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Chair: Mr. Niang (Senegal)
later: Mr. Al-Kuwari (Vice-Chair) (Qatar)

Contents

Statement by the President of the General Assembly

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development

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

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- (k) Combating sand and dust storms
- (l) Sustainable mountain development

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

Statement by the President of the General Assembly

1. **Mr. Muhammad-Bande** (Nigeria), President of the General Assembly, said that four years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the adoption of those frameworks represented a paradigm shift in how development was viewed.

2. All Governments were tasked with implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and countries had made important strides, but if they were to achieve all of the Goals and targets by the 2030 deadline, efforts would need to be stepped up. As the global response required to meet the Goals had not been ambitious enough, it was time to galvanize multilateral action to ensure that no one was left behind. His priorities for the current session were anchored in the 2030 Agenda.

3. The international community must refocus its efforts on poverty eradication. It was not on track to achieve the target of eradicating extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030. Furthermore, hunger had been on the rise globally for the past three years. In a world where one third of the food produced was lost or wasted, more could certainly be done to address hunger.

4. Youth had shown leadership by calling for action on the climate emergency. The United Nations had heard them and must respond by taking concrete actions, which could be furthered through the deliberations of the Second Committee and of the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held shortly in Chile.

5. Naturally, it would not be possible to effectively tackle climate without also considering the oceans and biodiversity. The 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, to be held in Lisbon, and the summit on biodiversity to be convened in New York in 2020 offered platforms to mobilize action on those important issues.

6. One in five children worldwide were not enrolled in schools and more than 600 million youth around the world lacked basic mathematics and literacy skills. None of the Sustainable Development Goals would be achieved without an educated population. Quality education was therefore a major priority as youth must have the education and skills to thrive in an increasingly digitalized world. He intended to convene a high-level

thematic debate on rapid technological change during the current session.

7. To make progress in any area of work, all stakeholders must be included. Delegations should therefore consider the specific needs and contexts of all Member States throughout their deliberations. Action had already been taken to address the challenges facing small island developing States, including through the convening of the midterm review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway) during the high-level week. The midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 would be conducted soon and the 25-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action offered an opportunity to recommit to women's rights and empowerment. Actions must be taken every day to ensure the full and equal participation of women at every level of decision-making.

8. The review of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and of the Economic and Social Council would produce a more effective architecture for implementing the 2030 Agenda and raise ambition for the next cycle of implementation. He would work closely with all Member States to make the forum fit for purpose as the international community charted the course for a new decade of action. He would also work with the President of the Economic and Social Council and with the General Committee and indeed all Member States to ensure that the agenda of the General Assembly was aligned with the 2030 Agenda and that any gaps and duplication across their respective areas of work were addressed. The political declaration adopted at the high-level political forum convened under the auspices of the General Assembly called on the international community to gear up for a decade of action and implementation at the speed and scale required. Progress was still possible, but only if immediate action was taken.

9. The Sustainable Development Goals would not be achieved without sufficient sustainable development financing to address structural issues and impediments and ensure financial integrity. It would be necessary to scale up existing development cooperation efforts, promote new and innovative initiatives and close the \$2.5 trillion financing gap.

10. The impact of the Committee's deliberations reached far beyond the Secretariat building and its work would improve the lives of the people it served. He therefore urged all delegations to work together in good

faith towards consensus outcomes on the wide range of issues on the Committee's agenda.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development
([A/74/208](#), [A/74/216](#), [A/74/216/Add.1](#), [A/74/225](#),
[A/74/238](#) and [A/74/242](#))

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development** ([A/74/72-E/2019/13](#) and [A/74/204](#))
- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** ([A/74/66](#))
- (c) **Disaster risk reduction** ([A/74/248](#))
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind** ([A/74/207](#))
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** ([A/74/207](#))
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** ([A/74/207](#))
- (g) **Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme** ([A/74/25](#))
- (h) **Education for sustainable development** ([A/74/258](#))
- (i) **Harmony with Nature** ([A/74/236](#))
- (j) **Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all** ([A/74/265](#))
- (k) **Combating sand and dust storms** ([A/74/263](#))
- (l) **Sustainable mountain development** ([A/74/209](#))

11. **Mr. Trepelkov** (Officer-in-Charge, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) said that he wished to introduce eight reports of the Secretary-General on sustainable development. The first, the report of the Secretary-General on agriculture technology for sustainable development ([A/74/238](#)) examined current trends and key advances in agricultural technologies, provided examples of the transformative use of technologies at scale and made recommendations for the

way forward. The report stressed the need for inclusive technologies and innovations geared towards the global good.

12. Second, the report of the Secretary-General on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea ([A/74/242](#)) summarized the views received from nine Member States and several regional and international organizations in response to a questionnaire on the subject matter and on the possibility of establishing a database and its institutional framework.

13. Third, the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ([A/74/204](#)) was based on recent studies, reports and analysis by the United Nations system and the outcomes of intergovernmental deliberations, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. The report should be read in conjunction with the other reports on sustainable development submitted to the General Assembly.

14. Fourth, the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system ([A/74/72-E/2019/13](#)) provided an update on the actions and initiatives of the United Nations system to further intensify efforts to mainstream the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development throughout its work.

15. Fifth, the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States ([A/74/66](#)) reviewed the status of implementation of the Samoa Pathway over the period 2015–2019, including a focus on stocktaking and an analysis of the progress made and continuing challenges faced. It also included a summary of the actions taken by Member States, the United Nations system and development partners to support small island developing States in the implementation efforts.

16. Sixth, the report of the Secretary-General on harmony with nature ([A/74/236](#)) drew on the outcome of the interactive dialogue held on 22 April 2019 to commemorate International Mother Earth Day. The report highlighted humankind's evolving consciousness

of its relationship with Mother Earth, an evolution that was guided by the urgent need to transition to an Earth-centred paradigm.

17. Seventh, the report of the Secretary-General on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (A/74/265) provided an overview of global, regional and national efforts in the energy sector and presented key messages from several global platforms for inspiring action in support of Sustainable Development Goal 7, including the high-level dialogues held in May 2019 at the midpoint of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All 2014–2024.

18. Lastly, the report of the Secretary-General on sustainable mountain development (A/74/209) detailed how mountain stakeholders had responded to the 2030 Agenda and included some recommendations on actions to accelerate progress towards sustainable mountain development.

19. **Ms. Aubert** (Policy Specialist at the Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/74/225), said that the report provided an update on progress in implementing successive General Assembly resolutions concerning the environmental disaster that had occurred on 15 July 2006 with the destruction by the Israeli Air Force of oil storage tanks near the Jiyeh electric power plant in Lebanon, causing an oil slick that covered two thirds of the Lebanese coastline and extended beyond to that of the Syrian Arab Republic.

20. Referring to paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 73/224, she said that, according to the report, the Government of Israel had not assumed responsibility for relevant compensation to the Government of Lebanon and, referring to paragraphs 7 and 8 of the resolution, she said that the Secretary-General regretted that no voluntary contributions had been made to the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund in response to his appeal.

21. In his report, the Secretary-General commended the ongoing efforts made by the Government of Lebanon to address the impacts of the spill, while expressing grave concern over the failure to implement the relevant provisions of the resolutions with regard to compensation by the Government of Israel to the Government and people of Lebanon. Damage had been assessed at \$856.4 million in 2014.

22. **Mr. Dumitriu** (Inspector, Joint Inspection Unit), speaking via video link and introducing the note by the Secretary-General (A/74/216) transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled “Strengthening policy

research uptake in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (JIU/REP/2018/7), said that the report aimed to raise awareness regarding the importance of the research function in support of a transformative agenda for sustainable development. The implementation of the various recommendations contained in the report would strengthen the role played by research within the United Nations system.

23. **Ms. Mizutori** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (A/74/248), said that the report provided an early overview of progress towards the seven global targets and the four priorities for action under the Sendai Framework. While the report showed that progress had been made in reducing disaster risk through the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the pace of disaster risk reduction creation was exceeding that of risk reduction efforts. She drew attention to the recommendations contained in paragraph 86 of the report.

24. **Mr. Violetti** (Director of the Finance, Technology and Capacity-Building Programme, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), speaking via video link and introducing the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (A/74/207, section I), said that the report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/232 on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind, contained a summary of the outcomes of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to Convention, held in Katowice, Poland. The Katowice Climate Change Conference had enjoyed a high level of participation and had achieved significant results across all bodies. He drew attention to the relevant conclusions and recommendations contained in the report.

25. **Mr. Thiaw** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), speaking in a recorded message to introduce his report on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (A/74/207, section II), said that the report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/233, provided an update on the principal activities undertaken to implement the Convention. Stressing that the theme of land was important towards achieving inclusive and sustainable development, he drew attention to the key observations and recommendations contained in the report.

26. **Ms. Paşca Palmer** (Deputy Chief, New York Liaison Office, Convention on Biological Diversity), introducing the report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (A/74/207, section III), said that the report had been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/234. The report covered key outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held from 17 to 29 November 2018 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. She drew attention to the relevant recommendations contained in the report.

27. **Mr. Ahmad** (Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, New York Office, United Nations Environment Programme), introducing the report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme on its fourth session (A/74/25), said that the fourth session of the Assembly, which had been held in Nairobi from 11 to 15 March 2018 on the theme “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”, had garnered the participation of 173 Member States and a number of entities, bodies, United Nations specialized agencies, the secretariats of various environmental conventions, international organizations, civil society, major groups, academia and the scientific community. He drew attention to the recommendations contained in the report.

28. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on combating sand and dust storms (A/74/263), he said that it had been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/237 and provided details on developments within the United Nations system for the period from mid-2018 to mid-2019. The report highlighted activities and initiatives undertaken by United Nations entities, Member States and a range of stakeholders to address the increasing challenges of sand and dust storms. He drew attention to the key messages contained in the report.

29. **Ms. Roudil** (Director, New York Office, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), introducing the report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the implementation of education for sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/74/258), said that the report provided an overview of the draft framework for education for sustainable development for the period 2020–2030 and included findings from consultations with Member States, key stakeholders and United Nations agencies.

30. **Ms. Abushawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group wished to reaffirm the

principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and to emphasize that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should be guided by paragraph 74 thereof. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations in 2020 was a good opportunity for the international community to reaffirm its collective commitment to multilateralism and to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the 2030 Agenda was essential for the full realization of sustainable development. While the primary focus should be placed on the 2030 Agenda, ongoing efforts to implement ongoing sustainable development commitments should be adequately supported and recognized.

31. Climate change was one of the world’s main challenges, particularly in small island developing States, but over the past year droughts and floods had hit countries and regions that had previously been unaffected by those phenomena. The Group urged developed countries to honour their commitments to provide \$100 billion in climate finance annually by 2020 to developing countries. As the current model of destructive development was damaging both to nature and humankind, it would necessary to promote a holistic approach in order to achieve sustainable development in harmony with nature.

32. Disasters could wipe out hard-won development gains. Disaster risk reduction was therefore one of the most effective tools to empower people and ensure inclusion and equality. It was necessary to enhance international cooperation, global partnerships and the provision of means of implementation to support least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, middle-income countries and countries that had recently exceeded the median income threshold but still had structural gaps and vulnerabilities.

33. Ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy remained critical for advancing new economic opportunities, creating sustainable and inclusive communities and building resilience against environmental challenges.

34. Urgent and swift action was needed to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species. The Group looked forward to the holding of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in China in 2020. It also looked forward to the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to be held in Nairobi in February 2021 and called for continued

efforts to strengthen the work, functions and mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme.

35. Investing in land degradation neutrality would act as an accelerator and integrator of the Sustainable Development Goals. Currently 122 countries had subscribed to voluntary targets to achieve land degradation. They were now in the process of preparing large-scale and transformative programmes that all countries were urged to support. Similarly, sand and dust storms were a serious challenge to the achievement of the Goals and associated targets. Such pressing issues required further cooperation among different United Nations entities.

36. With regard to education for sustainable development, the Group called for the international community to provide inclusive and equitable education at all levels so that people had lifelong learning opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and values needed to participate fully in society.

37. The Group urged financial institutions and relevant stakeholders to continue their technical and financial support so that Lebanon could carry out the clean-up and rehabilitation operations necessary following the oil slick off its shores.

38. **Mr. Arriola Ramírez** (Paraguay), speaking on behalf of Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that the Group was committed to the full, effective and balanced implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that respect, the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions remained the main challenge for the countries in the Group: a third of their populations lived in extreme poverty and food insecurity affected 51.6 per cent of the adult population. While the situation had been exacerbated by the impact of climate change, progress had been made in reducing maternal and infant mortality, in improving the quality of education and in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

39. The Group was highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, such as desertification, land degradation, droughts and floods. The twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Chile, should adopt a serious political commitment to mitigate, alleviate and reverse such consequences while respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

40. Investing in land degradation neutrality could act as an accelerator of the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the Group was grateful to the Government of India for hosting the successful fourteenth session of

the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.

41. The Sendai Framework recognized the vulnerability of landlocked developing countries to natural disasters. It was therefore important to increase their capacities to prepare for and respond to such disasters, including through the use of early warning systems.

42. Accessible, reliable and renewable energy and related technologies were essential components of a sustainable economy and sustainable development. While access to energy had improved, a high percentage of the Group's population still lacked access to electricity, particularly in rural areas.

43. The midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 would be held under the auspices of the General Assembly in December 2019. It provided a crucial opportunity to highlight strategic and mutually reinforcing links with the 2030 Agenda. The Group looked forward to the participation and support of all Member States in that endeavour.

44. **Mr. Ligoya** (Malawi), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that climate change affected the least developed countries severely and disproportionately and, consequently, they often had to divert resources away from broader development goals in order to overcome its impacts. That resulted in slower development which, in line with international commitments, required additional, predictable and adequate technical and financial support. Moreover, urgent action and commitments were needed to mitigate the impact of climate change, particularly in the most vulnerable countries such as least developed countries and small island developing States, and the Group underscored the primary importance of resilience and adaptation measures in that regard.

45. The Sendai Framework recognized that failure to reduce disaster risk would reverse development gains for most people in the world. In addition to climate vulnerability, the factors increasing the risk of least developed countries to disasters included changing demographics, poor technological and socioeconomic conditions, unplanned urbanization and the impact of epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

46. It was an undeniable fact that energy remained a major engine for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Access to electricity in the poorest countries had begun to accelerate, energy efficiency

continued to improve and renewable energy was making gains. However, only 51 per cent of the population of the least developed countries had had access to electricity in 2018. Furthermore, 85 per cent remained without access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking. Between 2018 and 2030 it was estimated that annual investments of \$55 billion would be needed to expand energy access, \$700 billion to increase renewable energy and \$600 billion to improve energy efficiency. To that end, the Group called on development partners to live up to their promises, to increase official development assistance (ODA), blended finance and private finance and to stop illicit financial flows.

47. *Mr. Al-Kuwari (Qatar), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

48. **Mr. Phansourivong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN was committed to the 2030 Agenda and had found complementarities between it and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 in five key areas: eradicating poverty; improving infrastructure and enhancing connectivity; promoting sustainable consumption and production; strengthening the sustainable management of resources; and building resilience.

49. In November 2019, ASEAN would launch a centre for sustainable development studies and dialogue, which would further promote research and capacity-building while providing a strategic platform for dialogue with external partners to make progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. ASEAN looked forward to collaborating with interested partners wishing to support the work of the centre in the coming months.

50. ASEAN had a rich terrestrial and marine biodiversity that must be sustained and protected from climate change, rapid urbanization and continuing habitat loss resulting from agricultural expansion, industrial activities and wildlife trafficking. Accordingly, ASEAN was committed to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources and terrestrial ecosystems, in line with Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15. It was also firmly resolved to fully implement the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020.

51. ASEAN supported the effective implementation of the Sendai Framework, which offered a solution for saving lives, livelihoods and assets, as well as reducing the fiscal burden on Governments. The priorities enshrined in the Framework and its seven global targets were the cornerstone of ASEAN efforts to reduce disaster risk.

52. Considerable progress had been achieved in strengthening education cooperation, including through the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016–2020. ASEAN approached learning as a lifelong process that would equip people to be adaptive, versatile and responsive to the continuing needs of society. ASEAN valued education, including the potential gains from quality technical and vocational education and training. While the fourth industrial revolution had brought great opportunities, it also presented challenges such as the potential displacement of workers, underemployment, increased inequality and the loss of individuality. In order to address those issues, ASEAN recognized the need for a visionary approach that considered new and innovative ways to provide inclusive education.

53. Despite the many challenges faced by the energy sector in an era of global energy transition, ASEAN had made good progress in implementing its Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation and had reached its energy efficiency target to date. At the thirty-seventh ASEAN Ministers of Energy Meeting held in Bangkok in September 2019, the Ministers had set out their aspirations for increased renewable energy, reduced energy intensity and enhanced energy security in the region.

54. **Mr. Prasad** (Fiji), speaking on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, said that he acknowledged the efforts of the 70 countries that had made pledges at the 2019 Climate Action Summit to boost their national determined contributions by 2020 and was hopeful that more countries would do likewise. As part of the commitment to the Paris Agreement, the leaders of the Pacific region were pushing for climate change measures in various forums, processes and instruments with the aim of raising awareness and encouraging the broadest possible efforts.

55. Pacific small island developing States were committed to addressing climate change, reducing disaster risk and building resilience. Such efforts in the region had been centred on sustainable development planning. In 2017, a regional framework for resilient development had been adopted which provided an integrated approach. The first ever Pacific Resilience Meeting, held earlier in 2019, had focused on disaster risk management, climate change, low carbon emissions and humanitarian preparedness and response. The Pacific had thus been doing its part in taking the necessary steps to build resilience and called for improved coordination of disaster risk across the United Nations system as a whole.

56. The midterm review of the Samoa Pathway had provided an opportunity to take stock of the progress made to date and look closely at what more needed to be done to effectively address the remaining gaps. The first high-level midterm review had concluded with the adoption of a high-level political declaration, which would ensure that the Samoa Pathway remained a relevant guiding document for small island developing States.

57. While the United Nations had made efforts to enhance collaboration between the Small Island Developing States Unit in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, there remained a need to improve access to financing for development and build capacities for data collection and statistical analysis so as to better inform policies and effectively monitor the Samoa Pathway. Development partners and the international community should therefore continue to enhance their support and work toward the full implementation of sustainable development priorities. In that respect, the Pacific small island developing States welcomed the decision of the Secretary-General to establish a dedicated multi-country office in the North Pacific, which would be hosted in the Federated States of Micronesia.

58. **Ms. Thompson** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the impact of climate change on the region had been underscored by the recent decimation of some of the islands in the Bahamas. Two years earlier, Hurricanes Irma and Maria had wrought havoc on the islands of Barbuda and Dominica. The significant damage and loss of life in those countries had wiped out their development gains and placed their future development at risk. Indeed, that was the case for all countries in the region, which would not be able to develop sustainably without building climate change resilience.

59. The existential crisis for CARICOM had become even more dire in the context of the recently issued *Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*. Its finding should serve as a wake-up call regarding the urgency and scale of action required to stabilize and reduce global greenhouse gas emissions, protect the most vulnerable and make financial flows consistent with climate resilient pathways. The sad reality was that CARICOM, like small island developing States in general, had contributed minimally to the climate crisis. The unique and particular vulnerabilities of those States must be

addressed within the work of the Committee, including in relation to the three dimensions of sustainable development.

60. CARICOM welcomed the recent pledges of \$175 million by a group of multilateral development banks to climate financing by 2025. However, the pledges made must now be delivered upon as the international community moved towards the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

61. CARICOM remained deeply concerned that despite the expanded mandate established by the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda to support the development of small island developing States, the resources allocated to the Small Island Developing States Unit remained unchanged. The allocation of resources to the work of the Unit, and to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, must be predictable and reliable. An overreliance on voluntary contributions presented a real challenge to those entities in the execution of their intergovernmentally agreed mandates.

62. CARICOM remained fully committed to the Sendai Framework, which provided the international community with a coherent structure to strengthen regional disaster risk reduction programmes through enhanced international cooperation.

63. As the custodians of rich biodiversity, CARICOM countries remained fully committed to the three goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity: conservation, sustainable use, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of biodiversity.

64. **Ms. Lindo** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the appropriate fiscal and policy space must be created to accommodate the needs and realities of small island developing States. For 30 years, those States had stressed that unsustainable practices in other parts of the world should not be their burden. Yet the international community had sat by in idle contemplation while small island developing States faced indescribable destruction, growing and unsustainable debt burdens and the social fallout of those impacts.

65. While small island developing States has advocated unceasingly for a system that was able to respond at scale and in an appropriate timeframe to disasters, those calls had thus far gone unheeded. Experts had made it clear that existing mechanisms were

not fit-for-purpose but, instead of replacing them, there was only the prospect of an examination being carried out to determine whether or not small island developing States required additional resources to strengthen their risk management and reconstruction needs. If such an examination was indeed necessary, then it should be undertaken without delay.

66. Small island developing States asked only for justice and fairness. They asked for the destructive behaviour of some States to be curtailed and for decisions to be taken based on science. They asked for the right to life and a future worth living. Wasn't that the premise of sustainable development?

67. **Mr. Makwe** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that poverty and environmental degradation were two of the greatest challenges that the world faced in the twenty-first century. The harm that both challenges posed, and the ways they were intertwined, were especially obvious in Africa, where countries were forced to deal with continuing desert encroachment and drought. Such increasingly unpredictable extreme weather events affected agricultural yields and, by extension, the ability of Africa to lift millions of its citizens out of poverty. Addressing the twin challenges of poverty and environmental degradation in isolation would fail to account for the varied ways that they interacted and amplified each other. The key therefore was to use an integrated approach, which meant focusing on the multidimensional aspects of sustainable development.

68. The African Group looked forward to a productive dialogue and called for tangible progress in operationalizing collective commitments to sustainable development. In particular, it emphasized the need for strong action on desertification, climate change impacts and the impacts of environmental degradation on agriculture, given their profound effects on African countries and their ability to develop.

69. The Group welcomed the fact that resolutions dealing with agriculture and technology, disaster risk reduction, the Samoa Pathway, protection of the global climate and access to sustainable and modern energy were important components of the Committee's work on sustainable development during the current session. The Committee's approach to those resolutions should reflect the special vulnerabilities of all African countries to the environmental challenges faced by each of them.

70. While the African Group welcomed the opportunity to engage in discussions on sustainable development issues with members of the Committee, mere dialogue was not enough to reach the Sustainable Development Goals and targets or to address the

obstacles to sustainable development already identified by the Committee. A commitment must therefore be made to strengthen the tools and mechanisms necessary for the achievement of sustainable development, including through technology transfer, capacity-building, the fulfilment of ODA commitments, debt restructuring and forgiveness, and private investment mobilization, particularly in key sectors. Unless substantial support was given to African countries in their efforts to implement and address the structural constraints to achieving sustainable development, the international community would fail in its commitment to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first.

71. As a continent, Africa would continue to adopt a holistic approach that focused on its people and economies. It would also continue to adopt measures that promoted food and water security, as well as access to renewable, reliable, affordable and sustainable energy.

72. **Ms. González López** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Central American Integration System (SICA), said that SICA countries were committed to implementing the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced and integrated way, as agreed in the 2030 Agenda, and that they sought common solutions to regional and global challenges that would benefit their peoples and leave no one behind. One of the fundamental objectives of SICA was to identify, establish and maintain concrete actions for the preservation of the environment through responsible administration in harmony with nature.

73. Stressing the importance of assessing the vulnerability of its member countries to climate variability, loss of biodiversity and other environmental hazards, SICA was committed to stepping up climate action in the region, which included strengthening the means of implementation for adaptation and mitigation measures and bolstering the Sendai Framework in order to improve disaster risk management in the region. SICA countries therefore called for access to adequate financial and non-financial resources, including more flexible access to financing mechanisms.

74. ODA made a positive contribution to strengthening national development strategies and reducing structural gaps. However, there was a need to deepen the methodology for measuring sustainable development in order to incorporate criteria beyond gross domestic product per capita and take into account the multidimensional nature of poverty.

75. El Salvador would be presenting the biennial resolution entitled "Sustainable tourism and sustainable

development in Central America” for the consideration of the Committee at the current session. She called on all delegations to support the draft resolution and to adopt it by consensus as in previous years.

76. **Mr. Tealei** (Tuvalu), speaking on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Group, said that the Samoa Pathway was the overarching framework that outlined the aspirations and priorities of small island developing States. Its full and effective implementation was therefore a priority concern for those States. Successful partnership was an important part of the solution, for which adequate and predictable resources would be required. While the countries of the Group had made a good start in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals, the Samoa Pathway and the Paris Agreement into their national and regional development agendas, they continued to rely on partners to support their efforts, particularly in the area of capacity-building.

77. As the devastation wrought by climate change could undo decades of hard-earned sustainable development progress, the resilience of small island developing States must be enhanced to mitigate its impacts and ensure that they were not left behind. The Forum Group was therefore grateful to the Secretary-General for convening the 2019 Climate Action Summit in order to accelerate more ambitious action to combat climate change. Serious consideration must also be given to the voices of youth in that regard.

78. The achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 remained a priority in order to advance the health, productivity and resilience of the ocean. Accordingly, the Group would continue to support work to conserve and sustainably use the ocean and its resources at all levels.

79. The Pacific Islands Forum Group was delighted to support the decision to designate the Federated States of Micronesia as the host of the proposed multi-country office in the Northern Pacific and would appreciate the support of every Member State at the current session to make that prospect a reality.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.