



# General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

**29**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Friday, 8 November 2019, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Muhammad-Bande ..... (Nigeria)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

## Agenda item 115 (continued)

### Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

#### (a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

##### Report of the Fifth Committee (A/74/482/Add.1)

**The President:** In paragraph 6 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020: Mr. Patrick A. Chuasoto (Philippines), Mr. Udo Klaus Fenchel (Germany), Mr. Olivio Fermín (Dominican Republic), Mr. Marcel Jullier (Switzerland), Mr. Takeshi Matsunaga (Japan) and Mr. Ye Xuenong (China).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons as members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115?

*It was so decided.*

#### (b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions

##### Report of the Fifth Committee (A/74/525)

**The President:** In paragraph 4 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members of the Committee on Contributions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020: Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Dème (Senegal), Mr. Gordon Eckersley (Australia), Mr. Bernardo Greiver del Hoyo (Uruguay), Mr. Ugo Sessi (Italy) and Mr. Alejandro Torres Lépori (Argentina).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons as members of the Committee on Contributions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** As stated in the report of the Committee, the appointment for the one remaining vacancy beginning on 1 January 2020 has been postponed to a later date.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 115.

#### (c) Confirmation of the appointment of members of the Investments Committee

##### Report of the Fifth Committee (A/74/524)

**The President:** In paragraph 4 (a) of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General

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Assembly confirm the reappointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Simon Jiang (China), Mr. Achim Kassow (Germany), Mr. Michael S. Klein (United States of America) and Ms. Luciane Ribeiro (Brazil) as regular members of the Investments Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to confirm the reappointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Simon Jiang, Mr. Achim Kassow, Mr. Michael S. Klein and Ms. Luciane Ribeiro as regular members of the Investments Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** In paragraph 4 (b) of the same report, the Fifth Committee also recommends that the General Assembly confirm the reappointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Madhav Dhar (India) as a regular member and as Chair of the Investments Committee for a one-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to confirm the reappointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Madhav Dhar as a regular member and as Chair of the Investments Committee for a one-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** In paragraph 4 (c) of the same report, the Fifth Committee further recommends that the General Assembly confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Tay Lim Hock (Singapore), Mr. Abel Moffat Sithole (South Africa), Ms. Katina Stefanova (Bulgaria) and Mr. Macky Tall (Canada) as ad hoc members of the Investments Committee for a one-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Tay Lim Hock, Mr. Abel Moffat Sithole, Ms. Katina Stefanova and Mr. Macky Tall as ad hoc members of the Investments Committee for a one-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** As stated in the report of the Committee, the appointment for three remaining vacancies for regular members beginning on 1 January 2020 has been postponed to a later date.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 115.

**(d) Appointment of a member of the Board of Auditors**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/74/526)**

**The President:** In paragraph 6 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the Auditor-General of the National Audit Office of China as a member of the Board of Auditors for a six-year term of office beginning on 1 July 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint the Auditor-General of the National Audit Office of China as a member of the Board of Auditors for a six-year term of office beginning on 1 July 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 115?

*It was so decided.*

**(e) Appointment of members of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/74/527)**

**The President:** In paragraph 4 of the report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Ms. Dorothy Bradley (Belize) and Mr. Anton Kosyanenko (Russian Federation) as members of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Ms. Dorothy Bradley and Mr. Anton Kosyanenko as members of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2020?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** As stated in the report of the Committee, the appointment for the one remaining vacancy beginning on 1 January 2020 has been postponed to a later date.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 115 and all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it today.

## Agenda items 120 and 121 (*continued*)

### Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations

#### Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

**The President:** As we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of United Nations, it is incumbent upon us all to ensure that the Organization is fit for purpose. This is particularly pertinent to the General Assembly, as the principal organ of the United Nations and the most representative and democratic intergovernmental body in the world. We are more likely to succeed in resolving common challenges if we have a strong United Nations. Strengthening the General Assembly is, in this regard, essential to ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations. We need to strengthen the General Assembly to deliver on our joint commitment to serve the people of the world.

The general debate featured the vibrant engagement of Member States at the highest level. The participation in the general debate, the high-level meetings and activities on the margins demonstrate that the United Nations remains the most pertinent forum for multilateral engagement. However, we must also be self-critical and improve the way we conduct our work. There is much space for improvement.

Implementing existing resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is key as we continue to seek efficiency gains and progress. In this regard, I wrote to all Member States on 21 October, outlining the need to enhance synergies and coherence by addressing gaps, overlaps and duplication where they are found to exist in the agenda of the General Assembly. This is of particular relevance to the Second and Third Committees and the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies. Furthermore, I reminded delegations of their commitment to limiting the number of high-level meetings and side events to be held, particularly on the margins of the general debate. This is in recognition of the increasing number of new initiatives and events emerging in the different Main Committees. Noting the current financial situation of the Organization, it will be prudent of us to streamline our activities.

I want to underscore that compliance with resolution 73/341 will enable us to focus on the theme for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations: “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming

our collective commitment to multilateralism”. The general debate remains a key date in the calendars of Heads of State and Government, and we should not detract attention from this most important platform for multilateralism. I am pleased that members of the General Committee share this view. I will continue to engage with the General Committee throughout the session in order to discuss how to improve and streamline our work.

In that connection, I would like to say that the Group of African States has also expressed its concurrence on this issue. I hope that others will do the same and follow in doing what is needed. I thank the Group for its input, and I invite all Member States to share their thoughts on how best to improve the working methods and efficiency of the work of the General Assembly.

To ensure open dialogue with all Member States, I am continuing the practice of hosting morning dialogues. I look forward to engaging with all Permanent Representatives and relevant partners in order to progress the work of the General Assembly.

Each of us has a responsibility to increase the efficiency of our work. During my presidency, I will endeavour to utilize the opportunities provided by the events that are already mandated to advance my priorities for the session, which are peace and security through conflict prevention, poverty eradication and zero hunger, climate action, quality education and inclusion.

As we embark on the decade of action and delivery, we must maintain that momentum, which will determine the fate of current and future generations and of our planet. Resolution 73/341 places the onus on us as a body to align the agendas of all the General Assembly Committees, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is crucial to build on the previous consultations and utilize the efforts of the seventy-third session, including the mapping of the Sustainable Development Goals and the identified criteria for defining overlaps and gaps. I will soon appoint co-facilitators for the agenda alignment process.

I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Her Excellency Mrs. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Permanent Representative of Ghana, and reappointed His Excellency Mr. Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General

Assembly for the seventy-fourth session. I look forward to engaging with them and with all Member States on the many critical issues that the Working Group will consider during this session.

In the context of strengthening the accountability, transparency and institutional memory of my Office, I am upholding the best practices inherited from my predecessors. I am continuing to engage with the leadership of other United Nations organs. I will uphold the ethics of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. I thank all Member States that have assisted my Office through contributions or the secondment of staff. Such support is instrumental to the success of the seventy-fourth session.

Indeed, resource mobilization is essential to strengthening not only the Office of the President of the General Assembly but the General Assembly itself. To that end, I call on Member States to support the Secretary-General's proposal to secure a position in the Office of the President of the General Assembly for future sessions. Adequate and sustainable resource mobilization would offer continuity and a smooth transition for successive Presidents.

I call on all delegations at this historic juncture to recommit to the ideals of the founders of the Organization. As we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, now is the time to galvanize multilateral action in the revitalization of our work to ensure a better world.

**Mr. Srivihok** (Thailand): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), comprised of the following 10 member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and my own country, Thailand.

ASEAN aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the outset, ASEAN would like to congratulate the co-Chairs of the previous session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassador Sima Sami Bahous of Jordan and Ambassador Michal Mlynár of Slovakia, for their able leadership in guiding the session to a successful outcome with transparency and openness. ASEAN also congratulates Ambassador Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee

of Ghana on her appointment and Ambassador Mlynár on his reappointment as co-Chairs for the current session. We trust that they will successfully steer the process forward.

ASEAN believes that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly remains important. It makes global governance more responsive and the General Assembly a more effective and efficient instrument for pursuing our shared priorities and aspirations. Revitalization is also a crucial and essential component of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations, thereby contributing to our ongoing efforts towards strengthening multilateralism.

ASEAN welcomes the progress made during the previous session, as reflected in resolution 73/341 adopted by consensus on 12 September. The adoption by consensus proved the determination and commitment of Member States to working together to achieve a stronger, more efficient and effective General Assembly. ASEAN also believes that this year's draft resolution, which has been streamlined and is more concise, will provide good groundwork for carrying forward our discussions and identification of practical solutions to revitalizing the General Assembly during this session. In that regard, ASEAN would like to highlight the following points on the four clusters under this important process.

First, on the role and authority of the General Assembly, ASEAN reaffirms the need for all Member States to continue working together to further enhance the role of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. We support the role of the President of the General Assembly in reinforcing synergy and coherence and in enhancing greater coordination between the work of the Assembly and the other principal organs of the United Nations. ASEAN appreciates the President's efforts in that regard, including the regular updates to Member States on the outcome of his meetings with the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

Secondly, on working methods, progress in that area has a direct and comprehensive impact on the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the General Assembly in fulfilling its duties. ASEAN also believes that the alignment of the work of the General Assembly with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is relevant to the revitalization of the Assembly. We reiterate the

need to develop tangible solutions for addressing gaps, overlap and the duplication of agenda items where they are found to exist, ensuring that the work of the General Assembly delivers on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in its entirety.

Thirdly, on the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads, ASEAN welcomes the General Assembly's decision to update the oath of office of the Secretary-General designate. We also reiterate the need to ensure an open and transparent selection of the best candidate for this important position. Resolution 73/341 must therefore be implemented faithfully. In addition, we encourage extending the improvement to the selection and appointment process of the Secretary-General to the selection of all other executive heads, taking into consideration gender and geographical balance.

Fourthly and finally, with respect to strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, ASEAN encourages the continuation of the handover report, which will be helpful not only to the President-elect, but also to Member States, especially during the transition period. We also welcome the convening of interactive dialogue between Member States and candidates to ensure the accountability and inclusiveness of elections to that very important position.

As a regional organization that strongly believes in multilateralism and the work of the United Nations, ASEAN reiterates its continued support for advancing the agenda of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. The occasion marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year will be a timely opportunity for us to further enhance our efforts in that regard. ASEAN stands ready to engage with all Member States and will support the work guided by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. That will be our common goal — making the General Assembly more effective, efficient and accountable in serving the needs of global citizens.

**Mr. Lauber** (Switzerland): I am honoured to take the floor on behalf of the 25 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal,

Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Uruguay and my own country, Switzerland. The ACT group promotes a more transparent and efficient United Nations. We believe that the process of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly constitutes an important avenue towards that goal. We would therefore like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's plenary meeting.

We welcomed the adoption of resolution 73/341, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and would like to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, Permanent Representative of Jordan, and Mr. Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, for their excellent work and dedication in steering the process during the seventy-third session. We also welcome the appointment as new co-Chair of Mrs. Martha Pobee, Permanent Representative of Ghana, and the reappointment of Mr. Mlynár. We thank them very much for taking on that task and wish them all the best.

The ACT group attaches particular importance to transparent and inclusive selection and appointment processes for the position of Secretary-General and those of other executive heads. We therefore particularly welcome the advances made by resolution 73/341 under this cluster. While we regret that we were not able to find consensus wording on the lessons-learned process of the most recent and truly historic Secretary-General selection, we welcome the commitment made by the General Assembly to consolidating the advances gained in the relevant resolutions and to exploring possible steps to improve the process further.

As resolution 73/341 explicitly states, we must continue the examination of innovative ways to improve the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General, guided by the principles of transparency and inclusiveness, including in cases where the incumbent Secretary-General decides to run for re-election. Discussions during this session come at a crucial time in that respect, and we look forward to building on the advances of resolution 73/341. More generally, the ACT group remains committed to strengthening the revitalization process and looks forward to working together during the sessions of the Ad Hoc Working Group next year.

Despite differences of position among Member States and groups of States, constructive discussion

in the framework of this Working Group has enabled us to maintain a strong consensus on this important resolution. That is worth highlighting, as we witnessed a decline in resolutions adopted by consensus during the past session. So far, the current session has confirmed that trend, as well as the increase in procedural difficulties. The current unprecedented level of the liquidity crisis is a further issue of legitimate concern for the General Assembly, as the full and timely payment of contributions to the United Nations budget is a legal obligation of all Member States.

All of those developments directly affect the work and functioning of both the General Assembly and the Secretariat and undermine the strong, agile and resilient United Nations that the ACT group and the general membership strive to uphold. In view of those challenges, the ACT group remains committed to continuing to make a concrete contribution to a strengthened multilateralism in which the United Nation has a central role. At the General Assembly, we will build on the advances of the Working Group, and in the day-to-day work of the Assembly and its bodies we will continue to engage constructively in all relevant negotiations and discussions with the aim of promoting a more transparent and efficient United Nations.

With respect to the Security Council, we will further pursue promoting the code of conduct regarding Security Council actions against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, currently supported by 121 States, as a minimum standard for candidates to the Security Council, and we will invoke the code in relevant situations.

Finally, we look forward to the commemorations of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year and the mobilization campaign launched by the Secretary-General as opportunities for fostering the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders in support of the improvement of the work of the United Nations and the strengthening of the principles of multilateralism.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Mr. Gonzato** (European Union): I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate country,

Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I thank you, Sir, for convening today's first joint debate during the seventy-fourth session on the items "Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations" and "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly". The issue has attracted increased attention over the years, and we would argue rightly so. The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is clearly linked to an overall United Nations reform aimed at making the Organization more effective, more efficient and better positioned to respond to the challenges of today and tomorrow. We are of the view that the Assembly, as the only intergovernmental body with universal membership, and given its broad mandate with far-reaching responsibilities, has a central role to play in responding to global challenges. We should do a better job in streamlining our work, including by reprioritizing and eliminating overlaps where necessary. The current liquidity crisis further underlines the urgency of addressing that necessity.

The EU and its member States remain committed to revitalization and to supporting efforts aimed at strengthening the role and authority of the General Assembly, in line with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions, and within agreed budget levels. Collectively, we have made significant progress towards that objective. The adoption on 12 September of resolution 73/341, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, is proof of that.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group, Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, Permanent Representative of Jordan, and Mr. Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, on their excellent work and dedication to steering the process during the previous session. I would also like to offer the same support and constructive engagement to the newly appointed co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group, Mrs. Martha Pobe, Permanent Representative of Ghana, and to congratulate Mr. Mlynár on his reappointment. They can count on our support in further delivering on the objective of making the General Assembly more efficient and effective.

The recent resolutions, in particular resolution 73/341, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, have made significant contributions to that

end and make further efforts to enhance synergies and coherence by addressing gaps, overlaps and duplication in General Assembly agendas and to limit the number of side events during the high-level week. We strongly welcome the constructive efforts made by delegations to achieve consensus, which should be preserved.

That said, the European Union and its member States regret that the more ambitious proposals made during the last round of negotiations did not meet everybody's approval. We believe that there is still a need to further streamline the work and working methods of the General Assembly, in particular to align it better with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as to ensure the strong involvement of civil society. The latter is a key priority for the EU and its member States, especially in view of next year's seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. The commemoration will provide a unique opportunity to foster the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders towards building more effective multilateralism, based on a strengthened United Nations.

Let me conclude by restating how important the European Union and its member States consider this issue and our willingness to continue our constructive efforts to improve the functioning of the General Assembly and the United Nations as a whole.

**Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia): The Chair of the Group of African States for this month is Ambassador Moncef Baati, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, who has asked me to speak on his behalf and on behalf of the African Group on this important issue.

First, I would like to thank you, Sir, for your letter dated 21 October on the issue of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. Secondly, I would like to congratulate our colleagues from Ghana and Slovakia who have been appointed and reappointed, respectively, as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly.

The African Group, like the rest of the membership of the United Nations, is deeply concerned about the impact of the current liquidity crisis on the ability of the United Nations to implement its mandated functions, and reaffirms its commitment to working constructively for a more efficient, effective and accountable United Nations. It is in that spirit that the African Group wishes to submit the following few points in contribution to the discussion at hand.

First, the African Group believes that we need a clearer definition of what constitutes a high-level meeting, as well as appropriate restrictions on the number of these high-level meetings. There is a saying that when everything is a priority then nothing is a priority. When everything is a high-level meeting, nothing is a high-level meeting.

Secondly, there is a need to address the ever-increasing number of side events and high-level meetings convened during the General Assembly's general debate, which affect the meaningful participation of delegations during the high-level week. Many of us come from small countries with very small delegations and our participation is greatly impaired when there are too many meetings taking place concurrently.

Thirdly, there is a need to limit the number of side events held on the margins of the general debate, first, in order to safeguard the primacy of the general debate, and secondly, to ensure that we afford an opportunity to everyone to participate in all the important meetings that take place at the United Nations. I believe that, during the last general debate, we had about 400 or in excess of 460 side events. That is untenable.

Fourthly, I refer to the periodicity and length of General Assembly resolutions. Every resolution these days is an annual resolution, but we also know that these days there is hardly any difference between last year's resolution and this year's resolution. Many a time, after laborious discussions, we are able to agree only on what we call agreed language from last year, which essentially means that all we are doing is changing the number on the resolution, not the content. It is important, therefore, that we consider the issue of periodicity.

I know that the African Group has been among those that have expressed concern in the past about the need to maintain the visibility of important resolutions and we have felt that the annual resolution ensured this visibility. However, the African Group is prepared to consider the biennialization, triennialization or even quadrennialization of some of those resolutions, not so much to sacrifice their visibility as to allow for periods of serious reflection about their implementation status. The length of resolutions is also a concern. We need to understand that all the time that is spent on elaborating long resolutions is a valuable resource that could be used elsewhere. In many cases, and particularly in our preambular paragraphs, all we are doing is simply

recalling past resolutions, and that could be done better in one or two paragraphs.

Fifthly, it is important to work towards addressing gaps, overlaps and duplications where they are found to exist.

We would like to assure you, Mr. President, of the African Group's continued commitment to the successful fulfilment of your mandate and to the entire mandate of the General Assembly. We believe that the proposals that we have made, and which we are prepared to elaborate during meetings with the co-facilitators and other regional groups, will go a long way towards ensuring not only that we satisfy the requirements of our mandates, but also that we have a General Assembly and a United Nations that are more action-oriented.

**Mr. Mimouni** (Algeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM), one of the largest cross-regional groups, consisting of 120 member States.

At the outset, allow me to say that all ceremonial protocols, including expressions of appreciation to outgoing co-Chair Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, Permanent Representative of Jordan, reappointed co-Chair Mr. Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, new co-Chair Mrs. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Permanent Representative of Ghana, and the President of the General Assembly Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, are respected.

We reiterate that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a critical component of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations. A reinvigorated General Assembly would contribute significantly to strengthening the wider United Nations system, improving international governance and enhancing multilateralism. A thorough evaluation of the status of implementation of General Assembly resolutions and the clear identification of the causes underlying any lack of implementation are of utmost importance to progressively eliminating the constraints that still prevent the process of revitalizing the General Assembly from realizing its full potential.

We fully subscribe to the letter and spirit of the relevant General Assembly consensus resolutions, particularly resolution 69/321, which form the cornerstones of the ongoing United Nations reform process. In that context, we strongly believe that

mobilizing the necessary financial resources, especially from the United Nations regular budget, is key. Today we want to underline the following points.

First, concerning the Secretary-General's selection and appointment, that process should continue to be transparent, democratic and inclusive of all Member States so as to allow the General Assembly to participate in it effectively and efficiently. NAM welcomes the collaboration between the General Assembly and the Security Council in launching the most recent Secretary-General selection process and circulating information on the nominated candidates, and encourages improved interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly in all stages of the process to further enhance transparency.

While we welcome the signing of the joint letter by which the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council formally launch the beginning of the process, it is NAM's understanding that regardless of the stage that has been reached in the presentation of the candidates, the new procedure, as outlined in the joint letter, will remain the main framework to be strictly adhered to in future selection and appointment processes. We call on the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council to continue to hold timely informal meetings for an exchange of views with candidates presented by Member States.

In that regard, NAM reiterates the need to provide the process of the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General with clear timelines, based on resolution 69/321, including for the publication of the aforementioned joint letter covering the submission of candidates, the completion of the General Assembly's hearings for all candidates and the Security Council's selection process, followed by the Assembly's adoption of a resolution on the appointment. In that context, NAM calls on the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council to work in close consultation with Member States on those timelines. We strongly believe that in order to ensure a smooth and efficient transition, the Secretary-General should be appointed as early as possible and preferably no later than one month before the date on which the term of the incumbent expires. We welcome further discussion in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly of all the options regarding the duration of the appointment and renewability of the term of office of the Secretary-General.



NAM would like to highlight the discussion that was held in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the desirability of having the Security Council consider putting forward more than one candidate to the General Assembly for future Secretary-General appointments. In that regard, we emphasize the need to continue our rich discussions on the appointment process. We encourage greater openness during that selection and appointment process and invite the President of the Security Council to announce the results of straw polls in a timely manner, while giving priority to Member States. NAM stresses once again that it has no intention of calling into question the confidentiality of the straw-poll process.

We also call on the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) to include in its work programme the preparation of analysis and recommendations on the selection and appointment of executive heads and senior managers in the United Nations system. Moreover, the Non-Aligned Movement would like to emphasize the issue of promises being made by candidates in exchange for the support of the permanent members of the Security Council, which is described in the 2011 JIU report (A/66/34).

We welcome the significant number of women candidates in the previous process for the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and to the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly as part of efforts to promote gender balance, and we encourage Member States to continue to do so. We reiterate that the process of the General Assembly appointing the Secretary-General should be carried out in full compliance with the Assembly's mandate. That includes the timely submission of the relevant draft resolution, which should be preceded by wide and extensive consultations with all Member States and ensure that the action of the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council, including by secret ballot, is in full and strict conformity with rule 141 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Bearing in mind the importance of the best practices and lessons learned from the latest selection and appointment process, NAM is of the view that the Ad Hoc Working Group should consider developing a compendium of those best practices for future reference. NAM stresses the need for a broader and more timely dissemination to the wider membership of the positions available at the level of Under-Secretary-General and senior posts. Due regard should continue to be given to regional and geographic rotation and to gender equality,

as stipulated in paragraph 59 of resolution 51/241 and paragraph 50 of resolution 69/321. NAM encourages the undertaking of steps to improve the selection of executive heads and enhance the transparency, inclusivity and credibility of the process, including by conducting interactive meetings with candidates running for those posts, where applicable.

Secondly, regarding the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, NAM finds it encouraging that an oath of office and a code of ethics for the President of the General Assembly have been adopted for the first time ever. NAM reiterates the need for the assignment of additional posts to the Office of the President of the General Assembly on a permanent basis. We also thank those Member States that have provided concrete support to the Office of the President of the General Assembly by seconding staff from their own respective missions. NAM also attaches great importance to ensuring successful annual transitions between Presidents of the General Assembly, and supports the process whereby outgoing Presidents brief their successors on lessons learned and best practices. NAM expresses its support for an effective and genuine strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, as well as for the allocation of sufficient human and financial resources to the Office from the United Nations regular budget.

Thirdly, on the role and authority of the General Assembly, NAM reaffirms the importance of preserving the intergovernmental, inclusive and democratic nature of the United Nations and the need to consult with Member States within the Organization. NAM emphasizes the need for strict respect on the part of Member States for the Charter-based prerogatives of the United Nations principal organs, particularly the General Assembly. Furthermore, NAM supports the initiative aimed at ensuring the proper implementation of the Charter of the United Nations with respect to the functional relationship between its main organs, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We welcome the establishment of a standing mechanism of dialogue between the Permanent Missions and the Secretariat within the framework of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly. We look forward to continuing discussions within that framework.

Fourthly, concerning the working methods of the General Assembly, NAM reaffirms that the

working methods are only one step towards making more substantive improvements aimed at restoring and enhancing the role and authority of the General Assembly. We welcome paragraph 58 of resolution 72/313, which notes with appreciation the changes to the format, production and editing of the *Journal of the United Nations*, and requests the Secretariat to continue with the improvement of the *Journal* in accordance with the requirements provided in paragraph 51 of resolution 71/323 and paragraph 31 of resolution 73/341. We also welcome the improvements made in communicating the names of candidates for election to the Secretariat and the decision for the campaign materials in the General Assembly Hall or Committee meeting rooms to be limited to a single page of information regarding the candidates.

NAM recalls that the General Assembly has encouraged the Main Committees to continue considering and making proposals on their working methods during the current session. In that connection, NAM reiterates the intergovernmental and inclusive nature of those discussions on working methods, which must engage all delegations. Last year's resolution 73/341, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, was adopted by consensus. However, we continue to insist that greater flexibility should be the rule for all Member States during the next round of negotiations.

The Non-Aligned Movement calls for the implementation of appropriate measures in order to enhance public awareness of the role and activities of the General Assembly and encourages the media to report on its work. We welcome paragraph 15 of resolution 73/341, which decided to continue to consider ways to rationalize the number of side events held during the high-level segment of the general debate. NAM strongly believes that there is a need to improve and strengthen the coordination of the revitalization process with the work of the Committee on Conferences and all Main Committees. We should also take a closer look at the arrangements for the process of holding debates in the General Assembly and the Security Council and their follow-up, given the number of participating representatives. Furthermore, we propose holding briefings, as necessary, with the Chairs of the Main Committees, as well as with the Secretary-General. NAM also calls for better monitoring of the implementation of past resolutions.

Before concluding, we would like to emphasize NAM's support for draft resolution A/74/L.5, formally submitted by the Chair of the Group of 77 and China and entitled "Enlargement of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: amendment to rule 155 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly", in line with principles of efficiency and equitable geographical representation. We would like to underline that the composition of that body has been reviewed three times — in 1961, 1971 and 1977 — in order to progressively correct that situation. The main criterion that had served and continues to serve the achievement of that objective is the increasing number of Member States, taking into account the fact that since the last decision, adopted in 1977, 46 Member States have joined the United Nations.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms its commitment to continuing to contribute effectively and constructively to the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly. The Non-Aligned Movement hopes for the same approach from other delegations and would like to humbly recall that it speaks in the name of 120 United Nations Member States. In addition, the Non-Aligned Movement stands ready to cooperate with the co-Chairs, as well as with you, Mr. President, and Secretary-General António Guterres, with a view to strengthening the role of the General Assembly as our chief deliberative policymaking organ. We will continue to provide support towards achieving inclusiveness, transparency and efficiency in the United Nations.

**Mr. Rybakov** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): With all protocol requirements met, I would like to associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Ghana and Slovakia on their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly for the seventy-fourth session. We are sure that under their leadership, real progress will be made and concrete results achieved.

Belarus has consistently supported the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and the Assembly's greater involvement in addressing the pressing challenges facing the Organization and the international community as a whole. We can achieve that goal only by strengthening the impact of our

activities, improving the working methods and adapting our approaches to the current realities. I would like to highlight the most important common problems in our view and to propose some solutions to address them.

The first major problem, which has affected the United Nations for decades, is the complexity and inflexibility of the agendas of the General Assembly and the Committees. Whenever we address the matter in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly or in the Committees, we find that the issue becomes extremely politicized. Many delegations, often with good cause, believe that the transition to a biennial framework for certain items will affect only resolutions that are important to them for various reasons, while the so-called unnecessary items will remain.

In that regard, we would like to propose a very simple yet effective solution, devoid of political overtones. Why not divide the agenda into two equal parts? One half would be considered at the current session and the other at the subsequent session. Such a step would not send a negative signal that some issues are more important or have greater priority compared to others but would fundamentally change the way in which we work, providing delegations with greater opportunities to work in more depth on all agenda items, which will ultimately improve the quality of the documents that we adopt. Saving the Organization's resources would be an important byproduct, as well as a positive outcome.

The second challenge that prevents us from working properly and is sometimes used to review decisions taken during the current session is the duplication of the agenda in the main United Nations bodies. That applies primarily to the General Assembly, its Main Committees and the Economic and Social Council. It is probably time to revise the agendas of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and to omit overlapping issues. For example, the operational segment practically duplicates the agenda of the Second Committee, while the humanitarian segment duplicates the agenda of the Third Committee.

The third aspect is the practice of almost completely repeating the provisions of previous resolutions on the same topic. Here there is only one question: why? The representative of Zambia, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, rightly made that point. All previous resolutions remain valid. If necessary, an umbrella reference to their relevance in a paragraph

of the new resolution would be sufficient. In that context, the provisions of the most recent resolution, if they differ from those of the previous one, would take precedence in accordance with the legal principle regarding provisions of a later document.

At the previous session of the General Assembly, the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Slovakia, proposed resolving this issue by looking at how we would deal with the agenda item under consideration today. The proposal was supported by all States. As a result, instead of the previous year's 18 preambular paragraphs and 101 operative paragraphs, we now have 7 and 62, respectively. Without that proposal of the co-Chairs, we could have had at least 200 paragraphs. It is not only a question of numbers and paragraphs but very often, unfortunately, of the amount of unnecessary work that we find ourselves involved in on the same matter. Regrettably, that is the sad reality at the United Nations.

The outcome of the work on the resolution on revitalizing the General Assembly during the previous session is a very positive example that can and should be picked up by the coordinators, primarily for the resolutions that, year after year, have only a few new paragraphs. Often 90 per cent of the text preserves the language of the previous resolution.

Following the positive example of the resolution on revitalizing the work of the General Assembly will enable us to have a clear vision of what has been achieved in the recent period rather than a compilation of anything and everything. Rather than an unordered jumble, we would have a clean, structured document understandable to all.

Next year is an anniversary year for the United Nations. Belarus does not support setting any artificial deadlines for our work. However, the forthcoming anniversary of the Organization is a good opportunity to resolve long overdue issues. Perhaps we could do that with regard solely to working methods, which are the least politicized aspect of our work in the Organization.

We all often like to recall the words of Dag Hammarskjöld, who was the second Secretary-General, when he said,

“The day will come when people will see the United Nations and what it means clearly.

Everything will be all right — you know when? When people, just people, stop thinking of the United Nations as a weird Picasso abstraction and see it as a drawing that they did themselves.”

We believe that it is high time to look at the United Nations as our creation, not as an abstraction that was created long before us. We should not just adapt and put up with proven schemes that were developed many years ago. It is possible to start from something small. The three simple steps that we have proposed today can help the United Nations to become understandable to all.

**Mrs. Nusseibeh** (United Arab Emirates): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Ambassadors of Ghana and Slovakia on their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session.

According to a 2019 public-affairs study by Edelman on the views of younger generations about the United Nations, young people hold the Organization in high regard, but their awareness of concrete United Nations initiatives is limited. While they frequently associate the word “important” with the United Nations, the same also goes for “outdated” and “boring”. I am citing that study here today because it is a useful reminder of the purpose and rationale for our meeting. While the General Assembly is the most universally representative body of our multilateral system and the basis for so much global respect, we have a duty to current and future generations to make it more substantive, relevant and responsive to people’s concerns and aspirations. The Ad Hoc Working Group offers an opportunity for that enhancement, and the process has indeed been able to deliver tangible results year after year, from a more transparent process for selecting the Secretary-General to the accountability of the President of the Assembly, among other things. Today I would like to touch on four points where we have a chance to move the dial in the coming year, in the view of the United Arab Emirates.

First, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the hallmark United Nations initiative, must be the guiding framework for its work, including, importantly, that of the General Assembly. The resolutions, declarations and outcome documents that we spend so many hours negotiating should be as action-oriented as possible, mandating how we will achieve the SDGs and the priorities for the United Nations. As others have

mentioned, we must also avoid duplication of content. We have collectively been grappling with synergies and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development within and across committees, but much remains to be done. While we know that kind of rationalizing can at times be politically sensitive, it is the right step forward if this Organization is to remain relevant.

That leads me to my second point, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. It will provide an opportunity not only to assess the state of multilateralism to date, but perhaps even more importantly, to identify where and how we can deliver better for our constituents. Our intergovernmentally agreed conclusions should be relevant to and explicitly address issues where people expect the United Nations to do better. We have to make sure that this is not a navel-gazing exercise. While the process is independent of the revitalization of the General Assembly, how we perform in it will be crucial to the Assembly’s reputation.

Thirdly, the United Nations should be as diverse as the people that it represents. Ensuring diversity and equity, promoting gender balance and fielding women candidates, including from the global South, are issues that have been at the forefront of our attention for the past few years, both when Member States put forward candidates and when the Organization fills vacancies. We applaud the results that have been achieved so far, especially during the tenure of this Secretary-General across the Resident Coordinator system and the Senior Management Group, but we believe there is no room for complacency. The humanitarian and peace pillars of the United Nations in particular need continued attention.

Lastly, the selection process for the Secretary-General’s position is one area that we all agree has been a key achievement of the Working Group. However, we have not yet consolidated the advances made in the transparency of that process. In that respect, we continue to believe that fixing notional timelines for the Secretary-General selection process would be helpful and is something that we should focus on this year, as called for in paragraph 44 of resolution 73/341. With the Secretary-General’s term coming to an end in 2021, 2020 will be an important year for communicating any mandates for an upcoming selection process or possible reappointment. In the case of a reappointment, we fully support ensuring that the Secretary-General presents a vision statement or address on the state of the United Nations for his next term.

The Ad Hoc Working Group provides us with a platform for moving the reform process forward and delivering a better General Assembly for our stakeholders. The Assembly can count on my delegation's constructive involvement and support in our deliberations this year.

**Ms. Najwa** (Maldives): My delegation would like to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassadors Sima Sami Bahous of Jordan and Michal Mlynár of Slovakia, for their dedication and leadership in steering the revitalization process during the Assembly's seventy-third session. We also wish to congratulate Ambassador Mlynár on his reappointment as co-Chair alongside Ambassador Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee of Ghana. My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for his report under this agenda item (A/73/895) and welcomed the adoption of resolution 73/341, addressing important aspects of revitalization, including the role, authority and working methods of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly is almost unique, the most important and inclusive platform globally available to discuss today's most pressing universal challenges. Some of those challenges are spreading across borders and will pose serious threats to humankind and human existence if left unaddressed. That is why we must never see the Assembly as a forum that allows an us-versus-them mentality. It must rather be a platform where the entire world comes together as a collective us-versus-humankind's biggest challenges. It is therefore paramount that we preserve the Assembly's authority and sanctity while also making it more effective and efficient.

Almost three decades have passed since the General Assembly started discussions on revitalizing its work with a view to strengthening its role and improving its efficiency and effectiveness. Several incremental steps have been taken since then, resulting in significant improvements. The Maldives notes with appreciation various measures that have been taken in recent years, such as improving the General Assembly's transparency and accountability, including in the Office of the President. We are encouraged by the series of dialogues such as the Morning Mingas initiated by the President, bringing together groups of Permanent Representatives and creating an environment conducive to genuine dialogue and exchange. We also believe that organizing meetings with former Presidents of the General

Assembly on the theme of revitalization is an important and useful initiative. The series of informal meetings held in preparation for the high-level segment of the General Assembly also provided an opportunity for seeking innovative solutions for pressing challenges, whether logistical or substantive. And we continue to believe that regular meetings between the Presidents of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council will help the General Assembly make more informed decisions and necessary adjustments in shaping its work.

Despite those improvements, there is still much to be done to further enhance and improve the General Assembly's work. The numerous discussions, debates, papers and resolutions on the topic have been unable to bring meaningful solutions for some aspects of it. Additional efforts are needed to enhance synergies and improve coherence by addressing gaps and avoiding overlaps and duplication in the work of the Assembly, including its Second and Third Committees, with that of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies. In tackling that, we must also focus on aligning the Assembly's work with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Further efforts are needed to rationalize its work through careful review of the number of resolutions put forward and their implementation. Moreover, we must address the proliferation of high-level meetings in a way that respects the primacy of the general debate in order to avoid overload and to create an environment conducive to meaningful interaction and engagement during the high-level segment.

*Mr. Dogan (Croatia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

In the words of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih of the Republic of Maldives,

“[T]he Maldives strongly believes in the United Nations, the principles and spirit of its Charter, and the belief that every single member of the Organization brings value to unlock the true potential for peace, progress and prosperity.”

An effective and efficient General Assembly is the best tool to unlock that potential, to achieve our collective goal of peace, progress and prosperity and to deliver for us all the future we want.

**Mr. Kakanur** (India): I thank the President for convening this important meeting. India aligns itself

with the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We extend our appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Slovakia, the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly at the seventy-third session, for ably steering the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group. We congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and Ghana on their appointment as co-Chairs of the Group for the seventy-fourth session and wish them continued success. My delegation will extend its full support to them for a productive outcome.

As the most representative global body of the United Nations, the General Assembly is the closest institution to a global parliament. Its primacy and legitimacy flow from the universality of its membership and the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members. The inclusive character of the General Assembly and the moral weight of its decisions and opinions cannot be compared to any other global organization or institution.

However, there is a widespread feeling that the General Assembly has steadily lost touch with its core responsibilities and has become increasingly involved with processes. The role and authority of the General Assembly have also been progressively undermined by the expansive role and activism of the Security Council. A part of the blame must lie with the General Assembly and its member States for having allowed the General Assembly to be undermined and encroached upon despite being the collective voice of humankind. That is counterproductive to the overall effectiveness and relevance of the United Nations.

India has consistently held the view that the General Assembly can be revitalized only once its position as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in letter and in spirit.

In any discussion of the revitalization of the General Assembly, we must recall that the Charter of the United Nations gives the General Assembly a unique leadership role. Article 10 of the Charter mandates the General Assembly to discuss any question or matter within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the Charter, except as provided in Article 12.

The General Assembly must therefore take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving existing and emerging global challenges.

For a revitalized General Assembly that is in tune with the challenges of our times, we need to draw inspiration from the high standards that the General Assembly set for itself from the very outset. It is worth recalling that the first issue that the General Assembly addressed at its first session in January 1946 related to the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy. The first resolution that the General Assembly adopted called for a commission to make recommendations for the elimination of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction (resolution 1 (I)).

In the same year, 1946, the General Assembly, based on an initiative of my own country, India, started addressing the global struggle for equality of opportunity for all races against the doctrine of racial discrimination.

Over the years, there have been several such occasions when the General Assembly has led from the front in setting the global agenda and addressing the challenges of the world. The United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in 2015, followed by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), the Ocean Conference in 2017, the Climate Action Summit 2019, the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the high-level meeting on universal health coverage are examples of how the General Assembly can set the global agenda and galvanize the global community into solving its common problems and challenges.

It is incumbent on us, the Member States, to remain vigilant in ensuring that the General Assembly continues its leadership role and maintains its ability to squarely address the global challenges. The process of the revitalization of the General Assembly is an urgent requirement. Although it is encouraging that we are making progress, we firmly believe that we have a long way to go.

The revitalization of the General Assembly must also be seen in the wider context of the overall reform of the United Nations. It is our firm belief that urgent and comprehensive United Nations reform is imperative

in order to make it reflective of the current geopolitical realities. The effectiveness, relevance and longevity of any institution lies in its dynamic character and its ability to adapt itself to the changing times so that it not only upholds the cherished values but also becomes capable of addressing the emerging problems and challenges of the day. The growing number of challenges faced by the world related to security, migration, health, climate change and frontier technologies, among other things, are incapable of being handled by a group of countries in isolation.

As we prepare to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations next year, let us utilize this important milestone to make genuine efforts to strengthen the role of the General Assembly in setting the global agenda, policymaking and seeking solutions to common challenges. The success of multilateralism largely depends on the success of the General Assembly. The President can count on my delegation's constructive support and participation in those efforts.

**Mr. Sparber** (Liechtenstein): Liechtenstein aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group.

The General Assembly meets today to discuss its revitalization amid challenging conditions. Geopolitical tensions and the rise of nationalism have an eroding effect on the international rules-based order and on inclusive multilateralism, of which the General Assembly is the most important embodiment. Within the General Assembly, we are witnessing an unfortunate tendency to backtrack on long-standing agreements, a decline in resolutions adopted by consensus and an increase in procedural difficulties.

At the same time, the expectations of our Governments and the broader public in the General Assembly are high. We are called on to provide leadership on global topics, including sustainable development, climate change, human rights and peace and security. There is the expectation that we take on emerging challenges associated with artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and new forms of weapons, to name but a few.

Consequently, the workload of the Assembly continues to grow. The proliferation of high-level meetings is just one, albeit a very visible, aspect of that development. The Main Committees are also seeing

an increase in their work, without making efficiency gains. Efforts to streamline processes and economize on the use of our resources routinely fall victim to ideological conflicts.

From the perspective of a small State, which is the majority perspective in this Hall, it is increasingly challenging to secure full and meaningful participation in the General Assembly proceedings. Some of the most basic tools that have been developed to assist States, in particular the *Journal of the United Nations*, have evolved in a way that provides almost no added value despite clear expectations and normative guidance from the membership.

Such developments would be challenging in normal times, but today the membership faces a number of additional problems that represent a systemic risk to the Organization. This year we have witnessed significant delays in the proceedings of the Main Committees and a sharp decline in Secretariat services due to a lack of funds. Both issues are legitimate concerns for the General Assembly, as they directly affect its work and functioning. The Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly should therefore proactively look into those issues.

Liechtenstein has made its position clear in the relevant Main Committees that it supports the most efficient use of resources and therefore opposes attempts to stall the Committees' work on procedural grounds. At the same time, obligations under international agreements that facilitate the meaningful participation of all delegations in the proceedings of the United Nations, including the Headquarters Agreement, must be fully implemented. Alleged violations of such agreements cannot be considered bilateral matters, nor can the proper determination of such allegations be left as the sole responsibility of the States involved. While the Committee on Relations with the Host Country is the Assembly's dedicated subsidiary body for dealing with such matters, its capacity to solve disputes should be the measure for the Committee's ability to implement its mandate, and both the scale and seriousness of allegations may justify deliberations by the membership as a whole.

With respect to the lack of funding and the so-called liquidity crisis, there should be no question that the full and timely payment of contributions to the United Nations budget is an essential element of

membership in the Assembly. Financial obligations are legal obligations, and it is unacceptable that only 34 Member States have honoured those obligations in 2019. While the sovereign equality of States imposes a shared responsibility for the proper resourcing of the Organization on all members, it is evident that large contributors have a particular responsibility insofar as their lack of compliance directly affects the proper work and functioning of the Organization, with negative consequences for the entire membership. Liechtenstein supports the Secretary-General in finding measures intended to increase his room for manoeuvre in time of financial crisis and would expect the same from all members, particularly those responsible for the Organization's current financial strains.

A key measure for placing the General Assembly at the centre of the work of the United Nations is enabling it to play its role and authority as the Organization's central and universal decision-making body. The Charter of the United Nations makes it clear that this role and authority include matters of peace and security. By acting in situations in which the Security Council is unable to act, the Assembly reinforces the complementary nature of Charter bodies, as it did with the creation of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, in the light of the endemic use of the veto in the Security Council, which has only increased further in the recent past. Liechtenstein is of the view that as a measure of accountability, as well as a means to empower itself, the Assembly should debate any use of the veto in a formal meeting. That debate should take place without prejudice to any possible outcome and independently of the substance of the draft resolution subject to the veto. The Security Council should be invited to contribute to the discussion in the General Assembly with a special report, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter. Liechtenstein intends to work with all interested delegations to create the mandate for such a debate in the coming weeks.

As part of the ACT group, Liechtenstein will continue to advocate for a number of concrete measures to strengthen the role of the General Assembly and increase the accountability of the Security Council. The procedural improvements in the selection of the Secretary-General represent a minimum standard for

the future to be applied and further enhanced, including in cases in which an incumbent Secretary-General applies for a second term. In the broader context of senior leadership appointments at the United Nations, Liechtenstein would also like to recall the proposal to adopt the practice of single, non-renewable terms aimed at increasing the independence of elected officials. Liechtenstein will also further pursue the promotion of the ACT code of conduct as a minimum standard for candidates for the Security Council and will invoke the code in relevant situations. Given its broad and growing support in the membership, which currently stands at 121 States, we consider that a strong and proactive role by the General Assembly whenever the Security Council fails to protect civilians from mass atrocities would be a natural extension of the code.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group I have the pleasure to align myself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Switzerland. I also want to take this opportunity to add a few points in my national capacity.

First, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Ambassadors Bahous of Jordan and Mlynár of Slovakia for their deft leadership of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly during the Assembly's previous session. We welcome their efforts to bring greater clarity and efficiency to the Group's work. I would also like to thank Ambassador Mlynár for taking the task on again in this session, and to welcome Ambassador Pobee of Ghana. Norway looks forward to working closely with them both in this session.

It is not an overstatement to say that as the most representative international body, the General Assembly sits right at the core of our multilateral system. That makes our ongoing work on its revitalization an important part of strengthening multilateralism, as well as ensuring the continued relevance of the General Assembly and the United Nations as a whole. Despite having a broad mandate, covering everything from the role and authority of the General Assembly, to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and the strengthening of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the revitalization of the General Assembly is a process that is capable of producing real, tangible progress in improving the way we work, and has done so. As the President of the Economic and Social Council, I also intend to uphold a good working



relationship between the Economic and Social Council and the Assembly.

We particularly welcomed the work undertaken last session in the cluster dealing with the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads. In this session, it is now vital that we consolidate the historic gains made in that process. It is a crucial year in that respect. The decisions we take will pave the way for the next selection and appointment process. We must maintain the progress we have made in terms of greater transparency and inclusivity. Ensuring that those steps forward are maintained as the next process begins, even in the possible case of an incumbent candidate. We also see this as a vital part of improving the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Indeed, based on Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations, it is one of the few instances that the Charter foresees for true cooperation between the two bodies.

For Norway, transparency and accountability are at the heart of all we do. In that respect, we welcome the ongoing discussions on the conduct of United Nations elections and campaigns. We have made good progress in recent years on the subject, but we also know that we can go further. Guided by the principles of transparency and accountability, Norway has voluntarily committed to publishing all costs related to our campaign for a seat on the Security Council for the period from 2021 to 2022. We have made that information easily available on our Foreign Ministry's website, and it is updated twice a year. We have made that commitment because Norway believes that greater transparency will ultimately benefit all Member States and the election process as a whole. We look forward to continued discussions and sharing best practices in the Working Group this session.

As we are all keenly aware, next year is an important one with the United Nations turning 75, and Norway is proud to have been a consistent partner since its founding. We must all work to bolster the Secretary-General's efforts to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary, especially those aimed at ensuring the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders, and particularly civil society and young people.

We look forward to constructive discussions on the revitalization of the General Assembly this session. As we know, no multilateral organization can be stronger or more dynamic than its member States are willing to

make it. Now is the time for us to make those efforts towards our common future.

**Mr. Koba** (Indonesia): Let me first congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Ghana and Slovakia, the incoming co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, on their appointment, and assure them of Indonesia's support and cooperation on leading the Working Group to productive outcomes. I would also like to thank the outgoing co-Chairs for their important leadership last session.

We associate ourselves with the statements made by the representatives of Algeria, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Thailand, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The global challenges we share require comprehensive and collaborative action. There is no better platform than the General Assembly, which has a sufficiently wide scope and represents the States Members of the United Nations in their entirety. To ensure that the Assembly plays its proper role as a parliament of nations and has a meaningful impact on issues of concern to its members, we all have to do our part to preserve its intergovernmental, inclusive, consultative and democratic nature. Furthermore, a concrete display of political will and constructive collaboration on the part of all members is essential to ensuring that the Assembly's Committees and mechanisms function optimally.

Next year's seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations represents another important moment for both taking stock of achievements and galvanizing it into needed action. Indonesia believes that the theme of the seventy-fifth anniversary — "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism" — should also be a key focus of the Ad Hoc Working Group during this session, guided by the existing resolutions on the revitalization of the Assembly.

First, in order to identify what "the future we want" means, we have to be more interactive. The Working Group should deliberate further on how the visibility of the General Assembly can be increased globally, utilizing traditional and new media. The emphasis should be not only on the better dissemination of the Assembly's role and events but also on how to maintain

two-way interaction with different audiences to enhance their ownership in the work of the United Nations.

As the role of the Office of the President of the General Assembly has increased in tandem with its activities in recent years, we should continue to explore giving it more support, including from the regular United Nations budget and through staff secondment from Permanent Missions. We also concur with the importance of the handover report from outgoing Presidents of the Assembly to their successors, particularly in areas discussing substantive reasons for shortcomings and suggestions for their improvement. On the selection and appointment of future Secretaries-General, the practices and lessons from the last experience should be detailed in a lessons-learned document while their memory is still fresh, and the Assembly should have more meaningful involvement in the process.

Secondly, with regard to “the United Nations we need”, our work here should have an impact on people’s lives. To that end, the Working Group should suggest how synergy, coherence and complementarity among the agendas of the Assembly and its Committees and the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies can be improved, as well as interaction with the Security Council. We support rationalizing the Assembly’s agenda by addressing gaps, overlaps and duplication where they are found. We commend Guyana for taking a lead in that regard. In our view, concrete deliverables to overcome challenges that have been identified are much more important than a large volume of agendas, meetings and high-level events.

Since success in meeting most of the global challenges requires comprehensiveness, and given that cross-pillar coordination is a key factor behind the restructuring of the United Nations peace and security, human rights and development architectures, the Working Group should welcome briefings from the Secretariat at regular intervals on how delivery on the ground is being improved, as that is where it matters most. The examination of ways to strengthen interaction between the principal organs should also be informed by progress in the intergovernmental negotiation reform process for the Security Council.

Last but not least, in an era when unilateralism, geopolitical rivalry, protectionism and narrow nationalism are spreading, reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism is our stronghold. No

matter how powerful a country or group of countries is, it cannot tackle challenges alone. The General Assembly is the best body we have for providing nations, small or large, with an opportunity to voice their concerns and aspirations on an equal footing. The strength of the General Assembly lies in its inclusivity. Its decisions may not be legally binding, but they are a product of global consensus and are therefore legitimate and in many cases more powerful.

We also stress strengthening the participation of regional and subregional organizations and cooperation with them. They possess unique local wisdom needed to address regional challenges. The democracy, transparency and rules-based nature of the Assembly’s mechanisms remain unmatched in enabling diverse countries to converge on crucial issues and reach transformational outcomes for promoting development, peace and security and human rights, the essential ingredients of international well-being.

For its part, Indonesia is determined to continue playing its role in the Working Group and other forums to bolster the General Assembly so that it can fully reveal itself as the true universal parliament of nations.

**Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa): At the outset, I would like to warmly welcome the convening of this debate on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. We appreciate the leadership of the President and the great importance that he attaches to the revitalization of the Assembly’s role and work. I also want to join others in congratulating the new co-Chair, Ambassador Martha Pobee of Ghana, and welcoming the reappointment of Ambassador Michal Mlynár of Slovakia as co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. I would like to assure them of my delegation’s support and cooperation.

South Africa aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Algeria, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States. We would like to make the following additional comments.

South Africa wants to underline that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a vital component of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations and will continue to be one of my delegation’s main priorities during the seventy-fourth session. In that regard, we welcome the achievements and progress that have been made in a number of

areas, including the role that the Assembly plays in the selection of the Secretary-General. We fully support the letter and spirit of the consensus resolutions that the Assembly has adopted to advance and strengthen its work, particularly resolution 69/321 and other subsequent resolutions. Notwithstanding the progress in that regard, we believe that more must still be done to ensure that the United Nations responds to the ever-changing needs of its whole membership.

South Africa continues to actively participate in the Ad Hoc Working Group, as we did throughout all the thematic cluster debates during the Assembly's seventy-third session and the interactive discussions between Permanent Missions and the Secretariat. We believe that continuing those informal dialogues during the seventy-fourth session will not only result in a better understanding of the priorities and innovative proposals that may be presented during those discussions but also of some of the challenges to be resolved in a mutually beneficial manner. We attach great importance to the entire cluster of issues under the Ad Hoc Working Group. In that context, I would now like to highlight my delegation's priorities for this session.

First, regarding the issue of the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, South Africa joins other delegations in expressing its pleasure in welcoming the significant reforms adopted during the seventy-second and seventy-third sessions, which have gone a long way to reinstating the role of the General Assembly in those processes. We reaffirm that the role of the Secretary-General is crucial to the implementation of the priorities of the United Nations, including peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. It is for that reason that South Africa would like to see those reforms institutionalized. The Ad Hoc Working Group should continue to discuss further reforms, including the possibility of a term limit and of appointing the next Secretary-General by a vote in the Assembly, as was the intention of the founding Member States. It must be stressed that it remains the desire of my delegation and indeed the majority of the Member States that the Security Council recommend more than one name to the General Assembly to vote for in accordance with rule 141 of the Assembly's rules of procedure. We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General to end the gender imbalance, especially at the senior executive level. We look forward to the full implementation of his gender strategy throughout the rest of the United Nations system and reiterate our

support for maintaining the principle of equitable geographic distribution when selecting senior executives and professional-level personnel.

Secondly, with regard to the role and authority of the General Assembly, South Africa reaffirms the importance of the Assembly as the chief deliberative and policymaking body and most representative principal organ of the United Nations. We will continue to work tirelessly with the rest of the members of the United Nations to strengthen the Assembly's role and authority in discharging its responsibilities, including those related to the maintenance of international peace and security and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the progress made by the Main Committees in improving their working methods. We also welcome the progress made in improving coordination between the Main Committees and the Ad Hoc Working Group with the aim of improving the work of the Assembly. My delegation joins a majority of Member States in underscoring the significance of preserving the intergovernmental, inclusive and democratic nature of the United Nations and the importance of consulting Member States within the Organization.

Thirdly, regarding the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, South Africa agrees that the Secretariat should assign additional human resources to the Office on a permanent basis, particularly with a view to improving record-keeping and promoting continuity from one session to the next. Furthermore, while we welcome the fact that the role and profile of the Office has increased exponentially in recent years, we remain concerned that its human and financial resources have stayed the same, which has huge implications for its work and efficacy. In that regard, we support the call for an effective and genuine strengthening of the Office of the President of the General Assembly as well as for allocating sufficient resources to it from the United Nations regular budget.

In conclusion, as we march towards the landmark seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, South Africa wishes to reaffirm its commitment to contributing constructively to the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during this session. We remain ready to work with other delegations in a transparent and professional manner.

**Mr. Ang** (Singapore): I join other speakers in commending Ambassadors Sima Sami Bahous of Jordan and Michal Mlynár of Slovakia for their work as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the seventy-third session. We look forward to the continued stewardship of Ambassador Mlynár and congratulate Ambassador Martha Pobee of Ghana on her appointment to lead our work for the coming year.

Singapore aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Algeria, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Thailand, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. I will add a few points in my national capacity.

The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is an important issue for Singapore. The Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. It is the only United Nations organ with universal representation, where all Member States, big or small, can play an equal role. That is the reason why Singapore has been such a strong supporter and advocate for a more efficient, effective and accountable United Nations and a revitalized General Assembly. Unfortunately, today we are grappling with the worst budget and liquidity crisis that the United Nations has seen in a decade. The Organization is barely able to keep itself running. We are facing delays in the issuance of documents and a reduction in the availability of key Secretariat services such as interpretation and translation. There have also been delays in the work of several of the Main Committees due to organizational issues that remain unresolved.

The commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations next year will be an opportunity for us to renew our commitment to multilateralism and the international rules-based order. It will be a chance to reaffirm the international community's commitment to tackling complex global problems such as poverty eradication, pandemics, climate change and the prevention of conflicts in its efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It will be a timely juncture for us to redouble our efforts to reinforce the role and authority of the General Assembly, enhance its effectiveness and efficiency and increase the transparency and inclusiveness of its work, all of which will be crucial to ensuring that the General Assembly keeps up with the challenges of the day and discharges its responsibilities.

The efforts to revitalize the work of the General Assembly have produced tangible and encouraging outcomes over the past few years, of which I will highlight just a few. There have been improvements in the processes to select and appoint the Secretary-General; the Office of the President of the General Assembly has been strengthened, with improved continuity between its outgoing and incoming Presidents; the election process has been made more efficient and guidelines have been put in place for election campaign materials; and the introduction of regular informal dialogues between the President of the General Assembly, the Secretariat and Member States has improved communication and the understanding of priorities and challenges on all sides. In that regard, we welcomed the convening of the first morning dialogue with President Tijjani Muhammad-Bande earlier today on the important topic of inclusive quality education and lifelong learning. But the task ahead is more difficult, as we must now tackle some of the more intractable issues. In that regard, I would like to highlight three points of particular interest to Singapore.

First, steps must be taken to preserve the primacy of the general debate during the high-level week. That means engaging in a serious discussion about how to rationalize and limit the number of high-level meetings and side events held in parallel with the general debate. Singapore is prepared to support initiatives that will streamline and limit such side meetings, including proposals to develop a set of clear guidelines to manage the overall activities in a manner that will benefit all Member States.

Secondly, Singapore looks forward to continuing the discussion on the rationalization and streamlining of the agenda of the General Assembly. This is important and necessary, as the continued proliferation of agenda items and resolutions will lead to an unsustainable volume of work that will dilute the Assembly's focus, effectiveness and efficiency.

Thirdly, more consideration must be invested in the scheduling of meetings of the General Assembly to enable meaningful consideration of the issues being debated. I am referring specifically to the consideration of the work of the United Nations and its principal organs and to the annual reports of the Security Council and of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. These reports give Member States the opportunity to scrutinize and ask questions about the work of the United Nations and its organs and are an

important exercise in transparency, accountability and legitimacy. There have been issues in the past with the timing of these debates. It is therefore important that the discussions on these reports and other important issues be scheduled to allow the wider membership sufficient time to consider the reports if they are to have a meaningful debate on them.

Singapore is committed to the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. We will continue to work with the President, the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group and other delegations to further enhance the Assembly's credibility, accountability, efficiency and legitimacy.

**Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and we would like to acknowledge the excellent work that the Algerian and Belarusian delegations have done as coordinators of the Movement during the consultations on this issue.

We want to express our appreciation to Ambassadors Sima Sami Bahous, of Jordan, and Michal Mlynár, of Slovakia, for their work as co-Chairs of the negotiation process during the seventy-third session. We congratulate the Ambassador of Slovakia on the renewal of his term and the Ambassador of Ghana on her new appointment.

The revitalization of the General Assembly should be understood as a dynamic process that strengthens the Assembly's role and authority as the main representative and deliberative organ of the United Nations. Supporting the work of the Assembly, including the full implementation of its resolutions, and respecting its rules of procedure constitute a support and a contribution to the strengthening of multilateralism and the effectiveness of the United Nations. We reiterate the importance of ensuring an appropriate balance among the principal organs of the United Nations, as established in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as ending the growing and dangerous tendency of the Security Council to invade the Assembly's scope of action. We hope that the revitalization process will help to further strengthen the interaction between the Secretariat and the General Assembly so that the Secretariat can continue to respond more effectively to the mandates determined by the Member States.

Cuba participated actively in the negotiations on resolution 73/341, on the revitalization of the General Assembly, which was adopted by consensus. Although the process is mandated to consider and make proposals regarding the work procedures of the Assembly and its Committees and subsidiary organs, we are concerned about the growing tendency to make proposals that seek to undermine the sovereign interests of States by infringing on their privileges and rights. We are also concerned about the attempts to use the revitalization process to endorse biased views that do not enjoy consensus and whose consideration is essentially the responsibility of the Main Committees and other relevant subsidiary bodies, in a comprehensive and holistic manner and according to the appropriate schedules, in a kind of analysis that would be difficult to achieve in the revitalization process. In that regard, we reiterate the importance of respecting the mandates, practices and relevant negotiating spaces of each of the Committees and other subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly.

With regard to the proposals submitted for changing the date fixed for the opening of the session, we believe that they should be examined in depth before any decision is taken. A comprehensive analysis of their advantages and disadvantages is necessary for the work of the Organization, and particularly for the Member States. Our delegation has no objection to keeping the start of the session as laid down in rule 1 of the Assembly's rules of procedure, that is, on the Tuesday of the third week of September. As the co-Chairs said in their report on the revitalization process, a number of Member States have reiterated that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be respected, and that Headquarters should not be used to single out its Member States with regard to issues not on its agenda or within its mandate. The powerful cannot be allowed to interfere in the internal affairs of other States in order to overthrow the economic, social and democratic order freely chosen by their peoples.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly cannot be determined by the rationalization of its work, much less by the removal of items and resolutions from its agenda, and my delegation does not support this kind of biased approach. True effectiveness and efficiency lie in the ability of Member States to advance the discussion and resolution of substantive issues of importance to our peoples on the basis of dialogue, respect and political will. Speaking of

efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the General Assembly, we must continue reiterating how important it is to strengthen the Office of its President through resources that include those related to additional positions in the regular budget of the Organization, complemented by the appropriate administrative, technical and logistical support that it needs to carry out its functions in accordance with its mandate.

Ensuring the sustainability of the international community's trust in the United Nations and its legitimacy also demands that the Organization truly respond to our collective interests and those of the vast majority of its Member States. The international community has frequently seen resolutions adopted by the General Assembly go unimplemented, along with a lack of consensus on decisions on issues that have long afflicted our peoples. Cuba calls on the States Members of the United Nations to show their political will and commitment to multilateralism.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my delegation's willingness to continue to support the process of revitalizing the General Assembly in order to consolidate its democratic and participatory nature.

**Mr. Guo Jiakun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China appreciates the convening of today's meeting. The world today is undergoing major changes of a kind that have not been seen for a century. In the face of the effects of unilateralism and protectionism, the world needs multilateralism and a strong United Nations more than ever.

The year 2020 will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Looking back, we can see that the United Nations has helped to bring peace all over the world for nearly 75 years and to lift 1.1 billion people out of poverty and achieve development. The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations have become the basic norms governing international relations. The concept and practice of multilateralism have brought tangible benefits to people everywhere. Looking to the future, human society is increasingly facing severe global challenges. The more complex and grave the situation, the more we must increase the role and authority of the United Nations and achieve greater unity and progress under its banner.

The General Assembly is one of the main Charter-based organs of the United Nations and the most

important body for policymaking, deliberation and review. The revitalization of the Assembly's work is linked to the vital interests of all Member States and the authority and credibility of the United Nations. Member States, especially developing countries, hope that the General Assembly will continue to improve its work and fulfil the responsibilities conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations more comprehensively and effectively.

China congratulates the Permanent Representatives of Ghana and Slovakia on their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly and assures them of its full support. We stand ready to work with all parties to implement the relevant resolutions on the revitalization of the Assembly within the framework of the Ad Hoc Working Group, guided by the principles of democratic consultations, step-by-step progress and tackling the easiest tasks first, with the aim of encouraging the General Assembly to play a more active role in upholding multilateralism and promoting peace and development. To that end, China proposes the following four points.

First, we should focus on the key points and take aim at the right targets. A top priority is ensuring the success of next year's series of commemorative activities marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. We should adhere to the overarching principle of enhancing solidarity and trust and send a positive message of support for multilateralism and the United Nations. More attention and input should be given to the issue of development to inject new life into the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and international development cooperation.

Secondly, the General Assembly should perform its own duties well and create synergies with other bodies. It should enhance its coordination with the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies in order to create greater synergies by combining their respective strengths. With regard to issues concerning the maintenance of international peace and security, the Assembly should strengthen its coordination and cooperation with the Security Council in accordance with the Charter.

My third point is about improving work and effectiveness. In accordance with their respective mandates, the General Assembly and its Main

Committees should improve their working methods, streamline decision-making procedures and improve work efficiency. They should focus on improving the quality of documents and reports, work hard to streamline their reports and make them concise, and produce practical and useful analyses and recommendations.

Fourthly, we should enhance support for the President of the General Assembly. The President is the symbol of the General Assembly. The effective operation of the Office of the President of the General Assembly is crucial to the Assembly's smooth functioning, and China supports increasing its human and budgetary resources. President Muhammad-Bande has listed poverty reduction, education and climate change as priorities in his work. China supports those promises and stands ready to take concrete measures to help the President turn them into action, which will benefit people everywhere, and to achieve the goal of this session of the Assembly, which is striving together and delivering for all.

**Mrs. Raz** (Afghanistan): Afghanistan aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the outset, I would like to sincerely congratulate the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly on their excellent work on this very important matter. I would also like to commend the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, for taking on this important issue, which seeks to strengthen our work in this important international multilateral forum.

The revitalization of the General Assembly is critical to enabling the United Nations to fulfil the role envisaged for it in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly in the face of continually evolving global challenges. We are confident that undertaking this process will make for a more inclusive, responsive and efficient body. In that regard, my delegation would like to make some brief remarks on four points.

First, with regard to the role and authority of the General Assembly, Afghanistan supports continued efforts to strengthen the Assembly to ensure that the United Nations truly works for us all. We join the call for the timely identification and presentation of resolutions and continued efforts to address gaps, overlaps and duplications as they relate to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. My country

recognizes the importance of holding inclusive and interactive thematic debates and will continue to be an active participant in such discussions.

Secondly, with regard to the Assembly's working methods, we support the continuing efforts to increase gender parity within the United Nations and welcome the increasing number of women candidates nominated to the Assembly's subsidiary bodies. Our delegation also commends the Secretary-General's commitment to increasing the number of women across the Organization, and in that regard we celebrate the achievement at the United Nations senior-management level. We believe it is a laudable accomplishment and hope that it will soon become the norm in United Nations missions globally.

Thirdly, our delegation acknowledges and supports the continued efforts to make the selection process for the appointment of the Secretary-General and other United Nations high-level officials inclusive, transparent and efficient. We hope that we can maintain the best practices of previous years and address the remaining challenges in order to develop a stronger framework that strengthens our vision of an open and democratic Organization.

Fourthly, our delegation supports efforts to further strengthen the Office of the President of the General Assembly. Afghanistan recognizes the crucial role it plays in the overall success of the work of the Assembly, and we enthusiastically join the calls for the human, technical and financial resources needed to ensure more efficient operations and transitions within the Office.

Afghanistan recognizes the important purpose served by the revitalization of the General Assembly. It is a process that seeks to bring the Organization closer to the purpose of its original founding and mandate. It also contributes to transparency, inclusiveness and efficiency while preserving the intergovernmental and democratic nature of the United Nations, and it requires frank and comprehensive dialogue among Member States. In reaffirming its support for those reforms, Afghanistan commits to the increasingly important need for cooperation and collective action to uphold the pillars on which the United Nations was founded. We look forward to being an active partner and participant in creating a United Nations that works for all, and the Assembly can count on our delegation's full cooperation in this area.

**Mr. Boguslavskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the convening of today's meeting of the General Assembly on the implementation of United Nations resolutions and the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. We would like to congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Ghana and Slovakia on their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly and to wish them every success.

We note the high level of professionalism shown by the previous co-Chairs of the Working Group, the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and Jordan, during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. Largely thanks to their efforts, resolution 73/341, adopted on 12 September, became a more understandable and implementable document. The work done during the seventy-third session once again demonstrated that we can succeed in the work of revitalizing the Assembly only when the process enjoys broad consensus support. An understanding of that enabled us to reach a balanced and well-considered text. The results of the forthcoming round of negotiations will also depend on the willingness of States to listen to one another.

The Russian delegation will continue to participate constructively in the efforts to revitalize the General Assembly. The upcoming seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, which should demonstrate the unity of the nations of the world in the face of global problems, will play a particular part in our collective work. However, our efforts with regard to revitalization should be depoliticized and geared primarily to enhancing the Assembly's effectiveness, which to a large degree can be achieved by further streamlining its working methods and reorganizing its increasingly overloaded agenda. In particular, it is essential to continue bi- or triennializing some agenda items and removing those that are no longer relevant. We support the initiatives to lighten the high-level week within the framework of the general political debate, as our colleague from Zambia, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, discussed. The various events could be evenly distributed throughout the work of the entire session, but it will be important to ensure that any changes take into account the interests of all Member States.

We believe that all initiatives should be based on strict respect for the distribution of prerogatives between the principal organs of the Organization, as

enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council is frequently criticized for infringing on the powers of other United Nations organs, and we share that concern. Our Council colleagues know that our approach to its consideration of thematic debates is a restrained one. But recently their number has only gone up, for which we are not to blame. We urge those who undertake them to consider what the Council can realistically accomplish on such topics.

A great deal of attention has recently been given to the issues of improving transparency and democracy in the procedures for selecting and appointing the Secretary-General. We are willing to continue working on reasonable ways to optimize the existing arrangements. In our view, however, ideas for this should be carefully studied, primarily to ensure strict compliance with the Charter, according to which the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. We should also not forget that the main task is to elect the most deserving candidate for the post of Secretary-General. Attempts to codify the procedure unnecessarily could have undesirable consequences.

With regard to the question of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions, we do not think this is entirely a matter of a lack of political will. One of the most important factors is the achievability of resolutions. Before proposing draft resolutions, it is therefore important to ask how implementable they will be if they are adopted. We urge everyone to refrain from politicized, deliberately unrealizable initiatives that tend to divide Member States rather than bring them together. There can be no doubt whatever that resolutions adopted by an overwhelming majority or, ideally, by consensus have a greater chance of becoming a reality. Needless to say, that requires work, diplomacy and a willingness to compromise. Unfortunately, the past few years have shown that not everyone takes that approach. There is therefore no point in expecting the implementation of resolutions that divide the Assembly and are focused only on obtaining narrow short-term advantages.

We want to once again wish the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group every success, and we are ready to work closely with them.

**Mr. Mlynár** (Slovakia): My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by the



observer of the European Union, and I would like to make a few additional points in my national capacity.

Let me start by thanking the President for convening this plenary debate, which goes to the very core of the United Nations — empowering the General Assembly to fulfil its central role, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, so that it is better able to face and address our current global challenges. As the United Nations approaches the seventy-fifth anniversary of its inception, as has been mentioned today by many delegations, the way we work and aim to achieve the noble goals defined in the Charter is more relevant than ever. We should therefore strive to take this opportunity to further reflect on the issue and agree on tangible outcomes. I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for the strong commitment he has demonstrated since the beginning of his mandate to the issue of the revitalization of the Assembly and its working methods and efficiency.

It was a great honour for me and my country to guide the negotiations on the issue of revitalization during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, together with my co-Chair, Ambassador Sima Sami Bahous of Jordan. With the trust and support of all delegations, I am deeply honoured and pleased to continue serving as one of the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly during this session as well, and I am looking forward to working in that regard with my colleague Ambassador Martha Pobee, the Permanent Representative of Ghana. I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for the trust he has placed in us through this appointment.

As we have seen in several recent sessions, the General Assembly has been capable of significant achievements in relation to its revitalization, ranging from issues such as the enhancement of the process for appointing the Secretary-General to the streamlining of its working methods. I firmly believe that the streamlined and much more concise resolution adopted at the seventy-third session, resolution 73/341, as well as the revitalization resolutions of previous sessions, particularly those adopted after the sixty-ninth session, provide a solid foundation for continued discussions and the identification of action-oriented solutions. In our view, our efforts should continue to focus on some of the following issues, of which I will discuss just a few.

First, previous resolutions of the General Assembly, not just on revitalization itself but on many other relevant issues, should be duly implemented. In that respect, we quite often fail by adopting resolutions and then somehow not spending the time to ensure that they are implemented and to delve into the details of their implementation, or even to address some of their shortcomings. By making sure that resolutions are adhered to, several issues of concern can be addressed in a simple way, without the need to repeat tiresome negotiations on the same matters in each and every session. In that regard, we should also make better use of the lessons learned from the Main Committees on the rationalization of their work, including the bi- or triennialization of some agenda items. The Ad Hoc Working Group should work even more closely with the Main Committees and their bureaus to identify practical approaches and look for solutions. This is therefore one of the areas where we believe the Ad Hoc Working Group can produce additional practical results and further focus its attention as a coordinator and as a body that would serve as the focal point for addressing the implementation of resolutions as well as some of the shortcomings.

Next, while there is a general agreement on the overburdening of the agenda, we have repeatedly fallen short of agreeing on tangible measures to address some of the very real challenges. We also saw this aspect during the previous session, where there were a number of very practical and very rational solutions, as well as some potential ideas, on the table, but in the end we were unfortunately not able to agree on them or to find the necessary consensus to take them forward. There is further work to be done and efforts to be made on the same issues.

Without addressing the difficulties posed by the proliferation of high-level events or side events, especially at the margins of the general debate, but also during other parts of the session, we cannot realistically expect to alleviate the current untenable situation. The situation in relation to the cash-flow crisis, as has been mentioned by several delegations, is yet another strong confirmation of the impasse.

We should continue to make further strides in our pursuit of the common goal to revitalize the Assembly in order to make it a truly deliberative and functional body. My delegation looks forward to engaging with all delegations and the relevant parts of the United Nations Secretariat, as well as with the Office of the President

of the General Assembly, in making results-oriented efforts aimed at further improving the Organization's ability to contribute meaningfully to global peace, prosperity, sustainable development and human rights. The process of revitalization is certainly an effort and a tool that we have had at our disposal since the early 1990s, and it is helping us to better deliver on all three United Nations pillars and all the different types of activities that we have been working on.

In conclusion, I would like to once again repeat that together with my fellow Chair, we will do our best to further address with all delegations the issues that are being discussed in the revitalization context. We are firmly committed to trying to find practical solutions to many of the issues that other delegations have already raised.

**Mr. Giordano** (United States of America): First of all, the United States would like to express its appreciation to the Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly during the seventy-third session, Ambassadors Bahous and Mlynár. We very much appreciate their efforts to prepare a streamlined, focused draft resolution and congratulate them on the consensus adoption of the annual revitalization resolution during the seventy-third session (resolution 73/341). We would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for his interest in advancing these efforts.

During the seventy-fourth session, the United States would like to build on the progress already made so that we can continue collectively further improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the General Assembly. The United States continues to call for the reduction of the duplicative resolutions and agenda items across the six General Assembly Committees, but particularly in the Second Committee. As we have stated on numerous occasions, we continue to believe there is insufficient change or development on many of the issues on our agenda on a yearly basis to justify annual reports or resolutions; rather, triennial or quadrennial reporting and negotiation would be beneficial to us all. There are also a number of resolutions that are outdated, irrelevant, ineffective and, in some cases, redundant. We support streamlining the General Assembly's agenda in order to eliminate such obsolete and redundant agenda items. By doing so, we will enable Member States to focus on concrete outcomes, not just on process.

Despite lengthy discussions on the alignment of the work of the Second and Third Committees and the Economic and Social Council, the agenda only continues to balloon. This year's Second Committee has more resolutions than ever before, and the Third Committee has over 60 resolutions. It is time for us to practice what we preach. The one resolution by the United States in the Third Committee on elections is biennial. We must all look holistically across the board at the periodicity of all but the most essential resolutions. Additionally, we should look at the resolutions themselves. They have also gotten longer than before, with some running more than 20 pages. As the President of the General Assembly has highlighted, many call for the convening of one-day high-level events as well, with 10 out of 13 proposals currently under consideration coming from a single political group.

We remain supportive of moving to a biennial General Assembly revitalization resolution process. This shift would allow Member States to focus on implementation versus negotiation and advance our common efficiency goals. We must remember that the extensive programme of work also results in opportunity costs for delegations and capitals. Time spent in negotiating rooms on resolutions with little effect is time taken away from other forms of outreach. It leads to problems in coordination by groups of countries, making positions more rigid and making it harder for participants in negotiations to work out compromises. In short, the overloaded programme causes the quality of work to suffer. The United Nations does not have infinite resources to create reports, and delegations do not have infinite human resources and time to devote to preparing for and participating in debates in this Hall and in the committee rooms. At some point, we must question their value. If everything is important, then nothing is.

Our time, energy and limited resources should be devoted to endeavours that have more of an impact. We also strongly encourage Member States to consider supporting a code of conduct governing elections in the General Assembly. These standards would improve transparency and accountability for Member States' election campaigns. We continue to believe that civil society participation in high-level conferences and meetings of the General Assembly will provide valuable — and often missing — perspectives on the issues before this body. The true drivers of sustainable development and the advancement of human rights are

respect for the rule of law and human rights, citizen-responsive governance based on transparency and accountability, and the participation of civil society. Citizens' voices must be heard.

Finally, we ask that the Ad Hoc Working Group remain focused on the main objective with which the General Assembly has charged us, namely, strengthening the work of the General Assembly.

**Mr. Aidid** (Malaysia): Malaysia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Thailand and Algeria on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively.

I join others in extending our appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and Jordan for facilitating the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly during the seventy-third session. I also wish to congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Ghana and Slovakia for her appointment and his reappointment, respectively, as Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the current session of the General Assembly.

Next year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. As an organization that began with only 51 members at its inception in 1945, the United Nations has grown and expanded to what it is today. With 193 members, the United Nations has become much more sophisticated. In today's digital era, information travels much faster than it did before, warranting a quick response in our work so as to ensure that all our mandates are implemented efficiently and effectively. My delegation is therefore encouraged by the adoption of resolution 73/341 as a manifestation of our resolve to uphold the principles of multilateralism in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

Malaysia is of the view that there should be no end to our collective efforts aimed at ensuring that the General Assembly remains the chief deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. To this end, the General Assembly must be endowed with all the necessary capacity to address all the challenges facing our world today, whether related to political, security or socioeconomic aspects. In this context, my delegation would like to stress the vital importance of improving our focus in the work of the General Assembly. We should pay close attention to prioritizing our agenda.

My delegation therefore supports continued efforts to address gaps, overlaps and duplication in the Assembly's agenda. In this regard, we call for regular and closer consultation between the Chairs of the relevant Committees to address these problems. The Ad Hoc Working Group could also convene informal consultations in the form of breakout sessions to enable frank and open exchanges of views. We can charge the Secretariat with preparing a concept paper to be used as a basis for our consultation on how best to move forward.

My delegation would also like to join others in encouraging regular interaction between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Such interaction is useful as we move towards reinforcing the synergy, coherence and complementarity among these three United Nations organs. Malaysia also supports regular interactions and greater coordination between the Presidents of the three organs and the Secretary-General.

Lastly, my delegation would like to stress the pertinence of strengthening the Office of the President of the General Assembly. The task of the President is not easy, and we therefore have the collective responsibility to support the President in the implementation of our mandates. My delegation supports the proposal for additional permanent staff and for adequate financial resources from the regular budget to be allocated to the Office of the President of the General Assembly. The Office should not have to rely solely on voluntary contributions from Member States to cover 87 per cent of its expenses.

The commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations in 2020 would be an opportune time for us to take stock of our achievements and to look critically at the challenges for the United Nations and multilateralism. Let us make the anniversary meaningful and not merely ceremonial. With the theme "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism", there is no more appropriate time for us to reform our Organization for the better in the interest of international peace, security and prosperity.

**Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): We associate ourselves with the statements made by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

In our national capacity, we thank the representatives of Slovakia and Jordan for co-facilitating resolution 73/341, and congratulate the representatives of Slovakia and Ghana for taking a further step in this ongoing historic process to improve the transparency and efficiency of the General Assembly, the chief organ of the Organization, in which we are all represented on an equal footing.

Paragraph 4 of resolution 73/341 suggests that during the current session, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly should identify ways to enhance and strengthen the role and the authority of the Assembly. The observer of the European Union told us about highly ambitious ways to revitalize the General Assembly that do not enjoy general approval, and noted that much remains to be done in terms of working methods in order to ensure robust civil-society participation in our work. Our delegation agrees fully on both counts. Furthermore, we believe that tackling the important issue of strengthening the role, hierarchy and authority of the Assembly in the exercise of some of its functions is not overly ambitious and deserves the membership's consensus. I refer to two of those functions in particular.

First is the General Assembly's role in accountability processes. It is a fundamental principle of every transparent process in every democratic system of checks and balances that accountability involves two actors, the one who is accountable and the one who holds accountable. Under paragraph 2 of Article 15 of the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly has the function of receiving and considering reports from the other organs of the United Nations. In early September, the Assembly saw a fledgling debate about the timeliness, quality and depth of the report of the Security Council, specifically how late, superficial and lacking it was in analytical content, as described by many (see A/73/PV.105 and A/73/PV.106). The request in paragraph 17 of resolution 73/341 that the Council's reports not be considered in a perfunctory manner was therefore opportune.

We note that the Security Council's 2018 annual report (A/73/2), which was discussed in September, reflects none of the issues that the General Assembly raised about the 2017 report (A/72/2). In other words, the Council gave no consideration to the comments made in the General Assembly at the time. The discussion of the report of the Security Council took place in this Hall in the absence of most of the members of the Council.

During the Assembly's second meeting on that agenda item, the Council did not even suspend its activities, as it is obliged to do under current regulations. We hope that the Assembly's authority and the remarks made here will now lead to the timely submission of the Council's report in 2020, that the report will contain substantive points rather than a mere list of resolutions and that it will lay the foundation for a truly interactive discussion.

Secondly, subparagraph (j) of paragraph 5 of resolution 60/251 — the resolution that created the Human Rights Council — establishes that the Council will “submit an annual report to the General Assembly”. That was done at the end of October, once again in a meeting with very low attendance (see A/74/PV.23 and A/74/PV.24), in this organ that is called on to receive and analyse the report (A/74/53 and A/74/53/Add.1), which, like the report of the Security Council, contained a simple list of resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council in the three sessions that took place during the period covered. There is no analysis in the report on the general situation of respect for human rights around the world, no interpretation of the current progress being made in the protection of human rights or on the need for any update that may be required owing to such new universal phenomena as the climate crisis, migration and the use of outer space and deep-sea areas.

The discussion of the report took place once again in the absence of representatives of many members of the Council throughout the entire debate and discussion, as well as a large number of those who had been elected a mere 10 days earlier, and with one member whose duties had come to an end but who had been re-elected for a new term failing to appear throughout the entire process of the discussion of the report. But on an even more serious note, almost unbelievably, the President of the Human Rights Council, having come from Geneva to deliver his briefing, left the Assembly Hall, without even sending a substitute, while representatives of Member States discussed the report.

Today's meeting once again serves as an opportunity to underscore the purpose of the General Assembly — which, I repeat, is the primary organ of the Organization — and to identify the working methods and approaches that consolidate and reinforce its functions and above all its authority, as mandated in paragraph 4 of resolution 73/341, which I mentioned earlier.

**Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative

of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We thank the President of the General Assembly for sharing his insights and for linking the matter of revitalizing the work of the General Assembly to the primacy of upholding the values and principles of multilateralism. Bangladesh believes that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly remains an integral part of the wider efforts aimed at reforming the United Nations as a whole. Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the General Assembly is therefore a first step towards a more democratic and inclusive United Nations that is capable of carrying out its mandated functions and obligations. Bangladesh believes that as the world's most representative multilateral body, the General Assembly is best positioned to address pressing global challenges. The recent practices followed in appointing the President of the General Assembly are a welcome development. We need to build further on them and replicate them in other appointments, wherever possible.

We underscore the importance of preserving the intergovernmental, inclusive and democratic nature of the United Nations and the need to consult its Member States. We also emphasize the need to respect the Charter-based prerogatives of the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, the primacy of which must be upheld.

We subscribe to the initiative aimed at ensuring the proper implementation of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the functional relationship between its main organs. Bangladesh stresses the importance of strengthened functional relations among the principal organs of the United Nations while leveraging their respective competencies and mandated responsibilities. Their efficiency can be further improved by building synergies and complementarities and avoiding duplication and overlapping, as well as by rationalizing their agendas. We commend the regular

dialogue held between the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council and the President of the Economic and Social Council. We take particular note of the joint meeting convened this month to reaffirm the commitment of Member States to multilateralism by further strengthening and energizing the United Nations.

Bangladesh continues to take a keen interest in the reform of the working methods of the General Assembly and its Main Committees. We understand that the working methods are only one step towards making more substantive improvements aimed at restoring and enhancing the role and authority of the General Assembly. In this context, we would see merit in mainstreaming some of these efficiency gains across all the Committees. We also underscore the need to ensure the due prominence of the general-debate segment of the General Assembly at each annual session. We echo the view expressed by many Member States that the number of side events should also be made more rational. This should be done in a way that ensures follow-up and forward-looking linkages.

In conclusion, with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations coming up next year, the Member States have the opportunity to look within and act with a view to making the United Nations more relevant and effective. The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly would go a long way to achieving that end. We look forward to remaining constructively engaged in the thematic debates and negotiations on the draft resolution on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these agenda items.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 120 and 121.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*