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Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales (Guatemala)
later: Mr. Braquetti (Vice-Chair) (Monaco)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 24: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (A/73/274 and A/73/274/Corr.1)

(a) Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) (A/73/298)

(b) Industrial development cooperation (A/73/121)

1. **Ms. Bas** (Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) (A/73/298), said that the report presented an inter-agency, system-wide plan of action for poverty eradication to coordinate the efforts of the United Nations system. According to the report, while remarkable economic growth across developing countries since 2000 had helped to reduce poverty and improve living standards, with strides also made in the areas of job creation, gender equality, education, health care, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, poverty rates nevertheless remained very high in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, in developing countries elsewhere and in pockets of developed nations.

2. The report highlighted the importance of a variety of initiatives, such as capacity-building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, accelerating global actions towards decent work for all, promoting structural transformation through industrialization and implementing social protection floors based on national priorities. It also highlighted the importance of promoting durable solutions for and inclusion of displaced populations, accelerating actions to combat climate change and its impacts, and mobilizing domestic resources, especially in the context of tax reform, good governance and creating an enabling environment for investment. In addition, the report noted that greater efforts were required to tackle illicit financial flows, tax evasion and money-laundering.

3. Since poverty was multidimensional, there was a need for integrated financial policies and sustained, inclusive economic growth that narrowed inequalities, while respecting internationally-recognized human rights. The United Nations should provide support to nationally-owned strategies, focusing on integrated system-wide action to address emerging trends. For their part, Member States should honour their official development assistance (ODA) commitments and step up their debt relief efforts. Moreover, foreign direct investment should be encouraged in sectors that boosted

inclusive growth and employment creation. Adequate national policies to combat poverty at all levels would make United Nations system support most impactful.

4. Lastly, the United Nations was focusing on how the impact of the new wave of technologies would shape labour markets and income distribution at the national and local levels, and how the most vulnerable were affected by and could benefit from rapid technological developments and interconnectivity.

5. **Ms. Linke-Heep** (Deputy Representative, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)), introducing the report of the Director General of UNIDO (A/73/121), said that the report outlined opportunities and challenges related to the new industrial revolution, and addressed the repositioning of the United Nations development system as an opportunity to ensure that adequate support was provided to countries in all dimensions of sustainable development.

6. The report noted that rapid industrialization had lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty over the past decades by providing them with jobs and incomes, and that world manufacturing value added had reached an all-time high of \$12.8 billion in 2017. The rise in global manufacturing was creating more wealth and opportunities, generating employment and preventing households from falling into poverty. However, manufacturing output had been distributed unevenly among nations; for example, emerging economies and industrialized nations accounted for over 90 per cent of global manufacturing value added, compared to only 1 per cent for least developed countries, and the least developed countries in Asia had much higher growth rates than those in sub-Saharan Africa.

7. Premature deindustrialization in Africa was a cause for concern, including in the context of the potential impact of high unemployment rates on social and political stability. Such uneven gains warranted the utmost attention of policymakers and international development partners. Effective policy interventions, financial support and targeted investment programmes were required to reduce inequality among nations and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. Turning to international trade concerns, world exports of merchandise trade had decreased in recent years, including manufactured goods, and global manufacturing was likely to be negatively affected by the recent drastic changes to established trade arrangements.

9. The report also highlighted the key importance of inclusive and sustainable industrial development in poverty eradication efforts. The new industrial revolution was a critical trend for the future, and the interconnection and integration of the digital and real worlds, even across great distances, was likely to transform industries and the way manufacturers, economic sectors and even countries integrated within global value chains in the near future. It was also likely to increase resource efficiency and further the transition to a circular economy, leading to more sustainable production and consumption patterns. However, the new industrial revolution also possessed disruptive potential as far employment was concerned, since technological progress could further widen inequalities within and between countries, leaving the marginalized and vulnerable further behind.

10. In the absence of adequate normative and regulatory frameworks, and to ensure that social benefits were shared and destabilizing risks minimized, the United Nations and its specialized agencies must support Member States in the transition under way. That entailed identifying and prioritizing technologies; strengthening capacities; enhancing decision-making tools and information; assessing the feasibility of technology; supporting environments that enabled local governments to incorporate adaptation to new technologies; and increasing access to financing.

11. *Mr. Braquetti (Monaco), took the Chair.*

12. **Mr. Rahman** (Deputy Special Representative, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Liaison Office to the United Nations), introducing the report of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization on the promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection ([A/73/274](#) and [A/73/274/Corr.1](#)), said that tourism played an important role in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the three tourism-related targets under Goals 8, 12 and 14. The tourism sector contributed to accelerating the shift towards more sustainable consumption and production patterns; conserving, strengthening and mainstreaming biodiversity; promoting a strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation; and promoting inclusive development.

13. UNWTO had built up a portfolio of some 120 projects benefiting 45 countries since 2004. It had successfully expanded training activities to national tourism professionals and stakeholders, including through webinars and encouraging the digitalization of the tourism sector. Initiatives to further tourism and facilitate the exchange of experiences and knowledge

included the launch of the multi-stakeholder One Planet network, aimed at advancing Goal 12 through innovative circular economy solutions; the development of an online interactive knowledge platform on tourism for the Goals, created in collaboration with Switzerland; and the expansion of a network of sustainable tourism observatories, which currently had 22 members, including in Brazil, China, Croatia, Greece, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal and the United States of America, to foster holistic measurement approaches. Member States were encouraged to join those networks and platforms. Lastly, he drew attention to the initiative to establish a statistical framework for measuring sustainable tourism, launched in 2016 in cooperation with the Statistics Division of the United Nations.

14. **Ms. Emet** (Nigeria), noting the fact that poverty and inequality affected regions disproportionately according to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027), asked what technical or financial provisions were envisaged to help lift the people of sub-Saharan Africa, particularly women, out of poverty by 2030.

15. **Ms. Yang Wenyan** (Department of Economic and Social Affairs), responding to the representative of Nigeria, said that the United Nations system was committed to according priority attention to people living in poverty, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. In that context, she drew attention to the system-wide plan of action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027), which specifically addressed many of the challenges facing that region. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) was a key partner in developing that action plan, and all United Nations agencies would no doubt do their best to give priority to the people and countries left behind, as pledged in the 2030 Agenda.

16. **Mr. Gad** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that urgent action was needed to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication in the light of the alarming data from the report (para. 2 of [A/73/298](#)) that 783 million people still lived below the international poverty line. The international community and the United Nations development system must maintain poverty eradication as the highest priority and urgently adopt measures to tackle the root causes of poverty, including through integrated and coordinated strategies at all levels.

17. Developed countries should fully implement their ODA commitments and provide predictable financial resources and technical assistance to help support

developing countries' own poverty eradication efforts. More economic opportunities should also be provided for people living in poverty.

18. The United Nations, for its part, in consultation with the international financial institutions, should develop transparent measurements of progress on sustainable development that went beyond per capita income, building on existing initiatives, as appropriate. Such measurements should not only recognize the multidimensional nature of poverty but also the social, economic and environmental dimensions of domestic output and structural gaps at all levels.

19. Addressing inequality should be an integral part of any poverty eradication strategy since poverty and inequality were linked. The gap between rich and poor countries remained large and income inequality within most countries was rising.

20. Lastly, inclusive and sustainable industrial development was an essential part of a comprehensive strategy of structural economic transformation in eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and supporting sustained economic growth. In that context, industrial development cooperation, which was necessary for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, must be balanced and integrated, taking into account the three pillars of sustainable development.

21. **Mr. Ligoya** (Malawi), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that the multidimensional problems of poverty and hunger significantly hindered the human and social development of least developed countries. Progress towards eradicating extreme poverty had been drastically uneven, with more than half of the world's extreme poor living in least developed countries. Indeed, per capita economic growth in those nations was reported to be rising at levels insufficient to eradicate extreme poverty, and an estimated 35 per cent of the population in least developed countries would remain in extreme poverty by 2030. In addition, according to the special report on global warming of 1.5° C issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, poverty and disadvantages were expected to increase as global warming increased.

22. As the least developed countries had a longer road towards the aspiration of shared prosperity and faced complex and pervasive challenges, sustained and inclusive economic growth contributing to full employment and decent work was more vital than ever. Building productive capacity was key in that regard, but low levels of per capita income, domestic savings and investment, coupled with a small tax base, limited those

countries' domestic resource mobilization efforts. Hence, partnership in capacity-building and resource sharing were essential in order to leave no one behind.

23. Enhanced international support was vital, particularly by increasing ODA and ensuring duty-free and quota-free market access, full debt cancellation, investment support measures, technology transfer and capacity-building.

24. The proposed system-wide plan of action should focus on productive capacity-building, structural transformation, diversification, value addition and access to energy and frontier technologies, including renewable energy technologies, which could generate employment and decent work on a massive scale and were essential to meeting the challenges facing least developed countries.

25. Recent trends in industrial development presented both opportunities and challenges for the least developed countries. The global share of manufacturing in those countries had grown only slightly in recent years, with a decline in productivity as compared with industrialized economies.

26. Structural transformation required proactive, development-driven and technology-based industrial policy. That would, in turn, require collective efforts by the international community to enable least developed countries entering into the global development mainstream to take full advantage of frontier technologies and ultimately achieve their strategic objectives of enhancing domestic productive capacities and international competitiveness.

27. **Mr. Sun** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the Association had undertaken integrated and cross-sectoral efforts to address the development gap and was actively engaging with all relevant stakeholders, regionally and globally, to eradicating poverty and implement the 2030 Agenda. Relevant efforts included a master plan on ASEAN connectivity and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration, which had forged a closer social and economic relationship and facilitated trade and investment among ASEAN member States and beyond.

28. In the context of the ongoing implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the Association's economic integration was on track to establish an ASEAN single market and production base, which would help ASEAN to promote sustainable employment, improve living standards and eliminate poverty.

29. In the light of the link between rural development and poverty eradication, ASEAN had been

implementing a series of rural development and poverty eradication plans in order to narrow the development gap in the region and reach the furthest behind by 2030. In that context, member States had shared respective poverty eradication policies, experiences, best practices and challenges.

30. As poverty eradication required global commitments, developed countries must meet their internationally agreed ODA targets. Debt relief could also help to enhance the ability of developing countries to eradicate poverty, and international cooperation on financing, innovation and technology transfer was critical to that end. In addition, developed countries should open more markets for products of interest to developing countries, eliminate subsidies so as to level out the playing field and refrain from protectionist measures in order to foster favourable conditions for global trade.

31. Lastly, ASEAN had introduced rural development and poverty eradication leadership awards to recognize outstanding contributions in those areas in ASEAN member States by non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector.

32. **Ms. Coye-Felson** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that implementation of the system-wide plan of action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) should address the special case of small island developing States in line with the globally agreed small island developing States agenda for sustainable development, which comprised the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

33. Future reporting on implementation of the system-wide plan of action could include information on how the United Nations system had targeted small island developing States in the context of the above agenda. The Secretariat could also consider specific indicators to track progress on the eradication of poverty in all its forms. The biennial progress report on the plan of action could then include analysis of trends with disaggregated information specifically relating to small island developing States.

34. She drew attention to the San Pedro Declaration, which had emerged from the Caribbean small island developing States meeting held in Belize in August 2018, in preparation for the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, which reinforced the special case of

small island developing States for sustainable development. Although that special case had been recognized globally as the premise of the agenda for those States, it had not been given full effect in global policy, leading to a worsening situation, as evident in relation to access to finance for their sustainable development.

35. Despite CARICOM member States' vulnerabilities and limited resilience to shocks, which set them apart from other middle-income countries, almost all Caribbean small island developing States were classified as middle- or high-income countries. As a consequence, they lost access to concessional development financing following their graduation. Indeed, ODA to the region had declined from 0.72 per cent of global ODA in 2000 to 0.52 per cent in 2016. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) should therefore cease to be used as a main criterion in determining access to concessional development financing, especially for small island developing States, given their vulnerability.

36. There was also a lack of effective policy to alleviate the unsustainable debt burdens of Caribbean small island developing States. In 2016, two thirds of CARICOM members had debt-to-GDP ratios above the 60 per cent debt sustainability threshold. A significant portion of that debt was due to external economic shocks and reconstruction after at least seven natural disasters had struck CARICOM member States between 2000 and 2017, causing damage ranging from 33 to 226 per cent of their GDP. Targeted measures were urgently needed to help those States reduce their debt burden, including through innovative mechanisms such as debt swaps for climate adaptation, as proposed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

37. It was also crucial for CARICOM member States to receive the necessary support to invest in resilience building in the face of the growing trend in natural disasters and more frequent and intense storms as a result of global warming, which would have devastating socioeconomic costs for the Caribbean region.

38. Blacklisting and de-risking practices posed significant threats to the financial services sectors and economic activities of Caribbean small island developing States, which had led to a reduction of correspondent banking relationships with indigenous banks in the Caribbean and reduced international trade, remittances and investment flows, severely constraining development. In response, the United Nations must provide the necessary global checks and balances and encourage global policies more conducive to poverty eradication and the reduction of inequality.

39. The lack of access to finance compounded CARICOM member States' already limited tax base, as well as their vulnerabilities and exposure to exogenous shocks. Their limited capacity for resource mobilization made international cooperation all the more vital.

40. **Ms. Zahir** (Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, welcomed the note by the Secretary-General (A/73/274 and A/73/274/Corr.1) and said that small island developing States relied on sustainable tourism for economic development. It was critical to maintain the momentum gained from the proclamation of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

41. While the Secretary-General's report on the Third Decade (A/73/298) did not address the challenges faced by small island developing States per se, it did address their concerns in the broader context of countries in special situations and their need for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. The more frequent and severe incidence of climate change-induced threats and disasters undermined efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, and, in some cases, completely reversed development gains. The Alliance therefore once again called for the full implementation of the relevant agreements, agendas and frameworks to help mitigate climate change and its impacts.

42. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, small island developing States needed improved access to the means of implementation, including capacity-building and access to finance and technology, especially since of them many still lacked even baseline data to help inform their poverty eradication programmes and policies. The Alliance urged the international community to improve its coordination and implementation of capacity-building commitments.

43. A collective commitment was needed to ensure tangible progress in the eradication of poverty worldwide leading up to 2030. In that context, all States should participate in the midterm high-level review of the Samoa Pathway, to be held in September 2019, which would help to promote successful sustainable development outcomes for small island developing States.

44. For their part, small island developing States were committed to finding innovative solutions and engaging in genuine and durable partnerships to ensure that no one was left behind, despite the unique vulnerabilities and structural challenges that they continued to face.

45. **Mr. Soriano Mena** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that although

individual and collective efforts had yielded encouraging results in many areas of the 2030 Agenda, CELAC countries continued to face the challenges of poverty, inequality, high global debt and reduced levels of international cooperation. Hence the need to accelerate the pace of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to further raise awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals all levels.

46. Eradicating poverty and advancing sustainable development while ensuring social, economic and financial inclusion required efforts at all levels. Sustainable development must thus be addressed using a comprehensive and holistic approach, as piecemeal approaches distorted the real situation for countries in the region. Implementation and follow-up of public policies should also focus on issues with a social impact, such as social protection and employment.

47. Effective coordination and coherence were needed in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. At the same time, the relevant mandates must be respected in order to build the necessary synergies and resilience.

48. Mechanisms for the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the international and regional financial system must be continuously enhanced to foster an international financial environment conducive to the 2030 Agenda. National resource mobilization alone was insufficient to achieve economic growth that fostered sustainable development or promoted mechanisms for social justice and inclusion in order to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

49. The United Nations system, in consultation with the international financial institutions, must devise transparent measurements of the progress made towards sustainable development that went beyond per capita income, building on existing initiatives, as appropriate.

50. As South-South cooperation had made a positive contribution towards the eradication of poverty and achieving sustainable development, CELAC looked forward to the forthcoming high-level United Nations conference on South-South cooperation. CELAC was also committed to promoting gender equity and equality and the advancement of women, which were a sine qua non for achieving the full exercise and enjoyment of fundamental freedoms and human rights, with a view to achieving the Goals and targets under the 2030 Agenda.

51. Lastly, to be truly effective, implementation of the 2030 Agenda and all other international agreements must be people-centred and human rights-based, with a cross-cutting gender perspective. It must promote the global structural changes needed both to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and to reduce inequalities in all their dimensions.

52. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that eradicating poverty was of paramount importance to African nations, where poverty was a key driver of conflict and civil strife. The African continent had thus embarked on ambitious initiatives to eradicate poverty in one generation, including by promoting the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme; encouraging strengthened South-South cooperation in the area of poverty eradication; acknowledging the critical importance of biodiversity and the sustainable use thereof in poverty eradication; and by incorporating poverty eradication as an indicator in the African Peer Review Mechanism.

53. Drawing attention to Agenda 2063 of the African Union, he noted that Africa was aware that the eradication of poverty required enhanced investment in productive capacities and improved incomes and job creation, and that the acceleration of widespread labour migration within Africa contributed to development and poverty eradication. He called on the United Nations system, in consultation with the international financial institutions, to develop transparent measurements of progress that recognized poverty in all its forms and dimensions. He also urged ODA providers and other partners to honour their commitments towards poverty eradication.

54. Agenda 2063 aimed to have a well-educated and skilled citizenry, underpinned by science, technology and innovation, which would lay the foundation for broad-based growth and job creation. In that context, the African continent sought to fully develop its human capital through sustained investments, both in universal early childhood development and basic education and in higher education, science, technology, research and innovation, and to eliminate gender disparities at all levels of education. Access to post-graduate education was also a priority in order to ensure world-class infrastructure for learning and research.

55. The role of women had long been recognized in Africa. The share of women in the workforce in sub-Saharan Africa had risen significantly in the past 20 years, a trend that should continue through affirmative policies and advocacy to ensure women's increased access to land and inputs, and specifically to ensure that

women had access to at least 30 per cent of agricultural financing. Another aspiration was for women to occupy at least half of elected public offices and managerial positions in the public and private sectors.

56. In the face of Africa's rapid population growth, it was crucial to collectively address humanity's most pressing concerns of ensuring human security and peace, the eradication of poverty, hunger and disease, and the reduction in vulnerability to climate change risks.

57. Noting that three in every four Africans were under the age of 35, and that the highest-growing African economies also had the highest levels of youth unemployment, he underscored the need to improve incomes and job creation, especially through growth in the formal private sector. In that respect, there was a need to modernize Africa's economies and to harness its natural resources, renewable energy potential and human assets. Lastly, coordinated efforts were needed to achieve sustained and continuing progress to end the scourge of poverty.

58. **Mr. Jadhav** (India) said that, despite steady progress being achieved in the eradication of extreme poverty in the world, greater efforts were needed to tackle the continued and stark wealth distribution disparities both within and among nations as the Third Decade commenced.

59. India continued to be one of the fastest-growing large economies that was allocating resources to pursue more inclusive development. It had made rapid strides in eradicating extreme poverty, lifting millions of people out of poverty over the past decade, and was deploying technological innovations with a view to upscaling policy interventions. National efforts towards poverty eradication included an ambitious financial inclusion scheme, which had led to the creation of an additional 320 million bank accounts for the poor who had hitherto been outside the banking net.

60. The issuance of biometric-based identity cards, coupled with smart phone applications, had enabled the wide-ranging delivery of e-services and direct benefit transfers, especially among marginalized groups, and had improved transparency and helped to tackle corruption. India had also launched a large-scale health insurance scheme the previous month, which aimed to provide 500 million people with a coverage of 500,000 rupees per family every year. Large-scale efforts were also being made in housing, through the construction of 21 million new homes by 2022, with over 5 million homes for the poor already constructed in recent years. In addition, an extensive skills development programme was being implemented to enable the poor to become

entrepreneurs, with women comprising more than three fourths of programme beneficiaries. Another measure was the provision of 50 million free cooking gas connections to the poorer segments of the population. The clean fuel supplied under the scheme also helped to address climate, health and energy issues.

61. At the same time, India had been significantly expanding its development partnerships with other developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States, in order to assist them in their efforts towards poverty eradication and sustainable development.

62. Lastly, as India was home to one sixth of the world's population, its success in lifting people out of poverty, with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, was essential. India was on the right track in that regard and was further intensifying its efforts towards inclusive sustainable development and leaving no one behind.

63. **Mr. Davis** (South Africa) said that poverty eradication and its root causes must remain an integral part of the United Nations development system. South Africa had long undertaken tireless efforts and had made great strides in tackling poverty in all its forms and dimensions, striving to provide its citizens with a decent, fulfilling and dignified life. Nevertheless, in 2018, the scourge of poverty, together with inequality and unemployment, remained among the country's most pressing challenges. South Africa thus remained strongly committed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, many of which were mirrored in and complemented by his Government's national development plan, which was centred on poverty eradication.

64. Poverty eradication must also remain an utmost priority for the United Nations and be given the highest levels of financial and technical support. In that regard, the Secretary-General's efforts to mobilize greater participation by the private sector was welcome, as that sector's considerable financial, technical and human resources capabilities, in partnership with Governments, the United Nations and other partners, could help to accelerate poverty eradication.

65. South Africa had long championed the need for industrialization, which was essential to the development ambitions of his nation and of the African continent as a whole. In that regard, productive capacities must be reshaped in order to add increased value to primary resource and commodity extraction. His Government was also committed to harnessing the opportunities from the advent of the fourth industrial

revolution, which called for rethinking the traditional models of industrialization and development.

66. The recently concluded African Continental Free Trade Area – the world's largest such area – provided exciting prospects not only for increased trade but also investment, industrialization and development. While South Africa was currently experiencing low economic growth, it was nevertheless encouraged by the continued and sizeable investments being made in the country, such as in the automotive sector, which reflected confidence in its economy and potential.

67. **Mr. Al Saleh** (Saudi Arabia) said that his country was one of the world's leading donor States and was always among the quickest to lend a helping hand to countries in distress. The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre had provided over \$1.8 billion to support hundreds of projects in such areas as food security, clean water, sanitation, health, shelter, education and humanitarian coordination around the world. Major beneficiaries included Yemen, Syria and Somalia, as well as Rohingya refugees in Myanmar and refugees in Bangladesh. Saudi Arabia had also contributed \$1 billion to the Islamic Development Bank's poverty alleviation fund. Over the previous three decades, the Kingdom had provided over \$100 billion in non-refundable assistance and concessional loans to some 78 developing countries in need. It also contributed to United Nations agencies and regional organizations that helped to fight poverty and hunger, and was the world's second largest provider of migrant worker remittances, which were a major source of foreign currency for developing countries.

68. Domestically, his Government had launched a number of national programmes and initiatives to alleviate poverty. It provided assistance to citizens of low or moderate income and supported charitable associations that helped the poor and needy. As the world celebrated the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty, he wished to stress that there could be no development without an end to the wars and conflicts that were a major cause of poverty and hunger.

69. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that poverty eradication was a key priority of the 2030 Agenda. Unfortunately, the low level of participation by developed countries in discussions within the Second Committee on that topic would appear to indicate otherwise. He hoped that situation would change in the future.

70. His delegation noted with satisfaction the capacity-building support provided by the United Nations system for the eradication of poverty and welcomed the halving of global poverty between 1990

and 2013, the proclamation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) and the development of an inter-agency, system-wide plan of action.

71. The shift noted in the age profile of poverty, with young people replacing older persons as the group most at risk of poverty, was a matter of concern. While an increasing number of young people had received a decent education in the last few decades, they could not always find their rightful place in a rapidly changing, digitized world. The increasing demand for technological innovation required highly qualified specialists.

72. Advances in science and technology could lead to dramatic improvements in standards of living and help to modernize the economy and infrastructure. The task of the State was to create an enabling environment in which the potential of every individual could be realized. Support for households with children and investment in the development of young people were key areas of Russian domestic policy and were also important drivers for poverty reduction.

73. While the poverty rate in the Russian Federation had fallen in recent years, it nevertheless remained quite high at 13.2 per cent. A presidential decree issued in 2018 had therefore set a target of halving the national poverty rate by 2024. The Government had also undertaken a range of measures to reach a level of sustainable natural demographic growth. Social protection for the older generation remained a priority, including by indexing pensions and reducing the gap between pensions and wages.

74. **Ms. Rodríguez Abascal** (Cuba) said that the current unjust and unsustainable international economic order was increasingly marginalizing many nations of the South. Hunger, extreme poverty, illiteracy, a lack of sanitation and premature deaths continued to be a reality in many countries, and those most affected were the least responsible for that crisis. She drew attention to the millions being spent on military ventures rather than on the development of peoples, the rise in unilateral and protectionist trade practices, the contraction in real terms of ODA and the continued growth of external debt, despite its having been paid multiple times. In that context, it was a pipedream to speak about poverty eradication when 815 million persons had suffered from chronic hunger in 2017. That contrasted with the opulence of the developed world, which bore a historic responsibility for the current serious environmental crisis, exacerbated by unsustainable global patterns of production and consumption.

75. Cuba had made substantial social achievements and had already met a number of the Sustainable Development Goals, despite the unfair and criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed upon Cuba by the United States for nearly 60 years. Cuba boasted the lowest child mortality rate in the world, a high life expectancy at birth, zero illiteracy, a high doctor-to-population ratio and an immunization programme covering 100 per cent of its children. Indeed, the Cuban Government had demonstrated political will by prioritizing resources in areas with a high social impact. More than 66 per cent of its annual budget was allocated to improving education, health, social well-being and security, culture, sport, and scientific and technical research.

76. Her Government believed firmly in South-South cooperation and international solidarity, as had been demonstrated by the sharing of its modest resources with nations in need. For example, its literacy programme, recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, had enabled millions of adults to read and write in 28 countries. Cuba would continue to share its human capital, which was its main resource and a product of the Cuban Revolution.

77. **Mr. Saleh** (Iraq) said that poverty had wider social implications, because poor people were more likely to become involved in crime or succumb to the appeal of extremism and terrorist recruitment. The wars and terrorism that his country had seen in its modern history had contributed significantly to poverty. His Government had taken measures to address that poverty with numerous laws guaranteeing social protection and allocating funds to help small business proprietors, students and pensioners. It had launched projects to help agricultural communities by building housing complexes that provided a range of infrastructure and services. It had also just adopted a national strategy that aimed to reduce poverty by 25 per cent by 2022, and by 50 per cent over the long term.

78. Unfortunately, a double crisis in the form of an upsurge in terrorism combined with a decline in oil prices had forced his Government to postpone a number of development projects as it focused on the immediate imperative of helping displaced persons. More ambitious progress would be dependent on international financing. His Government was exploring mechanisms to ensure the optimal use of such funding. International support for his country's development plans would not only help to alleviate poverty in Iraq but would also contribute to overall stability in the Middle East.

79. **Ms. Ha Thi Thanh Huyen** (Viet Nam), said that poverty eradication was one of her Government's utmost priorities and that special attention was paid to vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities. Significant progress had been made to reduce poverty in her country, where, according to a recent World Bank report, the multidimensional poverty rate had fallen from 9.9 per cent in 2015 to less than 7 per cent in 2017. In addition, in the period from 2016 to 2018, nearly \$957 million had been mobilized from the State budget for targeted national programmes for sustainable poverty reduction. Despite such progress, however, the poverty rate in remote and mountainous areas in Viet Nam remained high, inequality in income and socioeconomic development between different geographical areas and ethnic groups persisted, and the country remained among those most vulnerable to climate change impacts, including tropical cyclones, sea level rise, droughts and floods. Hence, poverty reduction progress in disaster-prone communities could be fragile, putting people who had escaped poverty at high risk of falling back below the poverty line.

80. Moving forward, Viet Nam sought to further implement an inclusive growth model to alleviate poverty more sustainably. It aimed to enhance labour productivity and infrastructure investment and improve access to basic services, especially in education and health care, while taking gender equality and regional disparities into account.

81. The repositioned United Nations development system should provide more coherent and coordinated assistance to strengthen national policy capacities. Technical assistance and adequate funding and resources, including ODA, should also be provided with a view to tackling poverty in all its forms and dimensions and achieving the 2030 Agenda.

82. **Ms. Lora-Santos** (Philippines) said that her country's long-term development plan for a prosperous Philippines by 2040 was in line with Sustainable Development Goal 1. Its development plan for 2017–2022, which aimed to lift nearly 6 million people out of poverty over the medium term, would ensure that economic growth remained robust and well-distributed across income groups. Poverty could be significantly reduced in rural areas, and inclusive and sustainable economic growth could be achieved by creating more jobs, improving communities' resilience, enhancing innovation and building greater trust in the Government. The national anti-poverty commission continued to strengthen its efforts and to build its response to the basic needs of the poor, which included providing them

with access to food and water, shelter, work, health care, education, social protection and a healthy environment.

83. Her Government had made great strides in delivering inclusive economic growth by creating larger fiscal space to help finance and expand social poverty reduction programmes, such as cash transfers to families conditional on their children's school attendance, coupled with legislative efforts to institutionalize such programmes. Her Government was also in the process of adopting a multidimensional poverty index, spearheaded by its statistics authority, which complemented income-based poverty indicators by taking into account indicators relating to education, health and living standards. She called upon the United Nations development system to continue to mainstream poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions.

84. **Ms. Ng** (Singapore) said that her Government had adopted a holistic, three-pronged approach to ensuring that no one was left behind on the road to sustainable development, focusing in particular on education, health and housing schemes and policies. For example, an onus had been placed on the development of the early childhood education sector to ensure that children had a strong foundation for lifelong learning and access to opportunities later in life, regardless of their socioeconomic background. Education had been made affordable to all Singaporeans, through free primary compulsory education and heavily subsidized education at the secondary and pre-university levels.

85. To ensure quality and affordable basic health care to all its citizens, her Government had established a shared safety net scheme and an endowment fund had been established to assist those who lacked financial means. Furthermore, the targeted public housing schemes and policies put in place had helped at least 8 in 10 Singaporeans to own a public housing apartment. That had been facilitated through a responsible, sustainable financing plan to allow residents to finance their housing needs through long-term savings plans, which, in turn, freed up more disposable income to cover other basic needs.

86. National poverty eradication initiatives could benefit from partnerships with international and regional stakeholders. Countries could share best practices and lessons learned, promote capacity-building and work with United Nations agencies and international financial institutions on projects to help boost local economies, upgrade workers and provide adequate education, health care and housing support. Her Government was committed to working with the international community to that end.

87. **Mr. Bushra** (Sudan) said that as the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Third United Nations Decade showed, economic growth in developing countries had done much to fuel poverty reduction. However, poverty rates remained high in Africa for least developed countries such as his own. As a post-conflict country that was host to over 2 million refugees from neighbouring States, the Sudan required special attention from the international community. Unfortunately, its heavy indebtedness remained an obstacle to international financing.

88. His Government had launched a number of plans, programmes and policies to combat poverty, including a national anti-poverty strategy, a five-year economic reform plan for 2015–2019 and a recent poverty reduction strategy paper drafted with the cooperation of the African Development Bank. It had also established a youth employment fund and a microfinance portfolio.

89. Structural transformation could help to overcome such challenges as a lack of industrial capacity or technology and low productivity, and to attract investment, but it needed to be supported by infrastructure financing, technology transfer and facilitated market access.

90. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria) said that although substantial gains had been made in reducing extreme poverty over the past three decades, 783 million persons continued to experience multidimensional poverty, and inequalities persisted as progress had been uneven from one region to the next. Noting that the data on extreme poverty dated back to 2013, he said that there had since been an alarming backslide in terms of ODA and a rise in hunger and the impacts of climate events and conflicts.

91. Poverty eradication had been a long-standing policy priority of his Government, which had enabled the country to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals before 2015 and to almost eradicate extreme poverty. Those efforts were ongoing in the context of the 2030 Agenda, with all national policies and strategies centred on promoting human and social development and ensuring a decent life for all citizens.

92. Implementation of the national development plan ensured that all Algerian citizens had access to free universal basic education, vocational training and higher learning, and health care. National efforts to combat poverty included employment support and professional insertion, and the extension of social protection and assistance to most of the population, especially the most vulnerable. A universal and compulsory social security system was in place, based on the principles of solidarity and benefit-sharing

without discrimination. More than 85 per cent of the population had social coverage, including those persons who were not employed. His Government had also endeavoured to improve the living conditions of its population and to mitigate inequalities by providing housing to different segments of the population and ensuring generalized access to drinking water and to basic sanitation services.

93. Successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda required genuine policy and financial mobilization from the international community, especially towards Africa, where more than 40 per cent of the population still lived in extreme poverty. Algeria would continue its efforts to that end, in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as well as through South-South and triangular cooperation; would continue to provide support to poor and least developed countries, especially in Africa; and would also continue to encourage strengthened partnership with countries with a view to building an environment conducive to helping the poorest countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where extreme poverty was prevalent.

94. The productive capacity of the poorest countries was weak, significantly hindering their industrialization and economic diversification efforts and making them all the more vulnerable to external shocks. In that respect, there was a need to rethink international support measures and help boost productive capacity. There was also a need to increase those countries' comparative advantages. In that context, development partners should increase their ODA flows and, in particular, channel them towards targeted actions to bolster strategies for development, investment and productive capacity-building.

95. While the outreach and awareness-raising efforts undertaken by the United Nations development system were commendable, global, concerted and inclusive action was needed to respond to the challenges that threatened the very survival of populations grappling with conflicts, financial crises and the impacts of climate change. Joint efforts were needed to ensure the well-being of all humankind.

96. **Mr. Rasuli** (Afghanistan) said that, despite the progress made towards the eradication of extreme poverty in recent years, poverty and hunger continued to be high in many countries, particularly the least developed countries. According to the mid-year update of *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018*, per capita economic growth in least developed countries was rising at levels insufficient to eradicate extreme poverty, with nearly 35 per cent of the population in

those countries projected to remain in extreme poverty by 2030. That situation was of great concern.

97. Indeed, the least developed countries were experiencing slow economic expansion and a growth rate well below the Sustainable Development Goal targets. A combination of economic, environmental, health and other shocks, as well as other factors such as armed conflict, weak domestic infrastructure, a lack of social welfare nets and climate change, further exacerbated poverty among vulnerable populations worldwide.

98. Afghanistan had made considerable progress on a number of fronts since 2001, especially in social, political and cultural rights. Building on those gains, his Government had developed a sustainable national reform agenda which included good governance in all sectors, with poverty eradication efforts at its core.

99. The National Peace and Development Framework set out the Government's strategic policy priorities towards self-reliance, including reducing poverty through job creation and addressing widespread related problems such as child malnutrition, access to education and healthcare, food insecurity, poor sanitation, as well as conflict-related impoverishment. Improved indicators in those areas could significantly enhance peoples' situation in the country. However, Afghanistan continued to experience fluctuations in indicators relating to poverty, food security and other socioeconomic indicators over time, the most worrying of which related to the labour market, the current rise in food insecurity and ongoing drought.

100. Nevertheless, his Government remained committed to building on the gains made over the past 17 years by creating an environment where peace, security and prosperity prevailed. It had made a conscious decision to move beyond conflict and poverty towards peace and prosperity.

101. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) should be part of an ongoing campaign by the United Nations system and collective action by Member States to meet the goal of eradicating poverty. Recalling that half of those living in extreme poverty were in sub-Saharan Africa, he noted that, since 2015, Nigeria had been according priority attention to areas such as the empowerment of people, social integration, full employment and decent work for all. It had developed a national social investment programme, which included measures for conditional cash transfers and school meals, and an enterprise and empowerment initiative to provide traders, women merchants and women-driven cooperatives with access to financial

services, as well as a youth skills-development programme.

102. In the context of the implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (2016–2025), which involved building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive industrialization and fostering innovation, Nigeria had put in place a plan for economic recovery and growth and a comprehensive industrial revolution policy focusing on the sectors where Nigeria had a comparative advantage, such as the agro-allied, metal and solid mineral sectors. The aim was to ensure job creation, economic and revenue diversification, import substitution and a broadened tax base.

103. Nigeria would further its partnerships with Member States, the United Nations and its related bodies with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, improving the welfare of Nigerians and leaving no one behind. He called on development partners to continue to support the efforts of African countries to promote and maintain macroeconomic stability; to attract investments by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those owned by women; to encourage the transfer of technology to African countries; and to assist in strengthening human and institutional capacity for the attainment of the Goals.

104. **Mr. Poudel Chhetri** (Nepal) said that poverty generated frustrations that fuelled anger, conflict and instability, even providing a breeding ground for terrorism. Coordinated global action, and the adoption of an integrated and holistic approach, must thus be stepped up in order to address poverty, especially in least developed and other vulnerable countries, where the problem was even more complex and multifaceted. That approach should include enhancing productive capacities, supporting rural farms and non-farm economies and implementing social protection floors.

105. Poverty reduction had been a focus of the Government of Nepal over the past few decades, helping it to significantly reduce poverty and hunger. Its current development plan aimed to reduce poverty to 17 per cent by 2018, and his Government had also set the goal of graduating from least developed country status by 2022. Nevertheless, national efforts would need to be complemented by international support that acknowledged the specific needs and challenges of Nepal as a least developed and landlocked least developed country, providing it with enhanced, predictable and sustained financial and technical support.

106. **Mr. Nugroho** (Indonesia) said that Member States must build on the momentum of the Third United

Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) to empower the people. As young people had replaced older persons as the group most at risk of poverty, jobs must be created at a pace commensurate with the growing global working-age population. It was also imperative to empower youth and women and girls through education, skills development and access to financing. In addition, environments conducive to business must be established, especially for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, industries and entrepreneurship, in order to ensure income distribution and create high-quality, productive and decent employment for all.

107. The United Nations system-wide plan of action for the Third United Nations Decade should be implemented. It could also be translated into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework to support specific country needs and poverty alleviation programmes. Priority areas for poverty eradication could include enhanced agricultural productivity and rural development; the promotion of universal health coverage and education; improved social protection systems; and the building of resilient societies, cities and human settlements against shocks, climate change and disasters.

108. Innovative means should be deployed to foster equitable growth while promoting local cultures and knowledge. In Indonesia, the creative economy provided a strategic alternative that could empower people and help to lift them out of poverty. Currently almost 15 per cent of the country's active workforce was employed in creative industries, and millions of women and young professionals were employed in its creative economy companies. Indonesia would be hosting the World Conference on Creative Economy in Bali in 2018.

109. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh) said that his Government's inclusive and people-centric development policies had enabled national poverty to be reduced to 21.4 per cent and extreme poverty to about 11.3 per cent. Half of the Government's total budget expenditure had been linked to poverty reduction over the past nine years. Sustained growth in Bangladesh had also greatly contributed to that progress, potentially placing it in a position to graduate from least developed country status in 2018 and to become a middle-income country by 2021.

110. His Government had numerous measures in place to alleviate poverty, including plans to invest in capacity-building in order to introduce a multidimensional poverty index measurement; the implementation of a health and nutrition programme to address under-five mortality, maternal mortality and

stunting; plans to provide universal health coverage by 2030; a comprehensive national social security strategy with regular allowances provided to older persons, poor women and persons with disabilities; skills development for youth and women in particular; and plans to create 12.9 million additional jobs by 2020, including through the creation of special economic zones and the securing of 2 million jobs abroad for migrant workers. Greater waged employment of women in the rural economy was also being encouraged.

111. The garment industry, which constituted nearly 80 per cent of national exports and employed 4.5 million workers, of whom 85 per cent were women, contributed significantly to poverty reduction and women's empowerment. Other key poverty reduction measures included investments in the transport sector, especially in rural areas, to improve competitiveness and growth; the use of more than 5 million solar panels, which helped rural small and medium-sized industries to grow; emphasis on information and communications technologies, which reduced the cost of financial transactions; and access to microfinancing, which had lifted millions out of poverty in rural Bangladesh.

112. The impacts of climate change posed a major threat to national poverty eradication efforts, and more than 1 per cent of GDP was being spent to address that challenge. A mega project entitled Delta Plan 2100 was specifically being implemented to build capacities to combat climate change.

113. As poverty eradication was a shared responsibility, development partners should help to address some of the major challenges ahead through resource mobilization, technology transfer and data capacity-building.

114. **Mr. Zhang Zepeng** (China) said that the international community should join poverty eradication efforts, especially in rural areas, through targeted and long-term measures for sustained and stable poverty reduction. As the world's largest developing country, China maintained a tough stance against poverty, with a view to achieving full poverty eradication in rural areas by 2020.

115. His Government had maintained rapid economic growth and was continuing to roll out pro-poor development policies, laying the groundwork for massive poverty reduction. Those efforts were Government-led and incorporated into the country's overall development strategy, including through the organization of targeted development plans for women, children, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities. His Government was also actively participating in international cooperation for poverty reduction through South-South cooperation, the exchange of experience

and assistance to other countries. China would continue to provide pragmatic assistance to help other developing countries reduce their poverty levels.

116. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that poverty was driven by political, economic, social and historical factors, and had been worsened in the current irrational international political and economic world order marked by a development imbalance. Poverty was a human-made phenomenon, and, like slavery and apartheid, could be overcome through human intervention. While developing countries needed to develop poverty reduction strategies based on their own national situations and ensure self-reliance and hard work, joint efforts were also required from the international community.

117. Pakistan had undertaken a number of initiatives, including establishing a poverty alleviation fund, facilitating public-private partnerships addressing multidimensional issues underpinning poverty and setting up an income support programme to address marginalized and underprivileged groups of society, such as women, through a comprehensive social protection scheme. His Government also planned to provide 5 million housing units for low-income groups.

118. Financial inclusion was a prerequisite for optimal economic growth and financial stability, and essential for lifting people out of poverty. In that respect, Pakistan had had a national financial inclusion strategy in place since 2015, to facilitate broad-based access to credit, formal savings and insurance for the masses. Developed countries were duty-bound to provide more assistance to their developing counterparts, making good on their pledges to provide financial aid and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, and to fulfil their ODA commitments. International organizations must play a greater role in the global campaign to eradicate poverty by following up on conference outcomes and exploring new ways to better support global poverty eradication efforts. The system-wide plan of action for poverty eradication coordination and the efforts of the United Nations system, through its advisory and programme support to Member States, were very important.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.