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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 13th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 15 October 2018, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales ..... (Guatemala)  
*later:* Mr. Remaoun ..... (Algeria)

## Contents

### Agenda Item 20: Sustainable development (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (*continued*)
- (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)
- (c) Disaster risk reduction (*continued*)
- (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*)
- (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)
- (f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)
- (g) Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (*continued*)
- (h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*)
- (i) Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (*continued*)
- (j) Combating sand and dust storms (*continued*)
- (k) The role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia (*continued*)

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

**Agenda Item 20: Sustainable development**

(continued) (A/73/81-E/2018/59, A/73/166, A/73/258, A/73/301 and A/73/383)

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development** (continued) (A/73/204)
- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** (A/73/225, A/73/226, A/73/345 and A/73/382)
- (c) **Disaster risk reduction** (continued) (A/73/268)
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind** (continued) (A/73/255)
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** (continued) (A/73/255)
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** (continued) (A/73/255)
- (g) **Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme** (continued) (A/73/25)
- (h) **Harmony with Nature** (continued) (A/73/221)
- (i) **Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all** (continued) (A/73/267)
- (j) **Combating sand and dust storms** (continued) (A/73/306)
- (k) **The role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia** (continued)

1. **Mr. Gadabu** (Nauru), speaking on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States, said that despite the recognition that small island developing States had gained within the United Nations, their progress towards sustainable development had been mixed, and was increasingly being threatened by climate change. In the run-up to the 2019 midterm review of the SIDS

Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the regional preparatory meeting held in Tonga in June 2018 and the one-day high-level review held during the high-level segment of the current session had provided opportunities to share national experiences and enhance genuine and durable partnerships as envisioned by the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2014.

2. Increased resources were needed to match the evolving mandates of the SIDS Units of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS). The Pacific small island developing States requested the Secretary-General to allocate additional resources within the programme budget for the biennium 2020-2021 in the context of the repositioning of the United Nations development system, the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway, and to include information on what had been done to address the needs resulting from those expanded mandates in his report to the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

3. The special report on global warming of 1.5° C issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had shown conclusively that countries such as the Pacific small island developing States were at disproportionately higher risk of adverse consequences from global warming. Resources for building resilience would be vital. However, small island developing States had traditionally struggled to access international sources of finance. Procedures needed to be simplified and direct access should be expanded. That would be consistent with the Joint Inspection Unit's 2016 recommendation that the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development should actively contribute to addressing the specificity of small island developing States as a special case with tailor-made solutions, and should also ensure that new parameters of eligibility were designed to afford better access to financing for development for small island developing States.

4. While the Pacific small island developing States were open to innovative financing sources, such as blue and green bonds, they believed that most climate change-related financing should be grant-based. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 should complement efforts to build climate resilience, as should an adequately funded international mechanism to address loss and damage from the impacts of climate change. The Pacific small island developing States were leading the way in renewable energy, but

warned that that transformation should not be derailed by the substitution of expensive loans and service fees for current fossil fuel bills. They called on all partners to enhance their support through the SAMOA Pathway midterm review and beyond.

5. **Mr. Chan** Guolong (Singapore) said that his country had learned a number of lessons in the course of its sustainable development journey. One was about the need to adapt and find creative solutions; there was no one-size-fits-all solution for all countries. Singapore, for example, had developed an innovative NEWater system that used recycled water to meet up to 40 per cent of its water needs. A second lesson was about the need to engage the community through ground-up efforts such as the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint, which had brought together individuals, communities, companies and government agencies and, in one of its key thrusts, had substantially increased the use of public transportation and bicycles as alternatives to car transportation. A third lesson was about the importance of international partnerships. As it had noted when presenting its voluntary national review to the 2018 session of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, Singapore was providing technical assistance to fellow developing countries for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Creativity, community action and international commitment could help to overcome the challenges to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

6. **Mr. Carazo Zeledón** (Costa Rica) said that his Government was committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda through a cross-cutting and multidimensional approach to poverty eradication and the empowerment of women and girls. It should be noted that family farmers, in particular, had a key role to play in the global efforts to achieve sustainable development.

7. Costa Rica belonged to a group of sponsor countries that had submitted a draft resolution for consideration by the Committee to designate 7 June as World Food Safety Day. That would represent a fundamental step towards promoting sustainable food practices and food safety issues, which had many interlinkages with the actions required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including access to nutritional and healthy food and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production in international trade.

8. His Government sought to promote an ambitious vision on the environment and combating climate change, particularly through the implementation of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change. As such, it wished to share its experience in forest conservation and generating renewable energy as part of the deep decarbonization of the economy. It was currently working on an innovative decarbonization plan to transform Costa Rican society. Furthermore,, in the context of the ongoing efforts to combat pollution, the Committee should build on the outcomes of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

9. **Ms. Al-Baker** (Qatar) said that it was important for the 2030 Agenda to be implemented on the basis of international cooperation and respect for national sovereignty. Her delegation supported a reinvigorated resident coordinator system. It stressed the importance of Sustainable Development Goal 16 on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. Qatar believed that education was the key to development, and made sure that all people, and especially young people, had access to education. Her country's Education Above All Foundation worked with partners to provide education to some 10 million underserved children in some 50 countries, including countries suffering from conflict, poverty and natural disasters.

10. Qatar had just presented its voluntary national review during the 2018 session of the high-level political forum, in the course of which it had discussed how it provided reliable modern energy services, ensured sustainable consumption and production patterns, and engaged in global partnerships for development. Her country's Qatar National Vision 2030 and its National Development Strategy 2018-2022 both provided for mechanisms to monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Qatar had accomplished all that even as it was dealing with the unjust embargo and other unilateral measures imposed against it in violation of international law and the principles of multilateralism.

11. **Mr. Benarbia** (Algeria) said that his delegation agreed with the recommendation in the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, contained in the note of the Secretary-General on implementation of United Nations environmental conventions ([A/73/255](#)), that the General Assembly should reaffirm that achieving land degradation neutrality constituted an accelerator to achieve other Sustainable Development Goals and responded to the overall objectives of the 2030 Agenda, and should also call upon Member States to step up efforts to implement the strategic objective of the Convention on drought as called for by the high-level

political forum on sustainable development and the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

12. His country was on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and would present its first voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2019. Algeria remained firmly committed to the multilateral environmental agreements that it had ratified and was implementing cross-cutting policies on housing, transport, agriculture and forests with a view to reducing greenhouse gases and moving towards a green economy. At the regional level, Algeria had hosted the 2014 Partnership for Action on Green Economy ministerial conference. In early 2019, it would take part in the discussions of the open-ended working group established by General Assembly resolution [72/277](#) on a global pact for the environment. Although the 2017 Ordos Declaration adopted at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification had confirmed that desertification/land degradation and drought were major environmental, economic and social challenges for global sustainable development, the Convention remained the poor stepchild of the multilateral environmental agreements. He called for ensuring a synergy among all three Rio Conventions, which should be implemented on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

13. **Mr. Amin** (Afghanistan) said that his Government had incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals into its National Peace and Development Framework (2017-2021), its priority programmes, and its national budget. It had highlighted its efforts to increase productivity, create jobs and improve the delivery of essential services when it had presented its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2017. He expressed gratitude towards the international partners who had helped Afghanistan along in its journey towards self-reliance and sustainable development, and looked forward to the ministerial conference on Afghanistan scheduled to be held in Geneva in November 2018.

14. Least developed and landlocked developing countries such as his own needed technical assistance, capacity-building and finance. Access to affordable, reliable and sustainable modern energy played a key role in structural transformation. Afghanistan was particularly committed to empowering women and promoting gender equality because of its multiplier effect on other development areas. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda constituted a great challenge to countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, including Afghanistan. The Committee should focus on

the nexus between peace and security and development as a matter of priority. Leaving no one behind would require a shift away from traditional ways of investing towards more targeted approaches.

15. **Mr. Rattray** (Jamaica) said that for well over two decades – from the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States to the 2005 Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States to the 2014 SAMOA Pathway – the international community had accorded recognition to small island developing States as a special case for sustainable development. The September 2019 midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway would mark an opportunity to assess the implementation of pledges and commitments by the United Nations system and other partners. The 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement all complemented national efforts to advance the development priorities of small island developing States.

16. Like other small island developing States, Jamaica was particularly susceptible to exogenous shocks. Natural hazards exacerbated the precarious fiscal situation it already faced through its designation as a middle-income country. Although disaster mortality had declined over the previous year, disaster economic losses had continued to rise. The 2017 Atlantic hurricane season had been particularly damaging for his region. Advances in disaster risk financing, including risk transfer arrangements, stand-by credit facilities and State-contingent debt instruments, should be expanded as part of a truly risk-informed approach to sustainable development that provided incentives to “build back better”. His Government was putting in place a comprehensive disaster risk finance strategy to safeguard investments against hidden liabilities that only became apparent when disaster struck. He was confident that public and private partnerships, both bilateral and international, would help to make that strategy a success.

17. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that the slow pace of development progress in sub-Saharan Africa was a source of particular concern. His Government had put in place a comprehensive accountability framework for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national strategies. It had established an inter-ministerial committee for implementation of the Goals and empowered a senior special assistant to the President to ensure horizontal and vertical coherence of development policies, plans

and strategies. A private sector advisory group and donors' forum had recently been inaugurated. The Nigerian Senate and House of Representatives each had a committee to oversee implementation of the Goals. The National Youth Service Corps had been mobilized to involve young graduates in the effort. Nigeria had aligned its national Economic Recovery and Growth Plan with the Goals. It had recently completed a data mapping exercise and was currently upscaling its conditional grants scheme to incentivize sub-national governments to accelerate progress on the Goals.

18. His delegation urged increased international cooperation to combat desertification, drought and other effects of climate change. In line with the Sendai Framework, Nigeria had established a National Emergency Management Agency and a flood early warning system. His Government had taken steps to implement the Paris Agreement and urged States Parties to ensure compliance on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities.

19. His delegation called for the creation of appropriate global partnership for development, balanced against the increased emphasis on domestic resource mobilization. Sustainable development efforts should also be supported by the elimination of safe havens for illicit financial flows.

20. *Mr. Remaoun (Algeria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

21. **Mr. Kafle** (Nepal), said that it was important to learn from the experience of implementing the outcomes of sustainable development conferences, including the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20), as well as the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. The time lag in implementing the 2030 Agenda had to be urgently addressed by redoubling collective efforts and ensuring coordination.

22. Urgent action was needed to reduce carbon emissions and render peoples' ways of life more sustainable by living in harmony with nature and preserving biological diversity and ecosystems. The natural connection between oceans and mountains could not be ignored. Natural disasters in the Himalayas such as avalanches, glacial lake outburst floods, torrents and landslides could affect millions of people and their livelihoods. In that regard, Nepal stressed the need to implement the Paris Agreement effectively and in synergy with the 2030 Agenda. In the light of the specific challenges faced by the least developed countries, there was a dire need to ensure the means of

implementation through reliable, predictable and sustainable resources. The neediest part of the global community, including landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, faced the most severe constraints. Nepal underlined the importance of clean and renewable energy and stood ready to harness its immense hydropower potential for the benefit of all.

23. In Nepal, efforts were underway to fully integrate the Goals into development plans and localize them. As a landlocked developing country, Nepal faced data-capacity-related and other constraints and vulnerability to disasters and climate change, as well as a large financing gap for fulfilling the Goals. The time had come for the international community to work together in the highest spirit of partnership.

24. **Ms. Engelbrecht Schadtler** (Venezuela) said that the global economic crisis, protectionism and restrictions on free trade, falling prices for export commodities, increasing environmental deterioration, and growing inequality and poverty were some of the barriers to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Resource mobilization was critical to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Venezuela supported balanced sustainable development policies and international cooperation and an enabling regional and international development environment to meet the needs of peoples of the South.

25. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, a global economic, social, cultural, environmental and political process was required. It should be geared towards constant improvement of the well-being of peoples based on their free, active and meaningful participation in the development process. The benefits of that process must be equitably distributed based on peoples' specific circumstances and sovereignty over their natural resources. Political will would be required, especially from the most developed countries, to implement the 2030 Agenda.

26. In setting national strategies and policies, it was essential to recognize the interdependence of the three pillars of sustainable development. The development model of Venezuela was people-centred and based on solidarity, justice, social inclusion, equality, promotion of human rights and citizen participation. Those values, which were inherent to peace and development, should serve as a guide in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

27. The effects of natural disasters were mainly concentrated in developing countries, especially among the poorest and most vulnerable sections of the population, whose living conditions were the result of a socioeconomic model that had not been in harmony with nature. Venezuela, with its status as a developing

country; its special geographic situation as an Amazon country, an Andean country and a Caribbean country; its diverse terrestrial and maritime ecosystems; and especially its great vulnerability to extreme natural phenomena, recognized that the State was ultimately responsible for development, natural disaster risk mitigation and response, but underlined the need for international solidarity in support of national efforts. In that regard, the people of Haiti and Indonesia could count on the solidarity and support of Venezuela for the victims of the recent devastating natural disasters.

28. **Mr. Moraru** (Moldova) expressed concern about the climate change-related extreme weather events that increasingly affected all countries and threatened the modest development gains attained thus far. Bolstered mitigation and adaptation efforts were needed to prevent and reduce vulnerabilities. It was imperative to ensure the implementation of the Paris Agreement. His Government hoped that the upcoming twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations Climate Change Conference) would marshal genuine action to prevent catastrophic climate-related consequences.

29. Earlier in 2018, with the support of development partners, his Government had drafted a long-term sustainable development strategy entitled Moldova 2030, which built upon the 2030 Agenda and the Republic of Moldova – European Union Association Agreement. The strategy was people-centred and sought to stop degradation of the environment, develop robust human and social capital and a sustainable and inclusive economy and build effective institutions. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, his Government was pursuing important reforms aimed at ensuring the rule of law and good governance, creating a conducive environment for business development, fostering the application of modern technologies and implementing green economy projects.

30. The complexity and resources needed to achieve the Goals required increased international cooperation and strengthened global partnerships to mobilize the required mix of resources. It was encouraging that multilateral development banks and international financial institutions had stepped up their efforts to support the 2030 Agenda. The knowledge and resources of the private sector were critical to achieving the Goals and, particularly, the targets related to energy, industry, innovation and infrastructure and climate change resilience. The United Nations would have to play an enhanced role in supporting Member States in pursuing the sustainable development path; his delegation hoped that the current reforms would enhance the

Organization's capacity to deliver the much-needed assistance and results at the national, regional and global levels.

31. **Mr. Rahmanto** (Indonesia) said that multilateral commitments must be implemented; to that end, it was of key importance to enhance international partnership and cooperation and focus on action-oriented steps and measures to make concrete changes on the ground. As part of its endeavours towards sustainable marine protection, addressing climate change and marine pollution and promoting the sustainable blue economy, Indonesia would host the fifth Our Ocean Conference and, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), co-host the Archipelagic and Island States Forum in November 2018.

32. The international community must channel and scale up the means of implementation, including financing, capacity-building and the technology needed for sustainable development, emphasizing innovation. In conjunction with UNDP, his Government had developed zakat and waqf as solidarity-based Islamic financing, with a view to broadening financing sources. Within the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation, Indonesia had conducted more than 500 programmes on issues including poverty eradication, disaster risk management and economic and good governance.

33. With regard to technology, Indonesia believed that the creative economy and creative industries played a significant role in enhancing economic growth, particularly in developing countries. Along with Australia, Mexico, the Republic of Korea and Turkey (MIKTA) and United Nations agencies, his country had explored the potential of harnessing the creative economy to achieve the Goals during the General Assembly's high-level session; that discussion had established a solid foundation for the first World Conference on Creative Economy in Bali in November 2018.

34. As the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia and recent disasters in the Caribbean region had proven, sustainable development was not always a linear process. His Government deeply appreciated the international community's sympathy and assistance and called for continued efforts to establish resilient societies and human settlements. The international community must reaffirm and implement its commitment to multilateralism because failure to achieve sustainable development would have severe consequences for the most vulnerable and for future generations.



35. **Ms. Simonyan** (Armenia) said that her Government welcomed the efforts to seek synergies and align the work programmes and priorities of the United Nations development system with the Goals, and to enhance coordination. Forging effective partnerships and networks should be an important driver of impact as the international community embarked on the next stage of development cooperation with a new generation of United Nations country teams.

36. Armenia had set up a national platform to support the accelerated fulfilment of the Goals, promote public sector innovation and leverage private capital through impact investment. The rapid nationalization of the Goals in her country was complemented by an ambitious reform agenda and the work of the Armenia SDG National Innovation Lab.

37. Regional and international partnerships remained ever-important, and middle-income countries required continued attention from international financial institutions and the United Nations development system. As a landlocked developing country, Armenia emphasized the importance of accessible and unimpeded transport and transit corridors, and the inadmissibility of unilateral coercive measures, imposition of blockades and closure of borders, that added to the existing infrastructure deficit.

38. Her country faced the vulnerabilities of a mountainous terrain and ecosystems. In defining climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, it was guided by the principles of the green economy, with a special focus on the most vulnerable sectors of the economy, and was working with its development partners on climate-smart technologies. In 2017, it had adopted a national disaster risk reduction strategy, translating the commitments made under the Sendai Framework and the relevant Goals into tangible measures. Her country, which had hosted the 2018 Sub-Regional Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, was ready to provide a platform for regional dialogue and contribute to exchange and cooperation on better integrating disaster risk reduction into development policies.

39. Sustainable development was an evolving process, and there remained considerable challenges to improving the effectiveness of development cooperation. In July 2018, Armenia had presented its first voluntary national review, highlighting the added value of partnerships for innovation, creative education and collaboration between the Government, civil society and the private sector in advancing “smart development”.

40. **Mr. Bilan** (Ukraine) said that his country was struggling to build stability and security; in spite of

external aggression, it was fully committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and had embarked on the process of localizing them and tailoring them to the national context. National consultations had involved approximately 500 participants from government institutions, United Nations agencies, academia, civil society and think-tanks. The resulting report, entitled “Sustainable Development Goals: Ukraine”, would serve as a tool for mainstreaming the Goals into national development frameworks.

41. His Government welcomed the Organization’s initiatives towards halving global hunger. Ukraine knew the price of hunger; in November 2018, it would once again commemorate the anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933. Currently, when over 850 million people around the world were starving, his Government was ready to offer assistance in addressing the global issue of food insecurity.

42. Two years earlier, his Government had reached an important benchmark by completing the United Nations Action Plan on Chornobyl and the Decade of the Recovery and Development of Chornobyl-affected regions. However, a continuous effort was needed to keep the issue of post-Chornobyl recovery high on the international agenda. His Government was fully committed to its obligations under the Paris Agreement, and had been the first European country to ratify the Agreement. It had achieved improvements in the maternal health system and progress on combating tuberculosis and reducing HIV incidence rates.

43. Ukraine was convinced that no country could achieve sustainable development without sustainable peace and security. Given its people’s first-hand knowledge of armed conflict, his Government called for combining all the Sustainable Development Goals with the goals of bringing peaceful resolutions to conflicts. Constructive multi-stakeholder dialogue could facilitate the broadest possible cooperation to ensure consideration of the emerging sustainable development challenges and guarantee the most appropriate, mutually beneficial way of addressing them.

44. **Ms. Ortez** (Honduras) said that implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda required a firm commitment from the entire international community. While official development assistance (ODA) was important to the achievement of the Goals and to maintaining financing for developing countries, new and enhanced financial resources would be required to fulfil the ambition of leaving no one behind. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018* highlighted progress made in many areas of the 2030

Agenda, but also showed that in some areas, progress was insufficient to achieve the Goals. Responsible management of finite natural resources and access to basic services was not only a fundamental human right but also an essential step on the road to sustainable development.

45. Climate change was a complex challenge due to its global causes and consequences and asymmetrical regional impacts. Although often, developing countries had least contributed to global warming, they frequently bore the greatest burden of the effects of climate change even as they attempted to overcome poverty and promote economic growth. Climate change was multiplying vulnerabilities, eroding progress and gravely harming future development.

46. Historically, Central America had been struck by cyclical drought in the so-called dry corridor. Climate change and weather events had worsened that situation, depleting the land and causing other problems. Without mitigation and adaptation measures, natural resources, quality of life and the economy would be critically affected, placing efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at serious risk. For Honduras, climate change was a matter of survival; a robust legal framework had therefore been created to address it, including legislation on the environment, water, forests, protected areas and wildlife. Climate financing was a priority; additional resources must be provided without replacing or diverting funds from other important economic and social development objectives.

47. **Mr. Xu Zhongsheng** (China) said that the international community must accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by intensifying its efforts and helping developing countries eradicate poverty and hunger, thereby enhancing living standards, further narrowing the development gap between the North and South, unlocking the potential for global economic growth and fostering universal development and prosperity. The collective efforts of all countries were needed to implement the 2030 Agenda and integrate it into national development strategies, ensuring balanced economic, social and environmental development and the prioritization of the issues of poverty reduction, health and education, among others. The international community should strengthen development partnerships and build a cooperation paradigm with the United Nations at its core, North-South cooperation as the main channel and South-South cooperation as the supplement. Developed countries should conscientiously fulfil their ODA commitments and help developing countries enhance their own development capacities. The international community should support the Organization in playing a greater role

in implementing the 2030 Agenda, strengthening its functions in policy guidance and overall coordination and guiding the relevant international organizations and all multilateral mechanisms to take stronger measures and achieve greater synergy in international development cooperation.

48. China had been among the first countries to issue a country programme and a progress report on the 2030 Agenda, and was advancing an integrated five-element strategy focused on quality economic development, which aimed to lift all rural populations out of poverty by 2020. Hosting the G20 Hangzhou Summit, the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, the BRICS Leaders Meeting in Xiamen and the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation had served as opportunities for his Government to work with all parties on placing the issue of development at the centre of the global macroeconomic policy framework. Through South-South cooperation and the joint Belt and Road Initiative, China also actively and constructively supported developing countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda. As an active participant in and promoter of global development, China would fully implement the strategic plan of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and uphold innovation, coordinated development, a green and open economy and shared benefits; it would integrate work on the Belt and Road Initiative with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, thus creating a better life for the Chinese people and making a greater contribution to fostering a community of shared destiny.

49. **Ms. Alhosani** (United Arab Emirates) said that her country's Vision 2021 was in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The Masdar City project in Abu Dhabi was a model for sustainability and clean energy. In 2017, the United Arab Emirates Cabinet had established a National Sustainable Development Goals Committee, which had undertaken initiatives to involve the private sector in development. The Dubai Cares programme had contributed to international implementation of Goal 6 on clean water and sanitation with projects in schools in a number of African countries. The United Arab Emirates Food Bank had been established to help achieve Goal 2 on zero hunger.

50. Her Government had presented its first voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in July 2018. Alongside its Vision 2021 strategy, her country's Centennial 2071 plan and Energy Strategy 2050 looked forward to a post-oil future. In January of each year, the United Arab Emirates celebrated Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week to promote sustainable development around the world. She urged the



international community to continue efforts to achieve Goal 7 on affordable and clean energy.

51. **Ms. Ellertsdottir** (Iceland) said that her Government firmly supported the inclusive and bottom-up approach to development of the 2030 Agenda, with strong ownership and participation of the private sector, civil society and young people. In its development cooperation, her country focused on human rights and gender equality, social infrastructure, peacebuilding and the sustainable management of natural resources, and took part in projects where it had specific know-how to share. Her Government welcomed the continued focus on inequality in the Commission for Social Development and believed that the Commission could contribute immensely to fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal 10.

52. Climate change was rapidly becoming the most serious obstacle to global peace, security and development. Her Government had recently established an ambitious new climate strategy to meet its 2030 Paris Agreement targets and make Iceland carbon-neutral by 2040. Already, all electricity and heating was produced using renewable resources. Her country's plan was to phase out fossil fuels in transport and increase afforestation and the restoration of wetlands.

53. Iceland had started transitioning to green energy decades earlier and continued to assist other countries in that regard. It cooperated with the Nordic Development Fund and the World Bank on researching geothermal exploitation in East Africa. It also cooperated with Sustainable Energy for All. Given the increased competitiveness of renewable energy, the international community must strive towards universal access to modern energy services.

54. Sustainable use of marine resources through successful science-based management remained a clear focus in Iceland's foreign policy. To that end, Iceland collaborated with many partners, including the World Bank, on the Global Program on Fisheries (PROFISH). Land restoration was another priority for her country, which had historically lost vast swaths of land to erosion. Her Government was a co-chair of the Group of Friends on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought. Achieving land degradation neutrality would accelerate progress on many of the Sustainable Development Goals by contributing to ending poverty and ensuring food security, helping ensure a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy supply and empowering women and girls. The connection between those efforts and current security threats such as climate change and forced migration was clear and merited serious consideration.

55. Gender equality was key to unlocking sustainable development in all countries. Iceland increasingly stressed women's empowerment in its development policy and also emphasized engaging men and boys, given that the international community had to stand together for gender equality.

56. **Mr. Alami** (Morocco) said that in recent decades his Government had undertaken a process to integrate the principles of sustainable development in its development strategies at all levels, and had created a State Secretariat for Sustainable Development. The 2011 Moroccan Constitution enshrined the right to sustainable development, and specifically to water. In 2017, Morocco had adopted a National Strategy for Sustainable Development, which envisaged an accelerated transition to a green and inclusive economy; it had put in place a number of follow-up, assessment and prevention mechanisms, and was ensuring that an environmental dimension was integrated into development projects. It had also developed a system for regional information on the environment and development as an aid to decision-making.

57. Great progress had been made in the areas of household waste disposal and wastewater recycling. Some three quarters of the population were connected to the sewage grid. Morocco was also committed to fighting air pollution and had put in place a number of measures to reduce damaging industrial and automobile emissions, including a national air quality monitoring network. As part of its commitment to South-South cooperation, Morocco had signed a number of agreements with other African countries in the areas of waste management, environmental monitoring, climate change, biodiversity, environmental education and integrated coastal zone management.

58. **Ms. Cordova Soria** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets would not be achieved unless urgent action was taken to combat the climate crisis. The IPCC special report had demonstrated that the world was approaching a critical point of no return. The Paris Agreement was inadequate to address that threat, especially if it was abandoned by the major emitters of greenhouse gases.

59. Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production had severely impaired the planet's regenerative capacity and ability to function. Climate change and natural disasters, which unfortunately affected the poorest most of all, were some of the many symptoms of the imbalance between humanity and nature. A development model in harmony with nature must therefore be established in which human beings

were no longer seen as the owners of natural resources but rather as part of a complex and delicately balanced shared environment.

60. In line with that vision, her Government was implementing the 2025 Patriotic Agenda, which aimed to eradicate extreme poverty, universalize basic services and promote national sovereignty in a number of key areas, including science and technology.

61. While great strides had been made to fulfil the goals of *buen vivir* (living well), the only way to promote sustainable development and a fair equilibrium between the economic, social and environmental needs of current and future generations was to establish policies, strategies and mechanisms that led to a lifestyle in harmony with nature.

62. **Mr. Amde** (Ethiopia) said that sustainable development could no longer be considered in isolation from other factors, most notably climate change. The IPCC special report highlighted the urgent need for action. His country's Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy envisioned a carbon-neutral economy by 2025; that strategy, with a particular emphasis on agriculture, forestry, energy, transport and urban development, was being implemented through integration in the national development plan.

63. As the coordinator of climate change negotiations on behalf of the least developed countries, Ethiopia would continue to promote concerted global action to implement the Paris Agreement. His delegation strongly agreed with the Secretary-General's emphasis on integrating disaster risk response into long-term development programmes. Coherence between development and disaster risk reduction would help to create resilience. He stressed the importance of United Nations support to least developed countries for implementation of the Sendai Framework. His country had been working with development partners to implement its national disaster risk management policy and strategy.

64. His delegation also concurred with the recommendation of the report of the Secretary-General on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (A/73/267) that financing and capacity-building should be provided to least developed countries for the development of energy infrastructure. His country had ample renewable energy resources, and was investing in energy infrastructure with a view to both meeting domestic demand and becoming a regional energy hub. Enhancing global partnerships and engaging the private sector would be indispensable for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7.

65. **Mr. Bokoum** (Burkina Faso) said that in line with its international commitments to sustainable development, his Government had launched a number of initiatives in such areas as sustainable consumption and production, environmental and natural resource monitoring, information and communications technologies, and subregional energy cooperation. Burkina Faso would be highlighting its achievements when it presented its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2019.

66. Among the challenges his Government was continuing to address were achieving inclusive economic growth and encouraging innovation; guaranteeing decent employment, ensuring access to basic services and affordable energy, empowering women and girls and promoting gender equality; and preserving and restoring ecosystems, promoting environmental governance and ensuring environmental sustainability. Cross-cutting challenges included developing planning tools for better management of the territory, promoting the rule of law, democracy and good governance and ensuring peace and security throughout the national territory. His Government would need the support of all its technical and financial partners to meet those various challenges.

67. **Ms. Muchiri** (Kenya) called on States to honour their climate change commitments under the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda. Her Government was implementing a national action programme to combat desertification, which had caused a significant reduction in the amount of arable land. In August 2017, it had introduced a ban on plastics, which had had an 86 per cent success rate in the use of alternative packaging materials. Her delegation believed that the outcomes of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held in Nairobi in March 2019, should include provisions for technical capacity-building and development and financial support and innovative partnerships, in order to enhance the efforts of African countries to formulate and implement policies, legislation and programmes that promoted innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

68. Her delegation welcomed the Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Well-Being. A diversity of ecological zones and habitats contributed to her country's economy over a wide range of sectors, from food production to energy to tourism. She called for implementation of the decisions of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and stressed the need for more technical and human resources to support capacity-building for developing

countries. She also reiterated the importance of mainstreaming the socioeconomic impacts and benefits of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

69. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan) said that the voluntary national reviews presented to the high-level political forum had demonstrated that progress was being made at both the national and international levels. However, the international environment appeared to be becoming less enabling. The previous few years had seen an erosion of international partnerships, restrictions on financial resources and a waning of global political will. Her country had mainstreamed the 2030 Agenda into its national development policy, and would be presenting its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2019.

70. No country could escape the impact of climate change, but developing countries such as her own, despite having minimal carbon footprints, were among the most vulnerable. Pakistan affirmed its commitments as a signatory to the Paris Agreement and hoped that the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference and the Climate Summit scheduled for 2019 would revitalize the political will to address climate change and renew the commitments of the developed countries to meeting their financial obligations. Her country also looked forward to participating in regional and global sustainable energy projects. The Sustainable Development Goals could only be realized if all actors played their parts.

71. **Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique) said that his delegation was concerned about the high economic losses from disasters as documented in the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (A/73/268). His country averaged more than one disaster a year and had been ranked third among African countries most exposed to multiple weather-related hazards. It had adopted a proactive approach to disaster risk management to reduce exposure of local communities, the economy and infrastructure to natural disasters. With the approval of its master plan for disaster risk reduction for the 2017-2030 period, Mozambique had joined the other African countries that had disaster risk reduction frameworks aligned with the Sendai Framework. That master plan focused on improving understanding of disaster risk at all levels, strengthening governance and public and private participation in disaster risk reduction, consolidating public investment, territorial planning and financial protection against disaster, strengthening early warning, response and recovery capacities, and establishing partnerships and international cooperation.

72. His delegation welcomed the Sendai Framework Monitor online system, which had been unveiled by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2018 and for which his country's National Institute of Disaster Management had already conducted training. He called on all bilateral and multilateral partners and stakeholders to enhance partnership and means of implementation to support developing countries in coping with disaster risk.

73. **Ms. Pobee** (Ghana) said that her delegation affirmed the continuing relevance of Agenda 21 and the need for multilateral approaches and solutions to cross-border environmental, social and economic challenges, rooted in the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly poverty eradication, ending hunger, achieving food security, and enhancing education and health care should be given urgent attention, drawing on the valuable lessons learned. In many African countries, rural-urban disparities persisted, as well as gender inequality. In Ghana, one of the key drivers of poverty in deprived areas was disaster vulnerability. Middle-income countries faced specific challenges. Ghana believed that the full extent of disaster risk and losses needed to be better assessed through disaggregated data.

74. Her delegation joined calls for support for the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, and hoped that the future strategic framework adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification would help drive implementation of the Convention forward through the development of innovative partnerships. Urgent action was also needed to address unsustainable levels of pollution, particularly in the oceans. Ghana reaffirmed its commitments under the Paris Agreement and looked forward to the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference. It joined calls for enhanced means of implementation and international cooperation, including South-South cooperation and global partnerships, in promoting technologies to reduce resource consumption, pollution and emissions and enhance material efficiency.

75. **Mr. Fox-Drummond Gough** (Brazil) said that the international community must accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda both domestically and at the international level. His Government had mainstreamed the Goals and targets into its policy-making process, ensuring that it remained on track to fulfil the Agenda. At the international level, his Government viewed the Agenda as a roadmap towards economic development that incorporated social justice and respect for the environment. The Organization's

work towards sustainable development was based largely on principles, processes and regimes which had a deep connection to Brazil and included the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the three Rio Conventions adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the processes launched at the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development. His country believed that sustainable development for all was not possible without strong multilateral commitment and cooperation, and would continue to work constructively with other developing countries and partners for development with a view to full realization of the Goals.

76. As the deadline for the Paris Agreement work programme approached, climate change negotiations had reached a critical juncture. The IPCC special report sent an unequivocal message regarding the urgency of the challenge, and the international community must react accordingly. Brazil favoured a broad and structured discussion on the items under the sustainable development cluster so as to better contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

77. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that the IPCC special report had signaled that the planet was in grave danger and that the immediate consequences of climate change would be far worse than expected. Unprecedented efforts would be required to achieve the targets of the Paris Agreement.

78. Peru was particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which included dwindling tropical Andean glaciers, sudden ocean warming, water scarcity and significant biodiversity loss; recurrent natural disasters directly affected millions of Peruvians and hindered efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In that context, Peru had enacted a framework law on climate change in 2018 to combat its adverse effects, reduce vulnerability and spur low-emissions development. The law also promoted environmental education, gender equality, and human rights through an intergenerational, cross-cultural focus. Peru acknowledged that women, indigenous peoples, youth, civil society and the private sector were key actors in the creation of environmental policy, and had formulated a gender and climate change action plan.

79. Peru had set targets under the Paris Agreement that were ambitious for a developing country. International cooperation would be essential to help developing countries implement the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework. In 2017, Peru had faced disasters caused by the coastal El Niño phenomenon that had injured many people and caused significant property loss. Technology transfer and

capacity-building for prevention and resilience in the face of climate events must be a political priority that was woven into actions taken for sustainable development. As disaster risk management was essential for sustainable development, Peru had made it mandatory in its national policies.

80. The link between water, disaster risk and climate change was undeniable, and water was central to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In that context, it was vital to meet water-related challenges in an integrated, multilateral and coordinated manner. Support from the United Nations was essential to face those challenges in a spirit of shared responsibility to care for the planet, value resources and use them appropriately in harmony with nature.

81. **Mr. Luchoomun** (Mauritius) said that, for a small island developing State like Mauritius, the issue of sustainable development was of key importance. Mauritius, one of the 10 most densely populated countries, was not endowed with natural resources and was further threatened by climate-related disasters and global warming, isolation from major markets, its status as a middle-income country, an ageing population, and other related difficulties.

82. Although the mid-term review of the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway was approaching, the problems identified by the Barbados Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy had not yet been fully addressed. Many small island developing States which had graduated from the least developed country status were faced with new challenges, including the emergence of non-communicable diseases, indebtedness, lack of access to concessional funding and a lack of capacity to build resilience. Meanwhile, the initial challenges brought on by the effects of global warming and climate change had persisted, further aggravating their plight.

83. Meanwhile, support was insufficient, not only at the country level, but also for the SIDS Units of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and OHRLLS. His Government called for increased funding for those Units to enable them to assist small island developing States in addressing such challenges as climate change and disaster risk reduction, developing ocean-based economic activities and the renewable energy sector, transfer of technology and innovation and attracting private sector investment. The successful implementation of the SAMOA Pathway would significantly assist small island developing States like Mauritius in implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the Goals.

84. **Ms. Ahmadi** (Bahrain) said that her country had launched numerous initiatives to promote sustainable development. It had just presented its first voluntary national review to 2018 session of the high-level political forum, in the course of which it had outlined the challenges it faced as a small island developing State. Bahrain had incorporated many of the Sustainable Development Goals into its Constitution, its National Action Charter and its Economic Vision 2030. It had also signed a number of recent agreements with United Nations agencies.

85. Climate change posed a particular challenge. Development was also threatened by terrorism. In cooperation with UNDP, Bahrain had launched a sustainable energy project with the aim of diversifying energy sources and promoting renewable energy. Her country's first solar panel factory had opened in 2017.

86. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia) said that since 2013, over 100 countries, including his own, had established targets to achieve land degradation neutrality in line with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and were actively undertaking measures to prevent and reverse that phenomenon. Another pillar of the Convention was drought mitigation, which was a key element in the Namib Declaration on a Stronger United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification for a Land-Degradation-Neutral World.

87. Land degradation disproportionately affected the countries with the hungriest, unhealthiest and poorest populations, with the exception of those that had access to minerals. Women and children often bore the brunt of land degradation. Namibia welcomed the launch of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, and the fact that it was built on the public-private partnership model, and called for Member States to be fully informed about the procedures for investing in that fund.

88. The phenomena of sand and dust storms must be addressed. Namibia welcomed the inclusion of a strategic objective on drought in the new strategy adopted at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The international community must shift its focus from drought relief to strengthening drought resilience, preparedness and early warning.

89. His Government had established a National Policy on Climate Change and a National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2020, which outlined national adaptation and mitigation strategies. Along with international initiatives, those strategies were aimed at enhancing resilience to drought and achieving land degradation neutrality and climate change adaptation in rural areas.

90. His Government believed that it was necessary to ensure that environmentally-related technologies and systems took root in individual countries in a way that suited their social and economic situations. In addition, it highlighted the need for more investment in climate-smart agriculture production methods and diversification of the resource base of vulnerable communities by supporting investment in non-timber forest products, developing the tourism sector and farming with better adapted animals that consumed less water. In the light of the projected upsurge in the global population by 2050, the international community would not be able to end poverty and hunger unless it prevented land degradation and restored degraded land. For that reason, Namibia continued to pursue initiatives to combat desertification by means of empowering its local communities, particularly women, in close partnership with the private sector. To strengthen those measures, his Government was currently exploring ways to extend the African Union's Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative to Namibia and southern Africa.

91. **Ms. Moldisaeva** (Kyrgyzstan) said that in its efforts to fulfil the 2030 Agenda at the national level, her Government accorded priority to ensuring the prosperity and well-being of every citizen. However, unless decisive steps were taken in the area of environmental protection – a priority for Central Asia – it would be impossible to ensure comprehensive sustainable development. The remaining radioactive waste sites, the so-called uranium tailing dumps, left behind after the collapse of the Soviet Union posed a host of challenges to Central Asian States, including deteriorating storage of radioactive waste, and a heightened risk of accidents. There was a real threat of all of Central Asia's groundwater and river basin becoming contaminated, which would have enormous consequences not only for millions of people and the environment, but also for the region's entire sustainable development process.

92. Kyrgyzstan, along with other Central Asian countries, was actively endeavouring to avert the radioactive threat posed by uranium tailing dumps. The adoption of General Assembly resolution [68/218](#) on the role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia had enabled significant progress in restoring closed uranium deposits and studying their effect on their environment, and also given international organizations and donor countries an incentive to initiate and carry out various projects and programmes. In particular, with the assistance of the Eurasian Development Bank, studies were being carried out to assess environmental impact and a funding

mechanism had been created. Moreover, her Government had developed a strategic master plan in close cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

93. In the past five years, those programmes helped increase the safety levels of former uranium mining sites in Central Asia and, above all, of uranium tailing dumps. Despite the success achieved it would only be possible to resolve key issues related to the region's uranium legacy with the continued targeted and coordinated assistance from the international community. Her Government hoped that increased attention from the Organization, IAEA and the international community on that issue would help prevent environmental risks and the risk of the outbreak of a humanitarian crisis, ensure the sustainable development of Central Asian countries and prevent radioactive waste from being used for terrorist and extremist purposes.

94. **Mr. Rakhmetov** (Kazakhstan) said that achieving the Goals required assessing the needs, interests and priority areas across borders and bridging capacity gaps to reach the targets of the 2030 Agenda. The first few years of implementation of the Agenda had demonstrated the need for multilateral action. Kazakhstan had aligned its domestic development agenda with the Goals and with global priorities. The country's 2050 development strategy stipulated a cross-sectoral and universal approach to economic, social and environmental issues. The entirety of his Government's strategic documents and the tasks set out in President Nazarbayev's annual addresses corresponded to the Goals, the attainment of which would allow Kazakhstan to join the world's 30 most developed countries by 2050.

95. Kazakhstan had established several regional and global hubs for promoting dialogue on sustainable development issues and had hosted a number of international conferences on related issues. The time was ripe for Member States to harness the momentum of regional dynamics and enhance regional cooperation in such areas as climate change and social tension, including extreme violence, and complex cross-border water issues. His delegation stressed the importance of adopting a regional approach, developing a region-wide strategy for sustainable development and tackling challenges that could fuel economic disparities and poverty. It believed that priority should be accorded to adapting regional strategic planning and monitoring systems to global standards, strengthening human potential, attracting overseas technologies, expertise and capacity building, and making developing countries more attractive for investment, given major international corporations' focus on socially responsible business models. While Kazakhstan welcomed the

Secretary-General's resolve to prioritize preventive diplomacy and the Goals in the Organization's work, it believed that additional measures were needed to enhance coordination and synergy in the agencies and programmes on the ground.

96. **Mr. Kai-Kai** (Sierra Leone) said that, on assuming office, President Bio had committed himself and his Government to a New Direction agenda aligned with the Goals that prioritized education, justice, peace and security, control of corruption and illicit financial flows, agriculture and health, in order to place the furthest behind first. Sierra Leone was pursuing an Education for Development Agenda, which prioritized free primary and secondary education with a focus on girls' and women's empowerment to address the development needs of current and future generations on the basis of a sound public service delivery mechanism underpinned by political will, leadership and zero tolerance for corruption.

97. In 2017, over 1,000 people in Sierra Leone had lost their lives in a mudslide and flood caused by excessive torrential rains. There was an urgent need to take action to reduce existing risks and mitigate the occurrence of new ones; the Sendai Framework must be fully implemented. Resource mobilization, capacity-building, technology transfer and partnerships were important to achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. In that regard, Member States must honour commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement; his delegation hoped that the report of the 2019 Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development would offer actionable recommendations.

98. It was clear that, without access to energy, developing countries such as Sierra Leone would not be able to achieve the Goals by 2030. To achieve goal 7, urgent action was needed from all stakeholders, including international financial institutions, the United Nations system, regional organizations and national governments to ensure the necessary financial resources and an enabling environment for energy investment. Sierra Leone intended to engage constructively with all partners to ensure the achievement of sustainable development for all.

99. **Ms. Sarvestani** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that capacity-building for developing countries through exchange of experience, know-how and best practices, and technology transfer, without discrimination or politicization, should receive priority attention given the difficulties faced by those countries in fully implementing their sustainable development plans, including realization of the right to development. It was important to focus on the different needs and special

circumstances of developing countries, as well as the accountability of major actors in the international economic and financial system. Unilateralism and the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact on developing countries not only undermined the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, but also adversely affected the implementation of the Goals, which could not be achieved without regard for multilateralism as a framework for cooperation.

100. Iran had made great strides in overcoming its development challenges, including through such legally binding documents as Iran Vision 2025 and the Sixth National Development Plan. Its national priorities included such issues as poverty eradication, sustainable management of water and sanitation, renewable energy resources, improving energy efficiency, combating climate change, desertification, deforestation and dust storms, disaster risk management and empowering women and girls. Its current energy policies focused on increasing capacity in the power sector, using modern gas-powered plants and renewable energy, maintaining production capacity and network resilience while taking into account environmental concerns and climate commitments, involving the private sector in the construction of power plants and achieving higher efficiency in the production, transfer and use of electricity.

101. As a natural-disaster-prone country, Iran had developed an internationally recognized and effective national and local disaster preparedness and response capacity. However, those areas would continue to require long-term and extensive cooperation, especially at the regional and international levels. Her Government recognized the key role played by the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, of which it served as a host country.

102. Sand and dust storms were among the most pressing environmental issues faced by Iran. In recent years, chronic drought and unsustainable land and water management, coupled with political destabilization, had created a situation where sand and dust storms had become more frequent and severe and required urgent action at the local, regional and global levels. In that regard, her Government welcomed the 2018 high-level interactive dialogue on sand and dust storms.

103. **Mr. Tavares** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), referring to the IPCC special report, said that the window for curbing global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius was closing and success depended on a collaborative and intensified effort. Sustainable agriculture had a critical role to play. In that

regard, FAO welcomed the Koronivia decision of the twenty-third Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which recognized agriculture as part of the solution to the problem.

104. The international community must identify, create and invest in synergies, implementing a range of actions that included recovering degraded land, tackling deforestation, promoting reforestation, embracing low-carbon agricultural and food production approaches and changing consumption patterns. Adapting agriculture to climate change must be closely linked with mitigating greenhouse gas emissions as the international community transitioned to more resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems. Those efforts were of critical importance to poor rural communities, given that approximately 75 per cent of the world's poor resided in rural areas and were particularly hard hit by natural disasters and extreme events. The recorded number of natural disasters in developing countries had almost doubled in the past 40 years, which had a staggering impact on rural livelihoods and agriculture.

105. Effective disaster risk reduction was essential, and evidence showed that it worked. A preliminary 2017 impact assessment had revealed that early response to droughts had helped save lives and livelihoods and had reduced the costs of humanitarian response and dependency on food assistance.

106. Recognizing that small island developing States were particularly threatened by natural disasters and climate change, FAO, in conjunction with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and OHRLLS, had launched the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States. Under an inter-regional initiative, FAO and its partners had developed frameworks to implement that Programme in small island developing States situated in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. The framework for Caribbean medium-term development was also being implemented, and FAO called on partners to support those efforts.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*