



General Assembly

Seventy-third session

52nd plenary meeting
Thursday, 13 December 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Ms. Espinosa Garcés (Ecuador)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Beleffi (San Marino), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 10

Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin

Report by the Secretary-General (A/73/390)

Draft resolution (A/73/L.54)

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Greece to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.54.

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): It is my honour to speak today on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution entitled “Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin”, contained in document A/73/L.54.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Director-General of UNESCO for the relevant comprehensive report (A/73/390), which outlines the most significant developments that have taken place in the aforementioned field during the past three years.

In 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/76, entitled “Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin”, by consensus. Three years later, significant developments have occurred, which this draft resolution aims to reflect in a thorough and balanced way.

Over the past few decades, the rise in the international cross-border movement of cultural objects, the increase in international organized crime involving cultural objects and the tendency to launder money through the antiquities market, including the selling of stolen cultural objects at auction, including in online auctions, have resulted in an increase of illicit trafficking in cultural property. Moreover, of late cultural property has been targeted more than ever before due to the recent armed conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere. It is noteworthy that one of the consequences of those conflicts is the looting of antiquities, as well as their trafficking and trade through the illegal market, notably by terrorist groups, with the aim of financing terrorism. As a result, a large number of artefacts supposedly ended up in antiquities markets, while the Internet has led to an immense increase in the possibilities for that illegal trade through online sales of trafficked cultural property. The fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property is therefore a key element in the strategy for drying up the sources of any illicit profit-making, including the financing of terrorism.

The draft resolution under consideration today expresses deep concern about the loss, destruction, theft, pillage, illicit removal or misappropriation of cultural property from archaeological and other sites, in particular in areas of armed conflict, including occupied territories. At the same time, it recalls the relevant Security Council resolutions, which highlight, among other things, the direct linkage between illicit

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

18-43660 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



trafficking in cultural property and the financing of terrorism.

Furthermore, the draft resolution recognizes the leading role of UNESCO in the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property, including its specific mandate within the context of Security Council resolution 2199 (2015). That is very important because the aim of that resolution is to cover not only the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property but also, most importantly, its return or restitution to the countries of origin.

Capacity-building is critical to the success of the efforts undertaken with regard to the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin. Criminal prosecution, customs and border controls are indispensable, but so are preventive measures to block the laundering of looted objects through art markets, including a proper framework for restitution. In that context, the draft resolution underlines the critical role of UNESCO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and INTERPOL, while at the same time focusing on the added value of stolen works of art databases, provided by the respective international organizations, as a tool in the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property, of which all Member States should make use.

The international community shares a common responsibility to protect cultural property, in times of both peace and war. Cultural property is not simply the testimony of a nation's path. Cultural heritage, as the mirror of a country's history, is thus at the very core of its existence, since it represents not only specific values and traditions but also the unique way in which a people perceives the world. That is why cultural property must be protected against any illicit act and must be restored to its historic environment, where it can best inspire the collective conscience of humanity. That is precisely the reason for which the objectives of this draft resolution should leave no State indifferent.

Mr. Said (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin (A/73/390), submitted in cooperation with the Director-General of UNESCO.

We would like to stress that the issue of the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin as a result of illicit appropriation includes many thorny and complex matters. However, those difficulties should not deter concerted efforts by the United Nations

and other international governmental organizations to continue their coordination with UNESCO within their mandates and in cooperation with Member States to resolve that important issue. The objective is to return cultural property to the countries of origin because it represents the historical heritage of the countries from which it was looted.

Cultural property is of great significance among peoples and nations because it constitutes part of their history and is indicative of their deep-rooted origin and cultures. Our discussion of this item is therefore seen as a new campaign against States and individuals to return what they took or plundered, such as manuscripts, sculptures and monuments. We note at this session that the report under consideration indicates that UNESCO attaches increasing importance to the issue of cultural property and its protection. In that regard, my country's delegation commends UNESCO and its Director-General for their efforts to launch awareness-raising campaigns and training courses at the international level and for their keen interest in increasing international awareness towards cultural property and in helping to return it to its countries of origin.

I would also like to note the international efforts to support Libyan professionals and cultural institutions through UNESCO and in cooperation with the General Authority for Monuments in Libya and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property. International experts have held meetings with a view to protecting Libya's cultural heritage, as well as preventing its illicit trafficking, while providing the necessary means to secure collections at risk in the west and east of the country.

Like other States, over the past five centuries Libya has been subject to great plundering of its cultural heritage. The circumstances that the Libyan people experienced under the colonists paved the way for the organized plundering of Libyan cultural heritage from antiquity. We see our statues, antiques, valuable manuscripts and handicrafts in famous museums, documentation centres and palaces in Asia, Europe and the Americas. They demonstrate the innovation and imagination of the Libyan people, who left a marvellous cultural heritage. The colonists dispersed and destroyed them, while keeping some in their archaeological collections. Suffice it to say that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, 165 original carvings were plundered from the archaeological site of Shahat town in eastern Libya. Hundreds of pieces of pottery, as well

as thousands of rare gold and bronze coins of different sizes, were also looted.

Historical records show that in 1860 alone scores of huge pillars and other marvellous artefacts were stolen from the city of Leptis Magna in western Libya and moved to a European country, where they were used in the gardens of a certain king. The same sources indicate that a European removed 350 alabaster pillars and thousands of other small pieces of artefacts from the same town, while another European removed 600 prehistoric objects from the city of Benghazi alone. They are currently located in a European museum.

Through UNESCO, the United Nations has tried to ensure the return or restitution of works of art, antiquities and manuscripts to their country of origin. However, it is clear from the report of the Secretary-General that progress in that area has been limited and that threats to cultural heritage are increasing, regrettably taking new forms and being used to finance organized crime and terrorist groups, as indicated in Security Council resolution 2199 (2015).

It is of great concern that most countries in possession of such treasures have not yet taken any practical measures to implement the General Assembly resolutions pertaining to that item. Libya was among those that supported its inclusion on the agenda of the General Assembly in view of the great importance that my country attaches to the restitution of cultural property to its country of origin. Given its vast cultural heritage and as a victim of such organized plundering of its cultural treasures, Libya is determined to restore those items to their places of origin.

In conclusion, it is my pleasure to announce in this forum that on 23 February, we signed a memorandum of understanding with the United States of America that imposes restrictions on the import and trade of Libyan archaeological objects. On 18 July, we received some pottery objects that date back to the Germanic civilization in Libya, representing a part of Libya's rich history and the history of humankind.

Mr. Korneliou (Cyprus): At the outset, I wish to commend Greece, the main sponsor of draft resolution A/73/L.54, entitled "Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin". We welcome the updates to the draft resolution, which reflect important initiatives and significant developments in that area. Cyprus supports and co-sponsors this draft resolution and appreciates today's discussion.

Although there are numerous international conventions and decisions on the protection of cultural heritage, there is still a great deal that the international community can do in that regard. That said, the draft resolution is particularly significant in the framework of the collective efforts for the protection of cultural heritage and the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

The protection of cultural property is one of the priorities of the foreign policy of Cyprus. That is hardly surprising if one considers Cyprus's rich cultural heritage dating back thousands of years and the bitter experience of witnessing its destruction and looting since 1974 as a result of the foreign military occupation.

To that end, Cyprus actively promotes the adoption of measures against the destruction and illicit trafficking of cultural heritage and the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin, such as the digitization of cultural property, both movable and immovable, and enhancing the public role in combating looting and illicit trafficking of cultural property.

At the international level, recent initiatives include the establishment by Cyprus, together with Italy, of the Group of Friends for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, within the framework of the United Nations in New York; Cyprus's initiative in Geneva on the Human Rights Council resolution on cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage, unanimously adopted in March 2018; and, finally, the adoption in 2017 of the Council of Europe's Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property, also known as the Nicosia Convention, an initiative of Cyprus's Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The Convention is the first legal text to incorporate a criminal code for perpetrators who destroy, steal or trade cultural property, including a provision that the burden of proof lies with the buyer or the possessor of the artefact, and the need for the harmonization of national legislation in order to promote and facilitate inter-State cooperation in combating the illegal trafficking of cultural heritage.

Moreover, the Convention promotes international cooperation in this field. It is open for signature and accession by members and non-members of the Council of Europe. Once again, I call upon all members to become a party to the Nicosia Convention, an important and unique legal tool for the protection of

cultural heritage and the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

In conclusion, we are convinced that the unanimous adoption and implementation of the draft resolution under discussion will further enhance our cooperation and collective efforts for the protection of our common global cultural heritage.

Mr. Brown (United States of America): The United States welcomes the resolutions of the General Assembly and other international forums that draw attention to the important issue of trafficking in cultural property. The United States strongly believes that the protection of cultural heritage in countries of origin promotes regional stability and good governance. To that end, we have supported and continue to support numerous resolutions on this issue in various international forums, including the Security Council, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNESCO. Furthermore, we have joined with other members of the United Nations Group of Friends for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in implementing national legislation to prevent the illicit trafficking of cultural property.

In 2016, the United States Congress passed its most recent legislation concerning this issue, the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act, which seeks to coordinate policy and programmes on this matter across the United States Government as well as with our international partners. We have already seen positive results from those efforts and look forward to continuing to work with our international partners on multilateral and bilateral bases.

However, while the United States joins the consensus on draft resolution A/73/L.54, on the return or restitution of cultural property, we take this opportunity to clarify important points related to the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 11, concerning the United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property. The draft resolution concerns the illicit trafficking of cultural property, which we believe is a separate issue from whether such property is immune in a judicial proceeding. In future draft resolutions on this issue, we encourage a re-examination of the relevance of the Convention to the issue of trafficking in cultural property.

The United States also takes this opportunity to highlight the important issue of trafficking in the cultural property of indigenous peoples. Consistent

with the spirit of this draft resolution and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the United States has enacted national domestic legislation that seeks to enable the repatriation of such property. Nevertheless, native American tribes frequently have difficulty recovering their cultural property internationally.

In conclusion, the United States reiterates its view that the trafficking of cultural property is unacceptable, and we look forward to continuing to raise the issue of the cultural property of indigenous peoples at international forums in future.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this agenda item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.54.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/73/L.54: Algeria, Angola, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Indonesia, Ireland, Latvia, Libya, Lichtenstein, Mauritius, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, the Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovenia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.54?

Draft resolution A/73/L.54 was adopted (resolution 73/130).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 10?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 129 *(continued)***Global health and foreign policy**

Notes by the Secretary-General (A/73/393, A/73/393/Corr.1 and A/73/414)

Draft resolutions (A/73/L.37 and A/73/L.62)

Draft amendment (A/73/L.67)

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.62.

Mr. Vieira (Brazil): Today I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.62, entitled “Global health and foreign policy: a healthier world through better nutrition”, under agenda item 129, on behalf of the seven core members of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, which are Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand.

The Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative was formed in September 2006. Every year since 2008, we have introduced in the General Assembly draft resolutions on health-related matters in order to advocate greater recognition of the intrinsic link between global health and foreign policy. For 10 years, we have touched on different topics that are seen as key health challenges and that require greater attention from the international community.

This year, at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, under Brazil’s chairmanship, the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative has the honour to introduce a draft resolution on global health and foreign policy with a focus on nutrition. The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is inseparable from the right to adequate nutrition.

In April 2016, the General Assembly proclaimed 2016-2025 the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (resolution 70/259). The following year, a programme of work was adopted. Those documents provide a unique opportunity for stakeholders to strengthen their efforts to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide. Notwithstanding those efforts and frameworks, we see a risk of lagging behind in the implementation of the Decade. That is a common concern of all countries of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative and a decisive factor for us in choosing nutrition as this year’s theme.

Improved nutrition, as well as healthy diets and lifestyles, are essential to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals and targets and are also key elements in preventing, controlling and responding to non-communicable diseases. The draft resolution recognizes the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger and all forms of malnutrition, and encourages international cooperation and assistance to support Member States in achieving health goals, implementing universal access to health services, addressing health challenges and increasing food production and access to healthy and nutritious food.

To strengthen those efforts, the draft resolution also invites Member States to work with the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to convene, on a voluntary basis, new action networks on nutrition and to develop, strengthen and implement policies to address the multiple challenges of malnutrition, including through the adoption of commitments that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound, within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition.

Tackling the root causes of, and factors leading to, malnutrition in all its forms is a complex and multidimensional task that demands strong and sustained political leadership, policy coherence across Governments and concerted, sustained and intersectoral efforts. In that context, I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for their fundamental support throughout the entire negotiation process.

Through this draft resolution, we reaffirm our intention and willingness to continue working together to achieve concrete results through the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative for the advancement of global health issues in the broader United Nations framework and beyond.

In conclusion, I call on all Member States to support this important initiative and to join us in adopting the draft resolution.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary to introduce draft amendment A/73/L.67.

Mrs. Bogyay (Hungary): Hungary is fully committed to the goals enshrined in draft resolution

A/73/L.62, on global health and foreign policy. The Hungarian Government has devoted strong support to achieving universal health coverage globally by 2030. We are one of the core members of the Group of Friends of Universal Health Coverage.

Today, I would like to thank Brazil and the group of friends of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative for their commitment. However, we cannot and are not in a position to endorse the twenty-second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution given its reference to the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Our opposition to such a reference was consistently expressed throughout the negotiations on the text. As is well known, after a long process of negotiations, the Government of Hungary decided to disassociate itself from the adoption and the implementation process of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. For that reason, Hungary requests the amendment of the draft resolution by deleting the twenty-second preambular paragraph.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Brazil on a point of order.

Mr. Vieira (Brazil): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and my own country, Brazil.

We regret that the only paragraph related to migration in draft resolution A/73/L.62 is being challenged. Aware of the current sensitivity of the issue, the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative tried to remain as factual as possible and not to reopen the discussion held during the negotiations on the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The group made a great effort to accommodate all concerns around that issue and managed to strike a delicate balance in the twenty-second preambular paragraph and the entire draft resolution. We therefore call on all delegations to vote against the amendment contained in document A/73/L.67.

Mr. Srivihok (Thailand): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and my country, Thailand.

The issue of health has gained impressive prominence and political attention in New York over the years for very obvious reasons. In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where people are placed at the very heart of our efforts, it is undeniable that good health is central to the achievement of sustainable development. Health is a fundamental right, an indispensable factor for the advancement and development of human capital and the empowerment of peoples, and an evident form of social justice.

The interdependence of and intrinsic link between global health and foreign policy become ever stronger with time. In that respect, ASEAN would like to commend the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, of which two of our fellow ASEAN nations, namely, Indonesia and Thailand, are members, for spearheading the efforts to address persistent and emerging issues of global health at the United Nations.

The theme of this year's annual resolution on nutrition (A/73/L.62) is of particular importance to our region because a large proportion of our populations die prematurely every day due to diet-related non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and obesity. It is important because some of our children continue to suffer from malnutrition and undernourishment, which hinders their growth and development, especially in families in rural areas.

In alignment with and reinforced by the Sustainable Development Goals, ASEAN member States have been continuously working together under the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda across 20 priority areas for health and their related goals, especially in the context of the promotion of good nutrition and a healthy diet, as guided by the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025. Among those priorities, we are working to ensure food safety and security, as well as to promote healthy diets and lifestyles of people, in our respective countries and in the region as a whole in order to achieve Healthy ASEAN 2020. ASEAN reiterates its strong commitment to addressing the various determinants, be they social, economic or environmental, and the main risk factors for poor health, as well as to ensuring greater access to health services, in the face of rising co-morbidities and drug resistance everywhere.

In that regard, ASEAN wishes to welcome the successful conclusions of the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis and the third high-

level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, and the adoption of their respective outcome documents (resolutions 73/3 and 73/2), which mark another important milestone with respect to global health. We also welcome the convening of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage next year. We believe that these processes will galvanize the political will needed to make a real and impactful change on the ground. It is clear that, in so doing, the health sector alone cannot be left with this task. It calls for the highest and strongest level of political support and requires adequate and sustained investment for effective implementation. Most importantly, it requires engagement from all relevant actors and sectors, including the people themselves.

To that end, ASEAN would like to reaffirm its commitment to continue working with the international community to realize our shared goal of healthy lives and well-being for all and truly to leave no one behind. Thailand will continue the excellent work done by Singapore this year as we take up the ASEAN chairmanship next year with the aim of advancing partnership for sustainability, which is much needed to address the complex challenges we face today.

Before I conclude, I would like to say a few words in my national capacity. First of all, Thailand aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Brazil. For us, it has been an honour to be an active member of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative since its formation over a decade ago. I would also like to commend Brazil, as the Group's current Chair, for leading us through this year's negotiation process. It was not an easy one, but we are happy to see the very balanced yet strong text of the draft resolution. Special thanks go to Ms. Laura Delamonica of the Brazilian Mission for having diligently facilitated the negotiating process on this very important draft resolution.

We deeply regret that this year, for the first time, the only draft resolution on health proposed annually by the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative in the General Assembly may be put to a vote even though its aim is to address health-related challenges that affect all countries, large and small. We also note with concern that today, the cross-cutting nature of health is drawing us further away from finding consensus. Nonetheless, the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, as a unique, like-minded, cross-regional group, will continue to advocate for global health in

the international arena, regardless of the countless difficulties and obstacles we may encounter because, after all, health is a key enabler for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Looking ahead and having just celebrated International Universal Health Coverage Day yesterday, my country is eagerly looking forward to the high-level meeting on universal health coverage to be held next year. For us, universal health coverage is an overarching factor of Sustainable Development Goal 3. The high-level meeting will therefore mark another historic milestone, which will help countries to promote greater access to essential and quality health services and medicines, bearing in mind that poverty should not block access to these services, and similarly, that these services should not force service users and their families into poverty or financial hardship.

Lastly, it is an honour for me to have been entrusted by the President of the General Assembly the responsibility of co-facilitating, with the Permanent Representative of Hungary, the negotiations on the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage. Once I have been officially appointed as co-facilitator, please rest assured of my support and that of my country towards a transparent and inclusive process, as well as an action-oriented outcome.

Ms. Bhengu (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of South Africa. South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative.

The year 2018 marks an important milestone for the international community as we commemorate 70 years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That marked a critical turning point as world leaders decided that discrimination on any grounds could no longer be tolerated by boldly declaring that all human beings are born equal in rights and in dignity. That historic document establishes the basic concepts of dignity, liberty, equality and brotherhood in how we conduct ourselves within and among nations.

This anniversary offers us an opportunity to assess how the commitments enshrined in the Declaration have guided and continue to guide us as we address emerging issues. As early as 1948, we understood that we cannot choose which and whose human rights we want to promote and protect as they are indivisible, interconnected and interrelated. Our pronouncements

on human rights — in this case, the right to health — are invalid if we cannot rise above our indifference towards those who are different from us, such as migrants and refugees.

As President Ramaphosa has said, the centrality of human rights in South African law and the importance of having a Bill of Rights included in our Constitution are in no small part thanks to the enduring impact of the Declaration, which has proved to be as relevant as it is timeless. Seventy years after it was adopted, South Africa reaffirms its commitment to upholding this pact between the peoples of the world.

Access to health care, including reproductive health care, is a constitutionally recognized right, under section 27 of the South African Constitution. The South African Constitutional Court has linked the realization of socioeconomic rights to the right to life and adequate standards of living. It enjoins the State to take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to achieve the progressive realization of each of these rights on a non-discriminatory basis.

Similarly, 2018 marks exactly 10 years since our network presented its first draft resolution to the General Assembly, which would make global health a pressing foreign policy issue of our time. We have been privileged to walk this journey with countries who share our vision, not only to promote health as a right but also to ensure that all people, without discrimination, enjoy access to health care.

While our network remains at the forefront of tackling some of the most difficult yet pertinent health-related questions through its annual themes, we have enjoyed the support of other Member States that believe that, regardless of our differences, the health of our people should always take priority. This is based on the recognition that health is a precondition for, and an outcome and indicator of, all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Under the leadership of our Chair, Brazil, we have once again presented a draft resolution seeking to promote a healthier world through better nutrition. The draft resolution brings together the commitments made in the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, the Second International Conference on Nutrition, political declarations on non-communicable diseases and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, among others.

In line with the commitments made by our Heads of State and Government at the high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases last September, as well as those made by ministers of health at the World Health Assembly in 2017, we urge Member States to promote healthy diets and adopt fiscal and regulatory public policies, such as taxing unhealthy foods and beverages, effective front-of-pack labelling, restrictions on the marketing and commercialization of unhealthy foods to children and adolescents, and the reformulation of industrialized foods to improve their nutritional value.

What we did not anticipate was that such an earnest effort aimed at the protection of the health of our population in line with the commitments made in Sustainable Development Goal 3 would erode the very essence of diplomacy, constructive engagement and mutual respect. Instead of heeding the call to adopt and review policies to ensure that children who suffer from child obesity resulting from unhealthy foods and beverages were protected by Governments, we witnessed a concerted effort to shut down any attempts aimed at highlighting this pertinent issue, all because it threatens industry. Nonetheless, South Africa and its partners remain resolved in their commitment to protect public health against the advocates of industry, who will stop at nothing to block progress that brings us closer to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 3.

Accordingly, South Africa condemns attempts to limit dialogue at the United Nations on important issues simply because they are deemed controversial. We are called “distinguished delegates” because we are committed to finding solutions, even on some of the most difficult issues, through dialogue.

We thank the delegations that worked with us to produce a well-balanced draft resolution on such an important topic. The role of nutrition in the lives of all populations, in particular those battling communicable and non-communicable diseases, cannot be overemphasized. Through policies and concrete actions, we should ensure that consumers make informed choices about the food they eat, while promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles. It is our duty to protect our populations, in particular children, from all forms of malnutrition.

South Africa remains firm in its belief that access to medicines, in particular essential medicines that are affordable, safe, efficacious and of quality, is one of

the fundamental elements in progressively achieving the full realization of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

In that regard, South Africa wishes to reiterate its commitment to the Declaration adopted by the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference of 2001 in Doha on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), as well as the TRIPS Agreement, as instructive documents on the balance between intellectual property rights and the rights of Member States to protect public health.

It is unfortunate that despite all our efforts to find consensus, a vote has been called for on the draft resolution. We ask that all Member States who are committed to global health vote in support of the draft resolution.

Ms. DeSuza (Saint Kitts and Nevis): Saint Kitts and Nevis welcomes the adoption of draft resolution A/73/L.62, on global health and foreign policy, as a manifestation of our continued commitment to building a healthier world through better nutrition. At the outset, we thank the facilitator of Brazil for the excellent manner in which the negotiations were conducted and express our appreciation to the other members of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative.

Saint Kitts and Nevis believes that a healthy population is a wealthy population. We are convinced that health is a precondition for, and an outcome of, sustainable development. In particular, we note the multidimensional nature of health as defined throughout the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the important interplay between food security and improved nutrition as well as healthy diets and lifestyles. Our Government has committed to improving the health and well-being of all our citizens and people through the crafting of our national food and nutrition security policy and plan of action.

Saint Kitts and Nevis is undergoing a period of nutritional and epidemiological transitions. The nutrition transition is reflected in a shift in diets, which is seen in a reduced prevalence of undernutrition and infectious diseases and an increased prevalence of overweight and obesity — one of the main risk factors for non-communicable diseases. Those diseases are the main public health concerns in Saint Kitts and Nevis. We therefore maintain that our country and our Caribbean Community region will continue to pursue

the commitments made just a few months ago during the high-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, and we call on our partners and the international community to do the same.

The health of our children continues to be of particular concern. With extremely worrying prevalence rates of childhood obesity in our region, Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to promote the importance of breastfeeding, nutrition education and physical education as components of our national interventions aimed at improving the health of our children. In addition, we continue to strengthen initiatives to improve the nutritional health of our population throughout the life course and to prevent micronutrient deficiencies.

My Government firmly believes that social protection programmes are a fundamental component of providing a healthier environment for our people. In my Government's most recently launched programme, we have encouraged the beneficiaries of cash transfers to invest in healthy diets and lifestyles.

We maintain that we cannot secure a healthier world through better nutrition without the advancement of food and agricultural systems. Small island developing States, such as Saint Kitts and Nevis, will continue to face the dual threats of climate change and unhealthy populations. Climate change, with its implications for agriculture and fisheries, undermines food security and in fact denies our population access to affordable, healthy food.

As articulated in *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018*, published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, we note that all dimensions of food security and nutrition, including food availability, access and utilization, are affected by climate variability and climate extremes, even in the short term. An important component of national food and nutrition policy in Saint Kitts and Nevis is the creation of effective disaster preparedness and adaptation and mitigation strategies as a means of protecting our population from the threats of natural disasters and climate change.

In the context of our discussion on global health and foreign policy, Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to chart its course towards achieving universal health coverage for all its people, and we look forward to the high-level meeting on universal health coverage to be held during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Finally, Saint Kitts and Nevis renews its commitment to building a healthier nation, a healthier region and, ultimately, a healthier world through better nutrition.

Mr. Gimenez (Norway): Let me first thank the delegation of Brazil for its steady leadership of the negotiations on this year's draft resolution A/73/L.62. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the members of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative. The negotiations have been particularly challenging this year, and I commend all Brazil's efforts and success in achieving our collective outcome.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the submission and adoption of the resolution, as agreed in 2007 in the Oslo Ministerial Declaration, spearheaded by the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand.

Our shared concern then, as now, is that health is one of the most important yet broadly neglected foreign-policy issues of our time and that it needs our continued and strategic focus here at the United Nations. It is therefore encouraging that awareness has been raised on the centrality of health to attain our common development objectives.

The topic of this year's draft resolution — nutrition — is essential in our endeavours to achieve a healthy population. Improving nutrition involves complex interrelationships between diet and disease, while the effects of malnutrition, including underweight, stunting, overweight and obesity, all heighten risks for both infectious and non-communicable diseases. Several of those concerns are underlined and addressed in this year's draft resolution.

However, we regret that the language regarding non-communicable diseases and nutrition in paragraph 10 does not sufficiently address some of the concrete policies and actions needed. We consider the language in that paragraph to be weaker than the language we collectively agreed on at the high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases as late as September.

In my country's view, the key to attaining the nutrition-related target 3.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on reducing disease and premature death, is through ensuring increased consumption of healthy and nutritious foods. That means that we must make a concerted effort to avoid consumption of unhealthy foods that are high in sugars, salt, saturated fats and trans-fats.

The normative work of the World Health Organization (WHO) has shown that there are cost-effective ways to achieve that, including the use of fiscal measures, such as taxation, front-pack labelling and restrictions on marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages, especially those aimed at children. The evidence base for applying those recommended measures is clear. We therefore urge Member States seeking to improve health through better nutrition to implement the WHO cost-effective actions and recommendations.

It is encouraging that we acknowledge the link between nutrition and sexual and reproductive health. Improving nutrition for mothers and children helps ensure that children get the best start in life and the opportunity to reach their full potential. We must step up our work in that area.

Health is an integrated element of a number of SDGs. Improving health and access to health services for all has a direct impact on poverty reduction, ending hunger, gender equality, education and peaceful societies, among many other issues. Progress on health means progress towards achieving the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Health and improved nutrition are among the most important building blocks of any well-functioning society. It is a long-term investment, but it is one that we must make now. We have no time to lose. We regret that, despite our efforts to reach a consensus, a vote has been requested on the draft resolution. We join others in asking Member States to vote in favour of it.

Mr. Khalil (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I commend the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative group, in particular the delegation of Brazil and its expert, for the effective management of this important issue. I also express my appreciation to the Secretariat, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for their support.

Everyone is aware of the high priority of issues relating to global health, reflecting its international importance and the central role of international cooperation in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, we at the United Nations have increasingly begun to address these issues, which were formerly considered specialized issues that did not require discussion at Headquarters.

Despite the related challenges, in particular with regard to delegations of developing countries with limited resources, this positive development reflects our realization of the need to achieve coherence in policies concerning a number of sectors, such as health, trade and industry, among others.

With respect to the relevant draft resolutions, the chosen topic of nutrition this year attests to the interrelated nature of such issues. The topic of nutrition calls for increased focus on the part of the international community, given that we have all noted in the reports of the Secretary-General the disconcerting and unprecedented increase over the past three years in the number of those suffering from hunger, at rates not seen in the past 10 years. It is simply unacceptable for us — the international community — to stand idly by as we watch more than 150 million children suffer from stunted growth. Through scientific research, it is also within our reach to consider studies and data on sound nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Given their limited financial and economic resources, however, human societies for the most part are unable to adhere to such guidelines.

With regard to scientific research, my delegation would like to point out that, as we are deliberating on the annual resolution under the agenda item “Global health and foreign policy”, many scientific discoveries have allowed us to achieve progress in the treatment and prevention of many diseases. It is important to note, however, that human societies have never been as stringent in placing restrictions on the transfer and recognition of knowledge as we are at the present time. That represents a very grave challenge for humankind. It is crucial that we step up our means to address that imbalance. It is also unacceptable that individuals and societies should suffer from any disease for which a cure is available, and for States and individuals to endure unbearable financial burdens in order to treat diseases that afflict them.

Given the important provisions of draft resolution A/73/L.62 on nutrition and health in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in all its dimensions and objectives, while calling for the elimination of poverty in all its dimensions and forms, my delegation has given the draft resolution serious consideration and interacted constructively and positively with the other delegations since its submission. We were happy to be among its sponsors. I hope that all of us will be able to congratulate ourselves

on the adoption of this important draft resolution in few moments. We hope that all States, the Secretariat and the relevant programmes and specialized agencies, whose role we value, will implement the draft resolution upon its adoption and enhance international cooperation so that no State and no person will be left behind.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): We thank the Secretary-General for transmitting the important report of the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) (see A/73/414) on improving coordination and cooperation to address the health needs of the most vulnerable for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We share the views of the Director General of WHO that health is not just an end in and of itself but a foundation for human capital. Therefore, Sustainable Development Goal 3, aimed at ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages, is fundamental for reaching other SDG targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Yesterday, for the first time at the United Nations, and globally, we celebrated Universal Health Coverage Day, which is a demonstration of our collective commitment to provide access to health care to everyone, everywhere. To move forward, we should frame emerging priorities, identify challenges and offer collective recommendations for accelerating progress towards universal health coverage. In that regard, we welcome draft resolution A/73/L.62, and our delegation remains grateful to the delegation of Brazil for successfully facilitating it in the most inclusive manner.

As we endeavour to address the health needs of the most vulnerable populations and improve equity, we need to work for collective action and its greater coherence at all levels and among all sectors and stakeholders. Global health is multidimensional in scope, often crosses physical boundaries and requires sustained high-level commitment and closer international cooperation, including partnerships among the relevant stakeholders. We recognize that, despite the progress made, challenges in global health still remain, with special regard to inequities and vulnerabilities within and among countries, regions and populations.

Bangladesh has seen remarkable health improvements since gaining independence in 1971 and has evolved into a role model of good health at low cost. Public health scholars have identified Bangladesh as a positive deviant, performing far better, given its widespread challenges, than anyone could have

expected. *The Lancet*, the renowned British medical journal, called that success one of the great mysteries of global health. In terms of health expenditure, per capita purchasing power parity expenditure from public funds in Bangladesh increased to \$88 in 2014, while the country spent less than 3 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on health in the same year. However, Bangladesh's health achievements in reducing maternal, infant and under-5 mortality rates, increased vaccination coverage and higher life expectancy at birth, have been achieved despite such low per capita GDP spending on health care. Bangladesh has outperformed its many South Asian neighbours, convincingly defying the expert view that economic strength and abundant health resources are the key drivers of better population health. Progress in the area of infant, child and maternal mortality has been particularly striking, with maternal mortality reduced from 594 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 176 deaths in 2015. The infant mortality and under-5 mortality rates, as of 2016, are 29 and 36 per 1,000 live births, respectively.

Such achievements are attributed to a variety of health and non-health systems-related factors, including the sustained political commitment of the Government, maternal and child health-based strategies, an expanded programme of immunization, innovative low-cost technology, the extensive networking of field workers, the establishment of community-based clinics by the present Government under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the active collaboration between the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the proactive role of mass media, intersectoral cooperation and the use of information and communication technology, among others.

I must mention here our strategy for the empowerment of women. Support for women in relation to national development has been one of the most important contributing factors. Bangladesh has undertaken the implementation of a pluralistic health system, in which resources were drawn from public funds and spaces were created for NGOs to work within the health sector.

This year, the theme of the global health and foreign policy draft resolution is a healthier world through better nutrition. Nutritional imbalances can lead to the two extreme health burdens of undernutrition and obesity and, like many other developing countries, Bangladesh has been experiencing both those burdens. Child malnutrition is a particular issue — according

to 2011 data, 30 to 40 per cent of children under 5 years of age are underweight or stunted. Yet, although undernutrition remains a significant issue in Bangladesh, overweight and obesity are also becoming concerns, especially for women of reproductive age. Despite these challenges, Bangladesh has made strides in reducing the prevalence of the stunting and wasting forms of undernutrition, which decreased from 41 per cent in 2011 to 36 per cent in 2014.

As agreed by Heads of State and Government at the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on non-communicable diseases, Bangladesh has committed to minimizing the impact of the main risk factors for non-communicable diseases and to addressing malnutrition in all its forms by intensifying its efforts and scaling up its activities under the work programme of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025).

Bangladesh recognizes the right of all people to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Those fundamental human rights cannot be realized without universal health coverage, which ensures that all people have access to the health services that they need without enduring financial hardship. In that regard, we welcome the high-level meeting on universal health coverage to be convened during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly.

We underscore that effective, results-oriented international coordination and cooperation are vital to the achievement of Goal 3 and other health-related Sustainable Development Goals. High-level political support from, and engagement with, Member States and non-State actors is therefore fundamental. Accordingly, we join the global community in committing to achieve universal health care by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals. We are fully committed in our support for draft resolution A/73/L.62.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this agenda item.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/73/L.37 and A/73/L.62 and draft amendment A/73/L.67.

Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Nemroff (United States of America): The United States regrets that it finds it necessary to vote against draft resolution A/73/L.62 today. No nation makes greater contributions in terms of resources and actions to promote global health than my country, and we appreciate the intent of the originators of the global health and foreign policy resolution to address this topic through an annual process, as a way of showing our long-term commitment to the issue. We also appreciate the importance of the general theme of this year's resolution, with its focus on nutrition.

Therefore, we find it unfortunate that this well-intentioned idea seems to have degenerated into an exercise in negotiating a draft resolution for the sake of negotiating a draft resolution. While the topic of nutrition is indeed an important one, this draft resolution seems little more than a collection of general platitudes, along with many paragraphs on extraneous topics that are composed of previously agreed text with the addition of the words "and nutrition" to make them appear on topic. This year's draft resolution has become a metaphor for the problem of the overconsumption of foods that have little nutritional value but are high in empty calories.

As representatives here know, when resolutions really matter, the sponsors go to great lengths to defend the texts from extraneous or controversial language in order to defend the parts that are important. In this instance, the opposite has happened. It has become a freight train in which the goal seems to be to load it with as much extraneous text and unfinished business as possible, while no delegation dares to oppose the text because we all believe that health is so important. This year, our delegation has therefore decided to vote against this resolution, not out of disrespect for this body but, in fact, because we respect the need to focus on resolutions and other agreed outcomes that are actionable and have real-world implications.

In future, when these types of resolutions are brought up annually, we would urge the sponsors to take a different approach — keep the draft resolutions as concise as possible, minimize or eliminate entirely preambular text and resolve to keep operative text to a minimum, with an emphasis on text that is truly new. Sponsors should seek to defend those resolutions against regurgitations of previously agreed text that we have adopted countless times. The draft resolution before us today does not respect the results of the high-level meetings of the General Assembly held by our

leaders just two months ago. On the contrary, the draft resolution diminishes and distorts the declarations of our leaders by attempting to relitigate those carefully negotiated balances.

With regard to the seventh preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, the United States believes that women should have equal access to reproductive health care. We remain committed to the principles laid out in the Beijing Declaration and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. As has been made clear over many years, there was international consensus that those documents do not create new international rights, including any right to abortion. The United States fully supports the principle of voluntary choice regarding maternal and child health and family planning. We do not recognize abortion as a method of family planning, nor do we support abortion in our reproductive health assistance. We also note that the United States is the largest bilateral donor of reproductive health and family planning assistance.

Moreover, with respect to the eighth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, the United States strongly supports the dignity and value of all human life and rejects any attempt by others to construe the term "health services" or "health-care services" to include abortion.

In our view, the United Nations must respect the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including trade negotiations, and must not involve itself in decisions and actions in other forums, including at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The United States recognizes the importance of access to affordable, safe and effective medicines and the critical role that intellectual property plays in incentivizing the development of new and improved medicines.

We regret, however, the inclusion of the unacceptable language of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health in the thirty-third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. It is unacceptable to the United States that the United Nations and other Member States have used non-WTO multilateral forums to attempt to characterize WTO rules and agreements. This could lead to misinterpretation of international trade obligations in a manner that may negatively affect the ability of countries to incentivize new

drug development and expand access to medicines. Furthermore, that paragraph distorts the agreement reached less than three months ago in the declaration adopted at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on non-communicable diseases.

Furthermore, the United States reaffirms, in this context, that the strong protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights incentivizes the creation and distribution of lifesaving medicines and other useful consumer products around the world that address the health, environmental and development challenges of today and tomorrow through a carefully negotiated, balanced set of TRIPS member rights and obligations. We continue to oppose language that we believe attempts to characterize trade commitments. We do not believe that United Nations resolutions are the appropriate vehicle for such pronouncements, and we are concerned that the inclusion of that language may be an attempt to prejudice negotiations under way or anticipated in other, more appropriate forums. Nor does this draft resolution prefigure or in any way influence the preparations for or the outcome of the fall 2019 high-level event on universal health coverage.

Finally, regarding the reference to the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, we believe that the Compact and the process that led to its adoption, including the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, represent an effort by the United Nations to advance global governance at the expense of the sovereign right of States to manage their immigration systems in accordance with their national laws, policies and interests. While the United States honours the contributions of the many immigrants who helped build our nation, we cannot support a compact or process that imposes, or has the potential to impose, international guidelines, standards, expectations or commitments that might constrain our ability to make decisions in the best interests of our nation and citizens. In that regard, we thank the delegation of Hungary for having proposed the amendment (A/73/L.67) to the text.

Lastly, with regard to references to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we addressed our concerns in our statement on 3 December under agenda item 12 (see A/73/PV.44).

Mr. Vieira (Brazil): In connection with draft resolution A/73/L.62, I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of France, Indonesia,

Norway, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and my own country, Brazil.

Every year since 2008, the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative has submitted a draft resolution on global health issues for consideration by the plenary of the General Assembly, and every year it has been adopted by consensus. It is regrettable that this year, as we celebrate its tenth anniversary, an entire draft resolution on health, with a focus on nutrition, is being put to the vote, especially given that the high-level meeting on universal health coverage will be held in 2019. The work done by the Missions of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative countries in Geneva; the dedication, energy and hard work of all delegations here in New York; and the tireless support of the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations all must be acknowledged and recognized.

We have tried to conduct an open and transparent process and to accommodate the various concerns expressed by delegations. In that regard, Brazil is confident that we have achieved the best possible results, given the time constraints and all the challenges with which we had to deal. The draft resolution reaffirms the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. It notes the importance of health across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the essential role of food security, improved nutrition, healthy diets and lifestyles in achieving the SDGs. The document recognizes that health challenges call for a national, regional and international approach, while also recognizing the need to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition, including undernourishment, stunting, wasting, underweight, overweight and obesity in all age groups.

We would recall that the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its Framework for Action reiterated the importance of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) and welcomed the political declarations of the high-level meetings on the fight against tuberculosis and non-communicable diseases. We have before us a draft resolution that sets the tone on health issues, and the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative will continue to do so for years to come. In that regard, we invite all delegations to vote in favour of the text. Their vote in favour is an indication of the

importance and the priority given to health issues in the United Nations agenda.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.37, entitled “Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This oral statement is being made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraphs 1, 4, 5 and 6 of draft resolution A/73/L.37, the General Assembly would decide the following. The one-day high-level meeting on universal health coverage would be convened by the President of the General Assembly and held in New York a day before the start of the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. It would consist of an opening segment, a plenary segment for general discussion, two multi-stakeholder panels and a brief closing segment. The organizational arrangements for the two multi-stakeholder panels would be as follows: two multi-stakeholder panels would be held in parallel to the plenary segment, one from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the other from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. The high-level meeting would also approve a concise and action-oriented political declaration, agreed in advance by consensus through intergovernmental negotiations, to be submitted by the President of the General Assembly for adoption by the Assembly, and request the President of the General Assembly, with the support of the World Health Organization and other relevant partners, to organize and preside over an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing, before the end of July 2019, with the active participation of appropriate senior-level representatives of Member States, observers of the General Assembly, parliamentarians, representatives of local Government, the relevant United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, invited civil-society organizations, philanthropic foundations, academia, medical associations, the private sector and broader communities, ensuring the participation and voices of women, children, youth and indigenous leadership, as part of the preparatory process for the high-level meeting. It would also request the President

to prepare a summary of the hearing prior to the high-level meeting.

Pursuant to the decisions contained in paragraphs 1, 4 and 6 of the draft resolution, it is envisaged that the following meetings will be held in New York: a one-day high-level meeting on universal health coverage on 23 September 2019 consisting of an opening segment, a plenary segment, a brief closing segment with interpretation in all six languages, two multi-stakeholder panels to be held in parallel on 23 September 2019 with interpretation in all six languages, and an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing before the end of July 2019. While interpretation services for the two segments of the high-level meeting and the interactive multi-stakeholder hearing would be provided using the meeting entitlements of the General Assembly, the remaining meetings would constitute an addition to the meetings workload for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2019. However, the additional requirements for meeting services in the amount of \$23,800 would be met from within existing resources.

Furthermore, the decision contained in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution would entail an addition to the documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2019 of one post-session document of 10,700 words in all six languages. However, the additional requirements for documentation services in the amount of \$32,500 would be met from within existing resources. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/73/L.37, no additional requirements would arise under the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

The statement that I have just read out has been made available on the PaperSmart portal.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.37?

Draft resolution A/73/L.37 was adopted (resolution 73/131).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.62, entitled “Global health and foreign policy: a healthier world through better nutrition”.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/73/L.62: Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, the Gambia, Guinea, India, Japan, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Mexico, Madagascar, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, the Philippines, Portugal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sao Tome and Principe, Sweden, Togo, Turkey, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

The Acting President: Before we proceed, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on the draft amendment circulated in document A/73/L.67. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Hungary, Israel, Libya, United States of America

Against:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic

of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bulgaria, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Norway, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Sweden, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft amendment A/73/L.67 was rejected by 4 votes to 117, with 27 abstentions.

The Acting President: I now put to the vote draft resolution A/73/L.62. A recorded vote has been requested.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra

Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Libya, United States of America

Abstaining:

Hungary

Draft resolution A/73/L.62 was adopted by 157 votes to 2, with 1 abstention (resolution 73/132).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor for explanations of vote after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Goebel (Germany): I have the honour to deliver this explanation of vote on behalf of Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and my own country, Germany.

We have voted today in favour of resolution 73/132 on the understanding that the text in its entirety reflects a compromise package. With regard to the twenty-second preambular paragraph, we would like to specify that we understand that paragraph as not promoting an expansion of the rights of migrants in an irregular situation within our countries, beyond what has been agreed previously in relevant international documents and what is in line with national legislation.

Mrs. Stern (Australia): Australia was pleased to vote in support of resolution 73/132, and we thank the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative for bringing it forward. Australia takes seriously its obligations under international law, including those contained in the core human rights instruments. We acknowledge that all States have an overarching obligation to respect, protect and promote the human rights of migrants and refugees. Australia does not support conflating this resolution with the global compact on migration, which

is expected to be considered by the General Assembly next week. For that reason, we abstained in the voting on the twenty-second preambular paragraph, as contained in document A/73/L.67.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): Austria voted in favour of resolution 73/132 today despite our reservations regarding the twenty-second preambular paragraph, as we see the draft resolution in its entirety as a package on the important topic of global health, with this year's focus on nutrition. In that regard, however, we reiterate that Austria does not support the global compact on migration and that it decides on migration issues in a fully sovereign manner, based solely on national laws and international treaties, duly ratified by the Austrian Parliament. Therefore, our vote today cannot be understood as accepting of an expansion of the rights of migrants.

Mrs. Schneeberger (Switzerland): Switzerland thanks the core group for its efforts to bring the negotiations on resolution 73/132, entitled "Global health and foreign policy: a healthier world through better nutrition", to an end. We regret that the resolution was put to the vote today. We would like to take this opportunity to clarify our position on certain aspects of the resolution.

The global health and foreign policy resolution is historically rooted in the Oslo Ministerial Declaration and focuses on one of its specific topics every year. This year's resolution addresses the issue of nutrition. Switzerland regrets that the resolution is not more focused on the topic. The text before us includes a variety of subjects not directly related to nutrition. We believe that those subjects should be discussed in the appropriate forums. One example is the issue of access to medicines mentioned in the fifteenth preambular paragraph.

With regard to this particular topic, Switzerland takes a holistic approach including all relevant factors that contribute to access to medical products. There are many reports in that regard, and we do not see a reason to single out one specific reference. Switzerland welcomes the fact that this year's resolution has taken up nutrition. Switzerland is convinced that nutrition plays a critical role for health and development. In addition, this year's resolution is fully in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its multisectoral nature.

Mrs. Bernal Prado (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Chile has reservations concerning the twenty-second preambular paragraph of resolution 73/132.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Draft decision A/73/L.38

The Acting President: As announced in the letter from the President of the General Assembly, dated 27 November 2018, draft decision A/73/L.38 is orally revised by adding to the end of paragraph (f) the following text:

“..., subject to the provisions in the resolution entitled ‘Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage’”.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/73.L.38, entitled “High-level meetings of the General Assembly in September 2019”, as orally revised.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) of draft decision A/73/L.38, the General Assembly would decide that the general debate of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly will be held from Tuesday, 24 September 2019 to Saturday, 28 September 2019 and on Monday, 30 September 2019; to hold the high-level meeting on universal health coverage on Monday, 23 September from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., in accordance with resolution 72/139; to hold the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly on Tuesday, 24 September, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and on Wednesday, 25 September, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.; to hold the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development of the General Assembly on Thursday, 26 September, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and

from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., and to hold on the same day the high-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., in accordance with resolution 72/251.

Furthermore, as indicated in the letter from the President of the General Assembly dated 27 November, following action on draft resolution A/73/L.37, entitled “Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage”, draft decision A/73/L.38 is to be orally revised before action on it by adding to the end of paragraph (f) in the text:

“..., subject to the provisions in the resolution entitled ‘Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage’”.

Pursuant to the decision contained in paragraph (b) of the draft decision, it is envisaged that the following meetings will be held in New York: a one-day high-level meeting on universal health coverage, on 23 September, consisting of an opening segment, a plenary segment and a brief closing segment, with interpretation in all six languages; and two multi-stakeholder panels to be held in parallel on 23 September, with interpretation in all six languages and an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing before the end of July. While interpretation services for the two segments of the high-level meeting and the interactive multi-stakeholder hearing would be provided using the meeting entitlements of the General Assembly, the remaining meetings would constitute an addition to the meetings workload for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2019. However, the additional requirements for meeting services in the amount of \$23,800 would be met from within existing resources.

Furthermore, the decision contained in paragraph (b) of the draft resolution would entail an addition to the documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2019 of one post-session document of 10,700 words, in all six languages. However, the additional requirements for documentation services in the amount of \$32,500 would be met from within existing resources.

The meetings and documentation requirements in the aforementioned fourth and fifth paragraphs of this oral statement were also indicated in the oral statement read out and distributed upon the adoption of draft resolution A/73/L.37.

Pursuant to the decision contained in paragraphs (c) and (d) of the draft decision, it is envisaged that the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly, the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development and the high-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons will be utilizing existing entitlements.

Pursuant to the decision contained in paragraph (e) of the draft decision, it is envisaged that the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States (SIDS) through the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway on 27 September, in New York, will consist of two meetings with interpretation in six languages. The meetings would constitute an addition to the meetings workload for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2019. However, the requirements for meeting services in the amount of \$11,900 would be met from within existing resources.

Pursuant to the decisions contained in paragraphs (b), (c), (d) and (e) of the draft decision, it is also envisaged that the high-level meetings would constitute an addition to the meetings and media coverage, media accreditation and liaison and audiovisual services for the Department of Public Information in 2019. However, the requirements in the amount of \$51,600 would be met from within existing resources.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft decision A/73/L.38, no additional requirements would arise under the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

The statement I have just read out has been made available on the PaperSmart portal.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft decision A/73/L.38, as orally revised?

Draft decision A/73/L.38, as orally revised, was adopted (decision 73/524).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 7.

Agenda item 9 (continued)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Draft resolution (A/73/L.40/Rev.1)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.40/Rev.1.

Mr. Khalil (Egypt): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Graduation of countries from the least developed country category”, contained in document A/73/L.40/Rev.1.

The draft resolution pertains to the graduation of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Solomon Islands and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe from the least developed country (LDC) category.

Since the creation of the least developed country category in 1971, only five countries have graduated from it. Two more are to be graduated in 2020 and 2021. Therefore, the graduation of an additional three countries, which is at the core of the decision that the General Assembly is about to take today, is a very positive development and should be welcomed and celebrated by the entire international community. More importantly, graduation from the LDC category represents a clear and strong signal that those three countries are on the right development trajectory towards achieving sustainable development and should be commended for their development achievements.

The Group would like to stress that the graduating countries, with the full support of the international community, should be put on a path of sustainable development to minimize the risk of backsliding after graduation. As the three graduating countries begin preparations for their smooth national transition strategies, we call on development partners, including the United Nations, to recognize that existing vulnerabilities to economic and environmental shocks will not be overcome simply by graduating out of the LDC category. Therefore, we call on all development and trading partners to assist the three graduating countries and provide them with country-specific support over the preparatory period and beyond to ensure smooth sailing in their transition out of the LDC category.

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank all partners involved in the negotiations

on the draft resolution. We hope that the General Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

Finally, the Group would also like to thank the delegations of Nepal and Canada for their efforts in co-facilitating the draft resolution, as well as the delegation of Bhutan for coordinating it on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.40/Rev.1, entitled “Graduation of countries from the least developed country category”.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.40/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/73/L.40/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 73/133).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor for explanations of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Tealei (Tuvalu): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum members represented at the United Nations: Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, Tuvalu.

First, we would like to thank the Group of 77 and China for introducing resolution 73/133 and Nepal and Canada for their able facilitation of the resolution.

Graduation from the least developed country (LDC) category is an important milestone on a country’s road to sustainable development and should be something that countries strive to achieve. However, if countries are not fully ready, graduation instead brings fear and regret. Therefore, graduation must be undertaken cautiously and mutually so as to ensure that it is sustainable.

The word “graduation” itself implies a gradual process rather than a cliff. To protect the development trajectory that led to graduation in the first place, it is crucial that the process avoid uncertainty and the potentially rapid loss of economic and development gains beyond graduation. We know that a slower, more deliberate transition process is more likely to create successful conditions for sustainable graduation for all

those involved. It is in our interest to ensure a successful transition process.

The Pacific is a unique region, with unique vulnerabilities and operating challenges. We share many of those vulnerabilities and challenges with our other brothers and sisters in small island developing States (SIDS) around the world. Many SIDS are highly vulnerable to economic shocks and natural disasters. Despite being middle-income countries, SIDS also struggle to attract certain forms of financing and investment. Susceptibility to fragility and conflict can also affect access to financing. Some of our Pacific countries have graduated from the least developed country category or are on their way. Others face obstacles that make graduation seem beyond our reach.

Even after graduation, we remain highly vulnerable due to the impact of climate change and the risk of natural disasters. Gross national income (GNI) per capita does not reflect vulnerabilities, nor does rising GNI make them go away. The Pacific Islands Forum considers that the mid-term review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway next year will be an ideal opportunity to reflect on the synergies between the development needs of SIDS and LDCs and to ensure that support measures for both are consistent and fit for purpose. It will also be an opportunity to ensure that the graduation process helps graduating countries build the resilience they will need, not just to protect but to extend their development achievement. We look forward to working with all those present towards that end in 2019.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 9.

Agenda item 14 (continued)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related field

Draft resolution (A/73/L.50)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mongolia to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.50.

Mr. Sukhee (Mongolia): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.50, entitled “Education for democracy”, on behalf of the sponsors representing

various regions and my own country, Mongolia. The text, which has been agreed by all delegations attending the informal consultations, includes meaningful advancements to promote education for democracy.

We reaffirm the fundamental link among democratic governance, peace, development and the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and we also recognize that education contributes to the strengthening of democracy, good governance and the rule of law at all levels.

In the draft resolution, we recall that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets are integrated and indivisible and that they balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. We acknowledge the importance of taking measures to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and of promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, including expanded opportunities for all children, particularly girls' access to quality education.

We also recognize that education for democracy nurtures responsible and active learners, capable of contributing effectively to peace and prosperity in their societies and beyond. Furthermore, Member States and national, regional and local education authorities are encouraged, as appropriate, to make further efforts to strengthen, through education, the connections among democratic governance, peace, sustainable development and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Moreover, we acknowledge the important contributions of civil society, academia, the private sector and other stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in support of democracy and education for democracy.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to all the delegations that participated actively in our discussions on the draft text, as well as to all sponsors for their support.

In conclusion, on behalf of all the sponsors, I would like to express our hope that the draft resolution will receive the unanimous support of Member States and wide co-sponsorship, as it has in previous years.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.50, entitled "Education for Democracy".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to the delegations listed in document A/73/L.50, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, the Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey and Uruguay.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.50?

Draft resolution A/73/L.50 was adopted (resolution 73/134).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Ordeman (United States of America): The United States believes that education is transformational for individuals and societies and that it creates pathways to better health, economic growth, a sustainable environment and peaceful democratic societies.

On 15 November, the United States Agency for International Development announced a new education policy aimed at focusing resources on programmes that produce measurable learning outcomes for students. The new policy also recognizes the important role of non-State actors, including civil-society organizations, faith-based and charitable entities and the private sector, in providing educational opportunities that help students gain access to the education and skills that they need to be productive members of society.

While the United States joined the consensus on resolution 73/134, on education for democracy, we do so with the express understanding that when the resolution acknowledges the importance of taking measures to ensure various aspects of education, it does so in terms that are mindful of and consistent with the governance framework for education in the United States and our respective federal, state and local authorities.

We see significant variation in the capacity and effectiveness of many nations' Governments in providing high-quality education. In many instances, non-State schools and providers, which often include faith-based and charitable organizations, are stepping in to fill gaps that would otherwise prevent access to education for many children and youth. Currently, in low-income countries, non-State schools enrol nearly 14 per cent of primary school-age students, and in lower middle-income countries the enrolment rate for primary school-age students rises to 24 per cent.

The United States believes that there is both a need and an opportunity to engage with non-State schools, including those of faith-based and charitable entities, to help ensure access to quality education for children and youth in developing countries. We further understand the reference in the resolution to internationally agreed development goals to refer to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United States position is articulated in the following explanation of position on that document.

With regard to the references to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the resolution, we addressed our concerns regarding such references in a general explanation of position delivered on 8 November in the Second Committee and in an explanation of position delivered in the General Assembly regarding resolution 73/24, entitled "Sport as an enabler of sustainable development", which was adopted under agenda item 12 on 3 December (see A/73/PV.44).

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position after the voting.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

Agenda item 128 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Draft resolution (A/73/L.45)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.45.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): In my capacity as Chair of the group of States members of the

Organization of Islamic Cooperation in New York, I have the pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.45, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation". The draft resolution is consistent with the spirit, mission and purposes of resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, in which the Assembly decided to invite the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to participate in the decisions and work of the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs in the capacity of observer.

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution reaffirms the common purpose and shared objectives of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations in conflict prevention and resolution, confidence-building, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, post-conflict rehabilitation, mediation and preventive diplomacy, and the promotion of a culture of peace through dialogue and cooperation, especially in connection with conflict situations involving Muslim communities around the world.

It welcomes, inter alia, the initiatives on interfaith dialogue pursued by the two organizations. Furthermore, the draft resolution highlights the desire of the two organizations to work more closely in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and scientific fields and in their common search for solutions to global issues of concern, such as questions relating to international peace and security, respect for territorial integrity, disarmament, self-determination, decolonization, the promotion and protection of human rights, economic and social development and combating international terrorism.

Among other issues, the draft resolution recognizes the existing cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In its operative paragraphs, the draft resolution reaffirms the shared goals of the two organizations in promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process. It further acknowledges the cooperation of the two organizations in combating intolerance, the stigmatization of persons based on their religion or beliefs and preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.

Today we are witnessing the increasing importance and utility of dynamic cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Indeed, in the face of protracted as well as emerging

conflicts around the world, such cooperation between the two organizations is an important strategic value.

In conclusion, we take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation to delegations for their interest in, and engagement with, the draft resolution. I now request that all States members of the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/73/L.45 by consensus.

The Acting President: We shall now take a decision on draft resolution A/73.L.45, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”.

Before giving the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting, I would like to remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania align themselves with this statement.

The European Union and its member States support draft resolution A/73/L.45, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and encourage further cooperation between the two organizations. With reference to the language contained in the draft resolution, which notes the 2025 Programme of Action of the OIC, the EU stresses that such language does not imply any endorsement of the declarations, decisions and resolutions adopted by the OIC forums, which should be fully consistent with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and in full respect of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including, notably, the principle contained in Article 2.7.

In that regard, we wish to put on record that the provisions of the OIC 2025 Programme of Action related to Cyprus are not consistent with existing Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. We therefore urge the OIC to refrain from adopting positions that would undermine international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The EU trusts that its position will be taken into account in future so that it can continue to support the resolution.

Mr. Al-Arsan (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to express its position on agenda item 128 (b) and draft resolution A/73/L.45, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”.

The Syrian Arab Republic is one of the founding States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and will remain so despite the artificial performance staged by the Government of the OIC host country in August 2012, when it exerted, as usual, political and financial pressure on certain OIC States to suspend Syria’s membership through an illegitimate resolution in violation of the Organization’s rules of procedure.

My country has excellent, friendly and steadfast relations with most members of the OIC. We appreciate that many Governments and peoples of OIC member States remained at Syria’s side as we fought a terrorist war that was imposed on us. However, the position that we express today is put forward in response to the irregular practices of the Government of the OIC host country, which contravene the rules of procedure that govern the Organization and the principles of democracy, governance and equality of rights and responsibilities among Member States.

These irregular practices of the Government of the OIC host country require a new, comprehensive review and evaluation of the performance of the OIC. It is no secret that many OIC member States are dissatisfied with these undemocratic practices, which depart from the principle of collective action and have been imposed on them by the Government of the OIC host country. That Government imposes its vision, will, agenda and national interests on the OIC.

In that regard, my country has reservations on paragraph 81 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/73/328), on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations, pertaining to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. My country will continue to reject any role envisaged by the OIC that is dictated by the policies and practices of the host country’s Government, which are based on supporting armed terrorist and extremist groups in Syria while obstructing any political solution and interfering destructively and dangerously in the internal affairs of Syria.

My country has suffered from global terrorism to a degree unprecedented in the history of humankind. The Syrian people have paid a heavy price in blood

and in the loss of economic, industrial and agricultural gains that were realized after decades of hard work. The Syrian people will never forget or pardon any Government that has supported and financed terrorism directly or by failing to shoulder its responsibility, or that has promoted terrorism politically and by means of the media and extremist religious platforms.

My country will never forget that tens of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters who embrace the Wahhabi extremist ideology have flooded areas of conflict and fighting in Syria from more than 100 States members of the United Nations. Regrettably, most of those terrorists came from OIC member States. It is evident that the recruitment and funding of tens of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters and their ease of passage to Syria were not coincidental or random events. Rather, they were an organized and systematic process carried out by certain Governments based on political and military investment in terrorism and extremist ideology with a view to achieving the political objectives of bringing down the legitimate Government in Syria, spreading chaos in the country and undermining its cultural identity, which has existed for centuries and is based on peaceful coexistence, tolerance and religious and cultural diversity.

The millions of dollars spent by the OIC host Government to get political cover from influential countries and silence the voice of conscience will not change the fact that it is responsible for the extremist terrorist Wahhabi ideology embraced by terrorist groups since the creation of Al-Qaida, Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham and all affiliated armed terrorist groups. That ideology has threatened international peace and security, undermined the image of Islam and Muslims and sabotaged the commitment of the OIC to promoting peace, tolerance and dialogue among civilizations.

The OIC host country is responsible for the worst humanitarian disaster and famine in the history of mankind in Yemen, which has led to the killing, displacement and starvation of 20 million Yemenis, the destruction of the infrastructure of the country and the spread of epidemics, such as cholera, on a scale not seen in the world in the last 50 years. The OIC host country is responsible for fuelling sectarian divisions, leading to wars between Muslim communities, in order to realize selfish and destructive political objectives, which will eventually lead to more conflicts and wars in the Middle East, merely because the Government of the OIC host

country decided to create a situation of unjustified hostility towards certain OIC Member States.

Above all, the Palestinian question is no longer a priority for the OIC, even though it was created in 1969 to defend the Palestinian question and Jerusalem after an arson attack by an extremist terrorist against Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. However, everyone should know that the rights of the Palestinian people and the rights of the people of the occupied Syrian Golan will never be the subject of a deal or the negotiating tool of any Government or party that does not have the right or mandate to determine the fate of the occupied Arab territories.

Nonetheless, my country will continue to believe in the pioneering role of international and regional organizations. Hence, it expects the OIC and its member States to be able one day to collectively conduct a true review of the methodology and work of the organization and to rid itself of the financial and political polarization that has, regrettably, been brought about by the host Government.

With regard to the situation in Syria, what is required of the OIC is to restore its free decision-making ability and to exercise the true will of the overwhelming majority of its members. The OIC should coordinate and cooperate directly with the Syrian Government in the combat against terrorism and religious extremism, from which, regrettably, false stereotypical links have been made between Islam and terrorism. The OIC should support Syrian efforts regarding building and reconstruction; facilitating the return of refugees and displaced persons; putting an end to all forms of foreign occupation; and achieving a political settlement that is determined by Syrians without foreign intervention.

In conclusion, the position of my country is not and will not be directed against the OIC, which we established to be a forum that reflects the true identity of Islam as a religion of peace, coexistence and amity. We express this position in order to sound the alarm, so that the OIC will return to its true path. Our position flows from our commitment to the principles of democracy, transparency and equality in rights and duties among OIC member States. That prompts us to ask for a recorded vote on draft resolution A/73/L.45.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

I give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh on a point of order.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): Bangladesh, on behalf of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, is disappointed to see that the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic has broken consensus on the text of draft resolution A/73/L.45 by asking for a vote on the draft. The text of the draft resolution consists of agreed language from previous resolutions and is consistent with the mandate of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation and the relevant instruments and resolutions of the United Nations. We therefore request all States to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic on a point of order.

Mr. Al-Arsan (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I understood that my colleague the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh had asked for the floor on a point of order. However, he spoke about the draft resolution. In any case, it is not true that there is consensual language in the draft resolution under consideration because it was voted on last year. Hence, he cannot consider it to be agreed language.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.45, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/73/L.45, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Togo,

Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested on draft resolution A/73/L.45, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Armenia, El Salvador, Honduras, India, Israel, Syrian Arab Republic

Draft resolution A/73/L.45 was adopted by 139 votes to none, with 6 abstentions (resolution 73/135).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Afghanistan informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Grigoryan (Armenia): I would like to present the position of Armenia on resolution 73/135, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”.

Like most of the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), my country’s shared history stretches back many centuries. Armenia enjoys and will spare no effort to further deepen cordial relations with those States. With respect to the resolution just adopted, the delegation of Armenia would like to reiterate the importance of fostering the resolution of disputes and supporting efforts for the peaceful resolution of conflicts within internationally mandated negotiation formats.

Furthermore, Armenia notes with regret the reference to the OIC 2025 Programme of Action in the preambular part of the resolution. The document contains formulations that blatantly contravene the basic principles of the settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. We call upon the States members of the OIC, when making references to Nagorno Karabakh conflict resolution, to adhere to the language and formulations contained in the proposals of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe co-chairmanship — the only internationally agreed and mandated format — and to reject any attempts by one member State to misuse the OIC platform to misrepresent and distort the process of conflict resolution.

Ms. Galarneau (Canada): Canada strongly supports resolution 73/135 and its objective of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). However, we wish to dissociate ourselves from the fourth preambular paragraph, as Canada opposes initiatives at the United Nations and in other multilateral forums

that unfairly single out Israel for criticism. Canada rejects one-sided resolutions and any politicization of the issues.

Mr. Ordeman (United States of America): While the United States voted in favour of resolution 73/135, we would like to make it clear that we once again dissociate ourselves from the preambular paragraph that makes mention of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation 2025 Programme of Action. The United States views the 2025 Programme of Action’s treatment of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in particular, as one-sided, politicized and biased in a way that does not contribute positively to efforts to resolve the conflict.

Ms. Fisher-Tsin (Israel): Resolution 73/135, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)”, refers to the OIC Programme of Action that was adopted in 2016. Not only does the Programme of Action contain biased information against Israel, but it employs language that is simply untrue.

It is regrettable to see the hijacking of yet another organization to promote the anti-Israel agenda, which does nothing to encourage dialogue and does nothing for peace. Because of our strong bilateral relations with some OIC members, Israel did not vote against this resolution. However, I request the official record to show that Israel dissociates itself from the fourth preambular paragraph of the resolution, which begins “Noting the adoption by the Islamic Summit Conference”.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

Several delegations have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Denктаş (Turkey): I wish to state the following in the exercise of our right of reply to the statement made today by the observer of the European Union (EU).

Turkey supports the settlement of the Cyprus issue, as was clearly demonstrated at the last round of talks that ended in failure in Crans-Montana in July 2017 and at the previous attempt in 2004. Only a negotiated settlement based on dialogue and diplomacy can be sustainable. We will continue to engage with all relevant parties on that understanding. In the meantime, we call upon

all parties to contribute to these efforts without bias or prejudice. We regret, however, that the explanation of vote read on behalf of the EU today and the approach that it reflects are examples to the contrary.

The EU has admitted the Greek-Cypriot Administration as a full member, despite the overwhelming Greek-Cypriot vote in 2004 against a comprehensive settlement. That position is totally disconnected from the facts and continues to be in contravention of the very treaties that founded the bicomunal partnership republic in 1960. Since then, the EU has been unable to adopt a balanced position on the Cyprus issue. The explanation of vote read today reminds us once again that as long as the EU continues to espouse this biased approach, it will not be able to contribute to impartial efforts to reach a solution.

As for the document referred to in the statement delivered by the EU representative, the plain fact is that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's 2025 Programme of Action is fully in line with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Its provisions related to the Cyprus issue describe some of the necessary components of a viable solution that will be based upon the political equality of both sides on the island. We regard any contrary initiative as ill-intentioned and as an attempt to further hinder the settlement of the Cyprus dispute. Such a settlement would undoubtedly contribute to the security and prosperity of the entire eastern Mediterranean region. We therefore urge the EU to play a positive role in efforts to that end and, accordingly, to keep its promises to the Turkish Cypriots.

Mr. Alhakbani (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to exercise the right of reply to what the representative of Syria said about my country, which is the host country of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

We strongly reject the false and invalid accusations made by the representative of Syria against my country. We have grown accustomed to the representatives of the Syrian authorities distorting facts and lying in their statements. That is no surprise, coming from the representative of the Syrian Government, which has violated all international laws and norms as well as humanitarian and ethical laws.

The OIC, which was attacked by the representative of Syria because of the suspension of its membership in the OIC, is the organization that defends the causes

of the fraternal Syrian people. It supports resolutions pertaining to Syria. A recent example of that is the support of the OIC and its members for resolution 73/100, entitled "The occupied Syrian Golan".

Syria's membership in the OIC was suspended because of the crimes and violations perpetrated by the Syrian Government against the unarmed Syrian people. The Syrian Government is responsible for the murder of more than half a million Syrians and the displacement of nearly 7 million people externally and 6 million people internally. Is that not reason enough to suspend its membership in the OIC? The Syrian Government has perpetrated crimes against the Syrian people and has used internationally prohibited weapons, including toxic gases and barrel bombs. Is that not reason enough to suspend its membership in the OIC? The Syrian Government is detaining tens of thousands of Syrians in its jails, subjecting them to torture and starvation, and has murdered women, children and the elderly. Is that not reason enough to suspend its membership in the OIC?

All of the Syrian Government's attempts to divert attention away from the gross and blatant violations it has perpetrated against its people will never succeed. That is why its OIC membership was suspended. It is regrettable that the representative of the Syrian Government opposed resolution 73/135, which calls for cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): I would like to exercise my right of reply to the comments made by the delegation of Armenia.

As is well known, the continuing aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and the resulting military occupation of the territories of my country amount to serious breaches of obligations arising from peremptory norms of general international law. Consequently, the international community as a whole has a legitimate interest and is committed, under international law, to putting an end to those breaches by lawful means.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has consistently expressed its principled position on the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and has reaffirmed that the acquisition of territory through the use of force is inadmissible under the Charter of the United Nations and international law; urged the strict implementation of Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993); called for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal

of the armed forces of Armenia from the Nagorno Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan; and called for the resolution of the conflict on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan.

The OIC's position fully complies with international law and the relevant Council and Assembly resolutions. The resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC, including the one just adopted (resolution A/73/135), make it clear that the two organizations share the common objective of fostering peaceful and political solutions to conflicts in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Council resolutions. That same position was expressed by the Council in its presidential statement of 28 October 2013 (S/PRST/2013/16).

Instead of blaming others, Armenia must look at itself and realize, finally, that the achievement of peace, security and stability will be possible only if the consequences of Armenia's aggression are eliminated — that is, if Armenia's armed forces immediately, unconditionally and completely withdraw from the territories of Azerbaijan; the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country are restored; and the right of internally displaced Azerbaijanis to return to their homes and properties is guaranteed and fulfilled.

Ms. Ioannou (Cyprus): I regret having to take the floor in right of reply in respect of the statement recently made by Turkey. Let me first invite the Turkish delegation not to refer to my country with the use of arbitrary names it has unilaterally coined, but rather to respect the official name of Cyprus as a State Member of the United Nations.

I will not speak to the compatibility of the language of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation regarding Cyprus with the language in Security Council and the General Assembly resolutions on Cyprus. Instead, I invite fellow representatives to read the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984), and to make up their own minds in that regard. Through those resolutions, the authoritative organ for the maintenance of international peace and security has spoken definitively and has condemned the purported secession of Cyprus.

I hope that Turkey will provide tangible support in the process of finding a settlement to the Cyprus

problem. It can do that, first and foremost, by agreeing to withdraw its guarantees and troops. Mention was made of the plan that was rejected in 2004. A significant portion of the Cypriot population rejected that specific plan — not reunification of the island — simply because it was imposed on the Cypriots and would have essentially rendered Cyprus a vassal State through provisions that are manifestly contradictory to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Indeed, the occupied areas of Cyprus are a part of the European Union (EU), but the EU *acquis* remains suspended in those areas until reunification occurs. That, of course, is not the fault of anyone but the occupying Power.

Mr. Al-Arsan (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I exercise my right of reply to the right of reply exercised by my colleague the representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I would like to very briefly address him by saying that we were discussing objective matters related to the current method of work of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). As for the statement of the Saudi representative, it regrettably contains false and unfounded allegations that reflect the unbalanced and unwise position taken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia vis-à-vis the crisis in Syria.

When we speak of supporting terrorism, I hope that my Saudi colleague will recall the facts and evidence. We were not the ones, as he knows, who established Al-Qaida and the Taliban. He knows where Da'esh, Jabhat Al-Nusra and Hayat Tahriri Al-Sham are getting not only their money and weapons but also their ideological distortions of our true religion of Islam. We call upon him and the OIC to conduct a wise and transparent review of the OIC's actions in order to return it to the right path. We call upon him to do so because the Middle East region which brings us together is in danger today. We call upon the OIC to undertake such a review and to reconsider its decisions in view of the tension in that region. The OIC knows that creating new conflicts, disputes and a state of false animosity against a country or countries will not benefit the region. It knows the countries I am referring to in the Middle East region, which are original members of the OIC.

Mr. Grigoryan (Armenia): I am compelled to take the floor to respond to the usual round of fabrications voiced by the representative of Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani delegation is once again, in typical fashion,

portraying reality upside down. The representative of Azerbaijan has failed to mention the principle of the equal rights and self-determination of peoples, which, along with other principles, constitute the essence of the proposal submitted by the co-Chair mediators, which Azerbaijan continuously disregards.

Lastly, I would like to remind my colleague that the approach of the international community vis-à-vis the Nagorno Karabakh conflict is well reflected in the statement and proposals of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group co-Chairs.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): The misinterpretations that we have just witnessed in the comments made by the representative of Armenia are particularly astonishing as they are being made at the United Nations, whose Security Council adopted four resolutions condemning the use of force against Azerbaijan and the bombardment and occupation of its territories, in addition to reaffirming respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force in the acquisition of territory.

Furthermore, in response to Armenia's territorial claims and forcible actions, the Council reaffirmed that the Nagorno Karabakh region is an integral part of Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all of the occupied territories of my country. In other words, through its resolutions, the Council acknowledged that is a fact that acts of military force were committed against Azerbaijan, that such acts are unlawful and incompatible with the prohibition of the use of armed force in international relations and run counter to the Charter of the United Nations and its purposes, and that such acts constitute an obvious violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

The actions that Armenia describes as the exercise of the right to self-determination have been unequivocally qualified by the Security Council and other authoritative international organizations as the unlawful use of force and the commission of other serious crimes. Armenia's annexationist and colonialist policy has no chance of succeeding. The Nagorno Karabakh region has always been and will remain an inseparable part of Azerbaijan. The military occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan is temporary and will never produce the political outcome desired by Armenia. Yerevan must stop its futile attempts to mislead its own people and the international community, engage constructively in the conflict-settlement process and comply with its international obligations.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 128?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to consult members regarding an extension of the work of the Fifth Committee. Members will recall that at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 21 September, the General Assembly decided that the Fifth Committee would complete its work by Friday, 14 December.

However, I have been informed by the Chair of the Fifth Committee that the Committee requests an extension of its work to Friday, 21 December, in view of the expectation that such an extension would facilitate reaching consensus on the pending draft resolutions before the Committee.

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Fifth Committee until Friday, 21 December?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.