

22. *A film entitled* Now is the Time to Invest in Resilient Cities *was projected.*

General discussion on the theme "Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies"

23. **Mr. Edrees** (Observer for Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, highlighted the importance of policy integration to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and said that the integration segment of the Economic and Social Council should maintain its role in integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

24. There was an urgent need to address developing countries' capacity constraints and lack of technology and innovation infrastructure, particularly in the case of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. In addition, research capacity in developing countries must be strengthened. Revitalized international cooperation should be aimed at increasing access to clean energy, expanding infrastructure and encouraging the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to all developing countries on favourable terms. In that connection, the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries must be fully operationalized.

25. Infrastructure, industry and innovation were interlinked and together supported socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic development. Poor access to infrastructure hindered development, diversification and value addition, as well as sustainable urbanization. Infrastructure must be climate-sensitive

and resource-efficient, while innovation was key to harnessing countries' economic potential.

26. Access to technology, a powerful driver of economic growth and sustainable development, was unequal both within and among countries. Therefore, it was essential to promote the development and use of information and communications technology and technology infrastructure, and to build capacity, including in support of rapid, universal and affordable access to the Internet.

27. The resilience of cities and human settlements must be boosted to reduce vulnerabilities and the risk of disasters. All stakeholders should support additional efforts to increase access to countries' early warning mechanisms. Recalling the commitments made in the New Urban Agenda, he said that building resilient cities required an enabling environment, which included access to science, technology and innovation; enhanced knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms; capacity-building; and financial resources, which must be mobilized at the global, regional and national levels. There was a need for reinvigorated international cooperation and partnerships among all stakeholders, based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination, accountability, respect for human rights and solidarity. Harnessing the potential of science, technology and innovation, closing technology gaps, and scaling up capacity-building at all levels were essential for the shift towards sustainable development and poverty eradication.

28. **Ms. Zahir** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that small island developing States were highly vulnerable to external shocks, both environmental and economic — such as crises and fluctuations in global markets. Debt service trapped several low- and middle-income countries for decades, restricting their ability to achieve sustainable development. Extreme weather events could reverse decades' worth of development gains; along with drought, ocean degradation, remoteness, limited resources and long-standing debt, they made it difficult for small island developing States to prepare for and respond to disasters.

29. The frameworks and agendas agreed by Member States in recent years provided pathways to addressing those interlinked challenges. The challenge was finding solutions that addressed each country's unique needs, while also recognizing their shared experiences, good practices and priorities. The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (SAMOA Pathway) provided a valuable basic framework for action. The midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway, scheduled for 2019, would be a chance to evaluate progress in meeting the needs of small island developing States.

30. Many countries, including small island developing States, still had no access to new technologies, which were critical for strengthening preparedness and reducing risk. The United Nations system and the international community must ensure the funding and means of implementation, as well as partnerships and capacity-building, to improve their access. Better coordination between agencies, and actions guided by the priorities of individual countries would be crucial to that end. Small island developing States needed increased human resource and technical capacity, particularly in the areas of data collection and analysis, as the ability to gather and use relevant baseline data was a prerequisite for investing in smart risk reduction measures. Building sustainable, resilient communities was a necessary, long-term project that required buy-in from all States and industries.

31. **Mr. Gonzalez** (Colombia) said that his country's National Disaster Risk Management System ensured that risk was managed in an orderly, systematic way. The System included a risk management plan, based on five strategic objectives, for providing technical assistance at the local level. Under the plan, 32 departmental risk management funds had been established, local (departmental or municipal) risk management plans had been put in place for 90 per cent of the country and 42 risk management offices had been created. The System incorporated preventive action, including with respect to goods, services, housing and infrastructure, to ensure that new risk situations did not arise. Colombia considered risk management a development issue that was indispensable to the country's sustainability and security.

32. The transfer of technology and knowledge was crucial to sustainable development. Through a national policy on the development of the productive sector, the Government was creating conditions conducive to innovation in production and knowledge and technology transfer. In the medium term, it hoped that the National System for Competitiveness in Science, Technology and Innovation would introduce a model for planning, follow-up and evaluation of policy instruments for productive development.

33. The forthcoming discussions in the integration segment should allow Member States to share their approaches to technology transfer, with a view to the replication of good practices. The resulting acceleration of national strategies should, in turn, contribute to the strengthening of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the fulfilment of international technology transfer commitments.

34. **Mr. Viet Dzung Van** (Viet Nam) said that in recent years, climate records had far exceeded predictions, with extreme temperatures and weather conditions causing enormous socioeconomic losses, especially in developing countries, and ever fiercer natural disasters threatening food security, agriculture, access to water, and living standards, ultimately widening inequality. Viet Nam was one of the countries hardest hit by natural disasters, with economic losses of 1.5 times its gross domestic product (GDP) and the number of deaths or missing persons exceeding 300 each year. In Viet Nam, the phenomena of El Niño and La Niña caused severe drought and saline intrusion.

35. As a country that was particularly vulnerable to climate change, Viet Nam attached special importance to common efforts to address it. Viet Nam fully supported the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. His Government had already adopted its national implementation plan for the Paris Agreement and remained committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 8 per cent by 2030. Developed countries should play a leading role in meeting the absolute emissions reduction targets under the Paris Agreement, and should support developing countries in that regard. Viet Nam had incorporated the Sendai Framework into its national plan to deal with natural disasters.

36. International cooperation to address climate change should be enhanced, with a special focus on capacity-building, technology development and access to financial resources, such as the Green Climate Fund. Developing countries must be able to formulate their own development strategies and policy tools, in line with their national circumstances. The United Nations system and other development partners had a crucial role to play in catalysing the structural changes needed to promote awareness, understanding and investment in technology and infrastructure.

37. **Mr. Prongthura** (Observer for Thailand) said that science, technology and innovation were crucial for sustainable development and the construction of resilient societies. The Thailand 4.0 policy was designed to transform the national economy into a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy, through technological schemes to build resilience such as smart farming, which included the establishment of a smart water operation centre that helped farmers with agricultural planning, and smart cities. Thailand was also using technology and innovation to reduce disaster risk, including through a forest fire application that enabled the general public to provide early warnings of forest fires.

38. Resilience and sustainability must be based on inclusiveness. Local communities could offer unique solutions to many local problems, based on their traditional knowledge, expertise and resources. Governments, the private sector and the international community, including the United Nations, must further empower local communities in that regard.

39. Building resilience began with the right mindset. For more than four decades, Thailand had embraced the sufficiency economy philosophy, a homegrown, people-centred approach to sustainable development. The philosophy encouraged people to live their lives with moderation, reasonableness and prudence, guided by knowledge — including science — and virtue. Through it, individuals, families, communities and nations could become resilient and immune to shocks. The sufficiency economy philosophy had enabled Thailand to weather the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the 2006 Indian Ocean tsunami. Thailand had shared its approach with many countries in Africa and Asia and was keen to partner with more countries. For inclusive sustainable development to become a reality, Member States must all work together to share experiences, continue to invest in science and technology and empower local communities.

40. **Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez** (Uruguay) said that his Government was seeking to adapt its production systems to the information society, a world that was increasingly interconnected and diverse. The National Research and Innovation Agency, established in 2007, was in charge of promoting productive innovation, social innovation and research. Under the Plan Ceibal in the social innovation component, schoolchildren and teachers were provided with personal computers. Although Uruguay had only adopted a strategic approach to innovation in 2005, it was a decisive approach, based on four pillars: reform of the legal framework, reform of its operational regulations, establishment of the National Research and Innovation Agency and the provision of resources. However, that approach suffered from the isolation that affected all developing countries' attempts at cooperation in science, technology and innovation. Promoting an enabling environment for science, technology and innovation as essential tools for sustainable development at the global level required a new level of international cooperation, including official development assistance (ODA).

41. Science, technology and innovation were critical to sustainable development. Development cooperation was needed to provide the capacity, knowledge and technology that would enable transformations in the way people lived. Although Uruguay had experienced a

decade of sustained growth, structural gaps and vulnerabilities remained, and the shift towards a recession in the region compounded the problem. Uruguay also faced a demographic challenge: it had a small, aging population, and, paradoxically, any increase in its GDP had a proportionally high impact on its per capita income, which, worryingly, as of 2017, was the only factor used for determining whether countries were entitled to ODA. Uruguay was also concerned by its categorization as a high-income country, since international development cooperation had supported and continued to support capacity-building for the design and implementation of public policies at the national and local levels, the promotion of human rights and the protection of the environment.

42. Lastly, the Council could provide greater support for initiatives already under way, such as the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to achieve the commitments made at the World Summit on the Information Society, or the creation by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of a regional digital agenda.

43. **Mr. Duque Estrada Meyer** (Observer for Brazil) said that technology was relevant not only to Sustainable Development Goal 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, but to all the Goals. Building the capacity to access and develop science, technology and innovation in developing countries was critical to their overcoming structural economic, social and environmental challenges.

44. The theme of the current integration segment connected technology to Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 13, on sustainable cities and communities, and climate action, respectively. To adapt to the impacts of climate change, foster resilience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the Paris Agreement, it was necessary not only to mobilize resources, but also to leverage technological solutions. Technology provided new policy options, enabling countries to achieve the Goals in ways best suited to their specific contexts.

45. The United Nations system could best support technology and innovation initiatives of Member States by strengthening the role of the relevant forums, in particular the multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Development partners should enhance their support to developing countries and work with the private sector in the realm of technology and innovation, in the spirit of Goal 17 on means of implementation.

46. **Ms. Yánez Loza** (Ecuador) said that Ecuador remained committed to the "right to the city" enshrined in the New Urban Agenda, in which Member States had set out their vision of just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all. Disaster risk reduction and management policies were needed to boost resilience and response capacity vis-à-vis natural and human-caused dangers. Prevention and early warning systems significantly reduced the costs of responding after the event. In April 2018, the Government had published the latest version of the national disaster response plan, which outlined mechanisms for protecting the rights of those affected by natural and human-caused disasters.

47. The development and dissemination of innovations and technologies was a driving force behind economic growth and sustainable development. Ecuador sought to develop smart cities that made use of digital technologies, clean energy technologies, and innovative transport technologies.

48. Ecuador supported research and the exchange of knowledge, and was seeking to increase digital literacy and the use of technology in the public and private spheres for productive transformation and economic development. In 2017, 10.5 per cent of those aged between 15 and 45 had been digitally illiterate and only 58.3 per cent of the population had been Internet users. Despite national efforts, the digital divide was a persistent reality; Ecuador had limited capacity for innovation, connectivity and access to technology. It therefore called on partners to mobilize more resources and implement technology transfers to assist developing countries.

49. **Mr. Bolaji** (Nigeria) said that Nigeria had committed to cooperating with the African Union to advance science, technology and innovation, and to support the development of the skills and competences that would enable Africa to combat poverty and underdevelopment. His Government had established six science centres in the country's six geographical regions in order to stimulate the interest of young people in science-related disciplines, and to integrate policies on science, technology and innovation with a view to enhanced resilience and inclusion within the context of the 2030 Agenda. The science centres also served as platforms for the exchange of best practices on leveraging technology and innovation to build an inclusive, resilient future, and supported national risk management and reduction efforts. However, the absence of critical infrastructure remained an impediment to building resilience. The Government had therefore instituted an annual Technology and Innovation Expo, which brought together inventors, researchers and investors with a view

to commercializing research results, inventions and innovations emerging from the country's research and tertiary institutions.

50. Currently, technology transfer for the benefit of developing countries was not a reality. On the contrary, indigenous technologies were being swindled by manufacturers of more sophisticated copyright- or patent-protected technologies. Further, most developing countries had to cope with illicit financial flows out of their economies, reducing their capacity to put in place the critical infrastructure for the technology and innovation that would support sustainable and resilient societies. International cooperation was desperately needed to provide support for and facilitate access to technology and technological infrastructure.

51. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) said that the challenges currently facing the world were global in scale, and called for a holistic and, above all, innovative, response. Increasing resilience was a complex process that required a detailed plan, and must begin with collective awareness. Although science, technology and innovation could set the world on the road to sustainability and resilience, developing countries would only be able to use technology effectively when it was accessible to them, at the national and regional levels, and in all sectors. Thus, technical assistance and investment in research and development were essential, along with the adoption of enabling national policies and regulatory frameworks.

52. Morocco believed in cooperative development based on intra-African solidarity; it hoped that through the pooling of means and efforts, South-South cooperation would contribute to the inauguration of a new Africa. Africa was already a laboratory for the digitalized world. Young start-ups in the fields of finance, telecommunications, industry and farming, among others, were driving the change. As the innovators were largely young people with low incomes, that population should be at the heart of public policy.

53. Morocco intended to undertake large-scale infrastructure projects that would comply with international standards, in order to build economic and social resilience. The Government was working towards accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by putting new technology and innovation at the centre of its national sustainable development policy. Among the various Moroccan institutes that effectively managed risk were a crisis surveillance centre, under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior, which managed disasters from a centralized command station, and a spatial remote sensing centre equipped with the latest technology for monitoring and modelling extreme weather events. Morocco continued to make every effort to improve the resilience of its agricultural and energy sectors in the face of climate change through innovative and sustainable solutions, such as the Green Morocco Plan and the national solar energy project, Noor.

54. **Mr. Dewar Viscarra** (Mexico) said that rapid urbanization was becoming a major challenge for Mexico. Access to basic resources such as water, energy, health care, education and other public services was difficult without the infrastructure to cope with the additional pressure resulting from urbanization. Disasters were unpredictable and, without resilient infrastructure, could lead to serious damage and heavy losses. For that reason, Mexico had begun drafting a shared alert protocol, which would enable the competent authorities to spread the alert when disasters threatened.

55. Mexico was also using technology to boost resilience. The Federal Telecommunications Institute had established the minimum technical conditions necessary for public telephone networks offered by different service providers to be interconnected, and mandatory quality standards for mobile service providers. As a result, in the event of a disaster, the telephone network would remain operational and emergency services would be able to provide a rapid and coordinated response. With regard to integration, ongoing reforms of the telecommunications system had increased the number of Mexican homes with Internet access by 20 per cent, and a new national employment portal had already facilitated the placement of 1.8 million persons in productive employment. In addition, the National Council for Science and Technology was bringing indigenous women into the academic and research sector through dedicated fellowships designed to strengthen research in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

56. The Council should continue to support the establishment of partnerships that would facilitate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 9 on infrastructure, industrialization and innovation; Goal 11 on resilient cities and human settlements; and Goal 17 on partnerships for implementation, in particular with bodies such as the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.