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President: Ms. Juul (Vice-President) (Norway)

Contents

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions

- (f) Prevention and control of non-communicable diseases
- (h) Calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields

Agenda item 20: United Nations research and training institutes

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In the absence of Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Ms. Juul (Norway), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions

(f) Prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (E/2019/55; E/2019/L.16)

1. **Mr. Obermeyer** (Deputy Director, New York Office of the World Health Organization (WHO)), introducing the report of the Director General of WHO on the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, transmitted in a note by the Secretary-General (E/2019/55), said that, through global joint programmes, thematic working groups and other initiatives, the Task Force had helped Member States to address 12 Sustainable Development Goals and almost 30 targets of the Goals. One such programme, primarily funded by the Russian Federation, had assisted countries in developing national investment cases, which enabled the study of the economic impact of non-communicable diseases and the return on investment from scaling up prevention and control of such diseases. While the Task Force global joint programmes had yielded positive results, they remained insufficiently resourced to meet their potential.

2. The Task Force strategy for 2019–2021 had four priorities: to support countries in delivering action on targets of the Sustainable Development Goals; mobilize resources; harmonize action and forge partnerships; and make the Task Force an exemplar for United Nations reform. The strategy was designed to mobilize the United Nations system to support countries in developing “whole-of-government” action for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, as that task could not be accomplished by the health sector alone. Through its work, the Task Force moved countries closer to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the triple billion targets in the thirteenth general programme of work of WHO. In response to a call from the Council in 2018, the Task Force had developed partnerships with non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, academia and philanthropic foundations to better achieve public health goals jointly with Governments. In that regard, the Task Force ensured that its work was protected from undue influence by any form of vested interest. The joint programmes had been expanded to cover areas such as the elimination of cervical cancer, tobacco control, the use of mobile technologies to

address non-communicable diseases, and assistance to countries to help build their fiscal and regulatory capacities.

3. The establishment of a multi-donor fund to catalyse action on non-communicable diseases had been recommended by the WHO Independent High-level Commission on Non-communicable Diseases and had also been highlighted as a necessary activity by the World Health Assembly. National responses to non-communicable diseases were determined by fiscal measures and domestic financing. In that regard, low- and middle-income countries were requesting a small amount of funds to catalyse their own responses and develop the necessary legislation to reduce premature deaths resulting from non-communicable diseases. Given that 70 per cent of deaths globally resulted from such diseases, the potential impact of response measures on national economies and economic growth was clear.

Draft resolution E/2019/L.16: United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases

4. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

5. **Ms. Plokhova** (Russian Federation), introducing the draft resolution, said that the Inter-Agency Task Force had been effective in its activities since its inception in 2013 and continued to yield positive results. The draft resolution underscored the importance of funding the Task Force and called on donors to support Member States to catalyse sustainable domestic responses to non-communicable diseases. The Russian Federation, together with WHO, had organized the first global ministerial conference on non-communicable diseases and healthy lifestyles in 2011, and the Government treated the issue as a priority in both its domestic and foreign policy. WHO had established an office for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in Moscow, which would be an important platform to advance best practices in that area. In February 2019, the Government had announced that it would make a voluntary contribution of up to US\$ 40.6 million to WHO for the period 2019–2023 to combat non-communicable diseases.

6. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary) said that Armenia, Jamaica and Japan wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

7. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that Mexico recognized the important coordinating role played by the Inter-Agency Task Force, in particular in respect of activities in the field. While his delegation would join the consensus on the draft resolution, it regretted that the text did not include a reference to the model policy

for agencies of the United Nations system on preventing tobacco industry interference. That reference had been included in similar Council resolutions in past sessions and a number of delegations had supported its inclusion during the present session. It was worth noting that the Inter-Agency Task Force applied the model policy to its work on the ground, in particular the activities of the thematic group on tobacco control, which aimed to create an action plan with agency-specific actions to promote implementation of target 3.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, namely to strengthen implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries. His delegation hoped that future similar draft resolutions would support the terms of reference of the Inter-Agency Task Force and its mandate by setting out concrete actions every agency should apply to help States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. *Draft resolution E/2019/L.16 was adopted.*

(h) Calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields (E/2019/53 and E/2019/67; E/2019/L.13 and E/2019/L.14)

9. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that, regrettably, the 2019 session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development had coincided with the annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. Notwithstanding the fact that those bodies met in different Headquarters' locations, Member States, with the support of the Secretariat, should be more careful when scheduling such events, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/17. It was incumbent on Member States when adopting meeting calendars to exercise their prerogative to make the changes necessary to establish sensible programming and effectively carry out their mandates to advance the 2030 Agenda.

Draft resolution E/2019/L.13: Proposed dates for the meetings and segments of the Economic and Social Council in 2020

10. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

11. *Draft resolution E/2019/L.13 was adopted.*

Draft resolution E/2019/L.14: Provisional calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields for 2020 and 2021

12. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

13. *Draft resolution E/2019/L.14 was adopted.*

Agenda item 20: United Nations research and training institutes (E/2019/8, E/2019/11 and E/2019/81; E/2019/L.9 and E/2019/L.12)

14. **Mr. Suazo** (Head, New York Office, United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on UNITAR (E/2019/81), said that the Institute's 2018–2021 strategic framework was structured around four pillars – peace, people, planet and prosperity – and three cross-cutting areas, which included accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level, support for evidence-based policies through technology and multilateral diplomacy. Some two thirds of the outputs of the Institute's beneficiaries had been related to Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13 and 16. UNITAR focused its work on countries in special situations, such as countries emerging from conflict, least developed countries and small island developing States. In 2018, UNITAR had reached over 185,000 beneficiaries, the largest outreach in its history.

15. Describing some highlights of UNITAR activities under the reporting period, he said that under the peace pillar, UNITAR had continued to pursue programming aligned with Goal 16; organized events to convene envoys of the Secretary-General and representatives of the African Union; and contributed to capacity-building in Afghanistan. Under the people pillar, UNITAR had organized training workshops on reducing road traffic deaths; provided learning events on sustainable development at the local level through 18 international training centres; organized the annual Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development; and launched a new initiative on good health and well-being with the aim of supporting stakeholders to identify knowledge gaps and enhance the impact of existing health programmes. Under the planet pillar, UNITAR continued to participate in the One United Nations Climate Change Learning Partnership, through which it offered an e-learning platform that had reached 170,000 users from around the world. UNITAR had also continued to participate in the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, which offered capacity development and knowledge production products to 17 partner countries. Activities under the prosperity pillar included a collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to develop e-learning courses on trade, food security and nutrition; and a partnership with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa on private sector development to improve the Bank's operations in sub-Saharan Africa.

16. The progress made in UNITAR programmes was reflected in the positive feedback received from compliance mechanisms. The Institute was entirely

funded through voluntary contributions, and remained in sound financial health. However, in response to the challenges associated with earmarked project funding, in 2018 the UNITAR Board of Trustees had created the Strategic Framework Fund to support programming in strategic areas that helped Member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the Secretary-General recommended that Member States strengthen partnerships with the Institute and consider providing financial support to the newly established Fund.

17. **Mr. Javan** (Director, United Nations System Staff College), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations System Staff College (E/2019/11), said that, during the reporting period, the Staff College had delivered learning initiatives, knowledge products and advisory services to approximately 47,000 beneficiaries in more than 50 countries across the globe and online. Learners had included United Nations staff, who remained the core audience, and beneficiaries from Member States, civil society and entities that partnered with the United Nations. More than 230 learning activities had been delivered directly by the College's learning experts, while many others had been delivered by trainers who had been certified by the College. As an extrabudgetary organization, the College relied mainly on self-generated income derived from course fees and contracts for services from United Nations organizations. As such, its funding was directly related to its ability to produce high quality products and services. In that regard, feedback from end-of-course evaluations had been consistently positive, with a 96 per cent recommendation rate from respondents, and a growing number of United Nations organizations and renowned academic institutions had asked to partner with the College.

18. Programmatically, the College remained committed to aligning its learning offerings with the key priorities of the United Nations global agenda. Over the last biennium, it had anchored its learning support around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the twin resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and Security Council on sustaining peace, and United Nations reform efforts. Under each programmatic area, lines of learning products were developed to maximize their effectiveness and relevance to participants. For example, in the area of sustainable development, related programmes not only promoted the interconnected nature of the 2030 Agenda, but also helped learners understand its significance by integrating its five critical dimensions: people, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace. In 2019, the College would develop a knowledge

centre dedicated solely to delivering learning products related to peace and security.

19. In the area of leadership and management development, the College had designed a wide variety of learning opportunities to support the United Nations system in the various reform processes currently under way. It had also continued to develop leadership, management and core professional competencies, while promoting a culture of change and innovation across the United Nations. Numerous change-management services had been delivered and customized to meet the needs of United Nations entities undergoing organizational transformations. The overall priority for the Staff College would continue to be strengthening the ability of the current and future United Nations workforce to learn and adapt to new ways of working, going beyond specific agency perspectives and within a multi-stakeholder framework.

20. **Mr. Passarelli** (Executive Officer, United Nations University), introducing the report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University (E/2019/8) on behalf of the University Rector, said that, as the knowledge partner of the United Nations, the University connected diverse groups of stakeholders to generate and share research with a range of audiences. It accomplished that task by publishing reports focused on the United Nations and convening events to bring together policymakers and academics; communicating policy-relevant research findings; serving as a gateway for the academic community to learn about the United Nations system; and providing training to researchers and Governments. The University carried out its work through 16 research institutes around the world which focused on themes for research and training rather than academic disciplines. That global system was coordinated by the United Nations University Centre in Tokyo, hosted by the Government of Japan.

21. One of several important institutional changes that had taken place in the University in 2018 was an improvement in gender parity among senior personnel, including among its directors. Institutional efforts in that area had been guided by the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity. As a result, the University was ahead of its target to reach gender parity at senior levels by 2021, with women presently occupying 46 per cent of senior posts. Also in 2018, the University had taken major steps to improve its coordination of information and communication technology security and policy frameworks, thus better protecting the institutions from external threats, limiting redundancy and creating flexibility at each of the University's institutes through a decentralized structure. The University's communications capacity and impact

had also improved with the implementation of the first global communications strategy and the enhanced coordination of communications personnel across the University.

22. The University had made efforts to advance an innovation agenda. For example, the University's Centre for Policy Research in New York had developed a global knowledge platform to achieve target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The University was also an active participant in the United Nations Innovation Network, an informal collaborative network of United Nations agencies, innovation teams and specialists. The University's project activities were distributed across the world, with 36 per cent of projects in 2018 focused on Asia and the Pacific, 29 per cent on Africa, 19 per cent on North America and 16 per cent on Europe. Through its five postgraduate degree programmes, the University offered a wide variety of specialized training for postgraduate-level scholars and early- and mid-career professionals. In 2018, the University had organized 164 training opportunities, over half of which were in developing countries, attended by more than 4,600 participants.

23. **Mr. Stefanile** (Observer for Italy) said that the 2030 Agenda, as well as the far-reaching reforms launched in the United Nations, could not be achieved without appropriate knowledge and training within the United Nations system. In that regard, the work of the United Nations research and training institutes was commendable and should be continuously supported by Member States. Italy hosted the United Nations System Staff College in Turin, which was an established centre of excellence that benefited an increasing number of United Nations staff and attracted resources from a range of stakeholders, including from outside the United Nations system. Italy also had record of successful collaboration with UNITAR. His delegation looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolutions concerning the research and training institutes.

24. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that his delegation had taken note of the report entitled "The New Geopolitics of Converging Risks: The UN and Prevention in the Era of AI" published by the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research and urged the University to continue its work on artificial intelligence. The fast pace of technological change had demonstrated the importance of the Organization keeping up with new developments. His delegation had also taken note of the Delta 8.7 knowledge platform, also launched by the Centre for Policy Research, which aimed to explore effective ways to achieve target 7 of Sustainable Development Goal 8 to eradicate human trafficking. Noting that migration was one of the most

significant phenomena of the times, he urged the United Nations University to consider migration using the framework of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in order to provide an empirical and knowledge-based foundation that could provide an alternative to biases and incorrect notions and serve as a basis for academic and multilateral discussions on the contributions migrants made to society.

25. **Ms. El Hilali** (Morocco) said that the work of United Nations research and training institutes on the United Nations pillars of peacekeeping, human rights, and inclusive and sustainable economic development would benefit from increased collaboration with national academies for diplomatic studies. In that regard, she invited those institutes to work with young diplomats in training and visit the Moroccan Academy for Diplomatic Studies in Rabat, which was willing to partner on activities related to the work of the United Nations. The Academy's programmes were part of the Moroccan South-South cooperation programme, which supported many diplomats from other African States. She underscored the remarks of the representative of Mexico concerning migration, which was a major issue in the global South. In that regard the African Observatory for Migration and Development, hosted in Rabat, would serve as a key platform for research and would partner with universities, think tanks and other scientific institutions.

Draft resolution E/2019/L.9: United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy

26. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

27. *Draft resolution E/2019/L.9 was adopted.*

Draft resolution E/2019/L.12: United Nations Institute for Training and Research

28. **Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga** (Ecuador), introducing the draft resolution, said that, through the draft resolution, the Council would encourage UNITAR to continue to align and harmonize its training activities with the 2030 Agenda. While the Institute's overall financial situation remained stable, the decline in non-earmarked voluntary contributions to the General Fund was a matter of concern. The draft resolution also recognized the expansion of the Institute's work to new thematic areas, including health and nutrition, and encouraged UNITAR to continue to develop programming in the areas of diplomatic training, mainstreaming a gender perspective, indigenous peoples and the use of geospatial technologies.

29. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary) said that Andorra, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Germany, Malta and Mexico wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

30. *Draft resolution [E/2019/L.12](#) was adopted.*

31. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University ([E/2019/8](#)).

32. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.