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Chair: Mr. Rai (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Agenda item 26: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition (A/C.2/75/L.31 and A/C.2/75/L.56)

Draft resolutions A/C.2/75/L.31 and A/C.2/75/L.56: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition

1. **The Chair** said that draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.56 had no programme budget implications.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.56 was adopted.*

3. **Ms. Zeitler** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was having a devastating impact in many countries. More than just a health crisis, it had become a global crisis that could trigger food crises in many regions of the world and further imperil the health and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people. Food security and nutrition were thus urgent topics to address and the present draft resolution provided a blueprint on how to transform food systems, especially in the lead up to the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021.

4. In that context, however, stronger language was needed on climate change and the environment. Unsustainable agricultural practices were a major driver of climate change and biodiversity loss. In order to make the urgently needed transformation to sustainable and resilient food systems and to achieve the climate change and biodiversity goals, the international community must look at those issues together and promote sustainable agricultural systems that provided food security, improved nutrition and the basis for rural livelihoods but did not harm ecosystems and ensured climate resilience.

5. “Building back better” must also mean “building back greener”. In that regard, it was regrettable that a reference to the “One Health” approach had not been retained in the final text. An integrated approach to environmental, human, animal and plant health would be crucial to prevent future health threats, and in particular zoonotic diseases, and to make the world more resilient to future global shocks. Furthermore, the reference to “healthy diets” in the draft resolution should not preclude any negotiations that were currently taking place in Rome on the Voluntary Guidelines on

Food Systems and Nutrition. The common position of the European Union was in support of the formulation “sustainable healthy diets”, with a view to incorporating a focus on the environmental dimension of agricultural practices.

6. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that while the critical role that agriculture could play in achieving sustainable development was recognized in the draft resolution, her delegation also wished to clarify several points. First, regarding the twelfth preambular paragraph, the United States had consistently supported many important goals of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, such as investing in infrastructure, protecting the environment and strengthening democracy and the rule of law. Her delegation was concerned, however, by language in Agenda 2063 that committed to reducing food imports, which could have a negative impact on food security and might be inconsistent with the policies of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

7. Second, regarding the twenty-fourth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, the United Nations should not be dictating scopes of work to independent organizations, especially regarding funding.

8. Third, regarding the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, WTO-consistent trade remedy measures and enforcement actions taken to protect the economy of the United States from the unfair and market-distorting trade practices of others were not “protectionist”. The United States did not advocate protectionism and saw no utility in reaffirming stale calls for its avoidance when others routinely violated that pledge. Moreover, the United Nations was not an appropriate venue for that discussion.

9. Fourth, regarding the thirtieth preambular paragraph and paragraph 33 of the draft resolution, the United States supported the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including food, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Domestically, the United States pursued policies that promoted access to food. While its objective was to achieve a world where everyone had adequate access to food, the United States did not treat the right to food as an enforceable obligation.

10. Fifth, the United States did not recognize any change in the current state of conventional or customary international law regarding rights related to food. As the United States was not a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, her delegation interpreted references in the draft resolution

to the right to food, with respect to States parties to the Covenant, in the light of article 2(1) thereof. It also construed references in the draft resolution to Member States' obligations regarding the right to food as applicable to the extent that they had assumed such obligations. As countries had a wide array of policies and actions that might be appropriate in promoting the progressive realization of the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, resolutions should not try to define the content of that right or related rights.

11. Lastly, she noted that the general statement delivered by her delegation on 18 November 2020 (see [A/C.2/75/SR.5](#), paras. 7 to 17) had detailed a number of additional concerns found in the draft resolution, including with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Paris Agreement, climate change, the New Urban Agenda, the World Health Organization (WHO), WTO, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030), reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and technology transfer.

12. **Mr. Woodroffe** (United Kingdom) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had had far-reaching effects on the global food system and had laid bare its fragility. His delegation agreed with the joint statement of the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and WHO of 13 October 2020, in which the following had been stressed: “We must rethink the future of our environment and tackle climate change and environmental degradation with ambition and urgency. Only then can we protect the health, livelihoods, food security and nutrition of all people, and ensure that our ‘new normal’ is a better one.”

13. For the United Kingdom, an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the prevention of future zoonotic pandemics required a cross-sectoral, multi-actor “One Health” approach. While it was regrettable that a reference to the “One Health” approach had not been included in the text, his delegation looked forward to further improving the substance of the draft resolution at the Committee’s next session.

14. The year 2021 would be critical for setting the international community on the right course in tackling the global food challenge: the Secretary-General would hold the first United Nations Food Systems Summit; a

new framework would be agreed for the protection of nature at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in China; and the United Kingdom, in partnership with Italy, would host the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

15. *Draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.31](#) was withdrawn.*

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (continued)

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind ([A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#), [A/C.2/75/L.59](#) and [A/C.2/75/L.60](#))

Draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#): Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

16. **The Chair** said that a proposed amendment to paragraph 10 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#) had been submitted by the United States in document [A/C.2/75/L.59](#) and a proposed amendment to paragraph 2 of the draft resolution had been submitted by the Russian Federation in document [A/C.2/75/L.60](#). In accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Committee would take a decision on the proposed amendments in the order in which the amendments had been submitted. The proposed amendment contained in document [A/C.2/75/L.59](#), had no programme budget implications.

17. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that her delegation proposed replacing the current wording of paragraph 10 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#) with the following text: “Reaffirms the commitment to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner”. Those words should be familiar to everyone because they safeguarded a critical innovation of the 2030 Agenda: that the three dimensions of sustainable development must be addressed holistically and comprehensively, namely in a “balanced and integrated manner.” The language currently in paragraph 10 did not appropriately capture that important insight and deflected attention from a key idea enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals and in the 2030 Agenda. In order to address that concern, the proposed amendment took language directly from paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution [70/1](#), entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development". She urged Member States to vote in favour of the proposal.

18. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document A/C.2/75/L.59 to amend paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1.*

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zambia.

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

Madagascar, Turkey.

19. *The proposal was rejected by 102 votes to 54, with 2 abstentions.*

20. **Mr. De La Mora Salcedo** (Mexico) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the proposed amendment because it contained language taken verbatim from the 2030 Agenda. As such, it was a demonstration of support for all aspects related to the Sustainable Development Goals. Mexico welcomed proposals to align the language of the Committee's resolutions with the agreed language of the 2030 Agenda, which was in line with the decision on revitalization of the Committee's work adopted at its previous session. Mexico would continue to support that alignment process and invited all Member States to redouble their efforts towards the common goal of leaving no one behind.

21. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that her delegation wished to request a vote on the retention of paragraph 10 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#).

22. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal to retain paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1.*

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana,

Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen.

Abstaining:

Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Iceland, Madagascar, Norway, Switzerland.

23. *The proposal was adopted by 83 votes to 61, with 6 abstentions.**

24. **Mr. Xing** Zhisheng (China) said that climate change was a common global challenge that required a collective global response. The international community should build on the positive momentum under way in the fight against climate change by firmly upholding multilateralism, promoting the implementation of the Paris Agreement, adhering to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and advancing climate mitigation and adaptation measures. His delegation regretted that an individual Member State had requested a separate vote on paragraph 10 of the draft resolution. The language contained in that paragraph had been agreed by consensus many times in the past and represented the correct direction for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the needs of Member States. They should all work together in responding to the challenge of climate change and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for the achievement of common development.

25. **The Chair** said that the proposed amendment contained in document [A/C.2/75/L.60](#) had no programme budget implications.

26. **Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) said that, during the information consultations on draft resolution

* The delegations of Angola, Botswana, Brazil, the Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Gabon, Kenya, Libya, Mozambique, Tunisia, Yemen and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) subsequently informed the Committee that they had intended to vote in favour of retaining paragraph 10 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#).

[A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#), his delegation had put forward suggested amendments to ensure that the approach taken to combating climate change was more effective and realistic in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, the proposals to make the text more balanced had been rejected and the contentious and unacceptable language identified by his delegation had been retained. He called on all delegations to support the proposed amendment contained in document [A/C.2/75/L.60](#) and requested to know which delegation had requested a vote in that regard.

27. **The Chair** said that the vote had been requested by Guyana.

28. **Ms. Austin** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in explanation of vote before the voting, said that while the Group appreciated the engagement of all partners during the informal consultations on the draft resolution it would vote against the proposal.

29. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal contained in document [A/C.2/75/L.60](#) to amend paragraph 2 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#).*

In favour:

Belarus, Russian Federation.

Against:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway,

Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

Madagascar, United States of America.

30. *The proposal was rejected by 150 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

31. **Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation regretted that delegations had rejected the proposed amendment, which showed once against the lack of desire for compromise in order to reach a consensus. In that context, his delegation requested a vote on paragraph 2 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#) and called on all delegations to vote against its retention.

32. **Ms. Austin** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group would vote in favour of retaining paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

33. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal to retain paragraph 2 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#).*

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho,

Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Russian Federation, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Madagascar.

34. *The proposal was adopted by 154 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.*

35. **The Chair**, turning to draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1](#) as a whole, said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

36. **Ms. Lindo** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that it was regrettable that, despite the increasing magnitude of the challenge of climate change, the United Nations had missed yet another opportunity to make an unequivocal commitment to meet the universal demand for ambitious action. Instead, in order to forge a consensus, the language settled upon in the draft resolution was akin to offering a placebo for a life-threatening ailment and, worse still, contained vague and misleading statements on commitments under existing frameworks. At the start of the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, countries must be ambitious if they were to fully implement the Paris Agreement, UNFCCC and the 2030 Agenda.

37. The current draft resolution fell short on ambition, did not adequately address the issues of finance and capacity-building and did not recognize the national

circumstances of countries in their response to COVID-19, which was a major global health crisis with serious humanitarian, social and economic consequences. While all countries had been affected by the pandemic, developing countries had been hit very hard. AOSIS regretted the fact that the opening line of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution did not adequately recognize the difficult national circumstances of developing countries, which required Governments to respond with strategies appropriate to the circumstances.

38. AOSIS was particularly concerned by the way in which the draft resolution addressed the issue of funding. The pandemic had decreased fiscal space and created additional barriers for developing countries to access sustainable financing. The need for adequate climate finance had therefore increased, but, distressingly, 10 years after developed countries had committed to deliver \$100 billion per year in climate finance, that pledge remained unfulfilled. Developing countries should not be forced to choose between helping their citizens to recover from the pandemic in the short term and compromising their efforts to combat climate change.

39. The draft resolution generalized the call for action and funding to all countries, with no differentiation between developing and developed nations. That was an imbalanced message, since it failed to properly recognize two key points: developing countries needed financial assistance on climate change action and developed countries were legally obligated to provide such assistance. AOSIS was also extremely concerned about the myopic focus of paragraph 2 on “mobilizing” means of implementation. In order for the draft resolution to reflect the agreed commitments and the highest ambitions, the language should instead say “providing” such means, in accordance with article 9 (1) of the Paris Agreement and article 4(3) of UNFCCC.

40. As the language in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution was inconsistent with international agreements aimed at tackling climate change and did not address the specific financing needs of developing countries in a balanced manner, it could not establish a precedent and should not be used in subsequent iterations or as an attempt to renegotiate the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC.

41. **Ms. Austin** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group advocated for the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus. It was important to signal to the world the solidary and unity of the United Nations in addressing the global

crisis of climate change. In that regard, the Group would vote in favour of the draft resolution.

42. *Draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.26/Rev.1 was adopted.*

43. **Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) said that while his delegation had supported the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, it wished to distance itself from paragraph 2 of the text and did not consider itself bound by its provisions. His delegation would not consider that wording a source of agreed language in the future or agree that there was consensus on that matter.

44. **Ms. Zeitler** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, as in previous years, sent a strong and important signal of joint ambition for the challenging work ahead on the road to the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC.

45. She welcomed the clear language in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which called for a climate- and environment-responsive approach to recovery strategies. Indeed, it would only be possible to truly build back better and create and sustain long-term socioeconomic prosperity if recovery strategies and the policy and investment decisions adopted promoted, rather than undermined, the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

46. There was no choice to be made between addressing the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic and addressing climate change. Both must be done. The opportunity must also be seized to invest sustainably and create jobs in areas such as renewable energy or ecosystem restoration that helped the economic recovery and sustained livelihoods, while supporting climate and environmental objectives.

47. Climate and biodiversity were two interlinked agendas that were mutually dependent and could not be dealt with in isolation from each other. It was therefore regrettable that agreement could not be reached to include related language on the importance of nature-based solutions.

48. The last months had seen encouraging new announcements from several members of the Group of 20 that they would pursue the goal of achieving carbon neutrality as close to 2050 as possible. The European Union and its member States urged all other major

emitters to follow suit. The submission of new, more ambitious nationally determined contributions and of long-term strategies towards climate neutrality, based on the best available science as assessed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, was essential, together with climate finance pledges for the period between 2020 and 2025 and ambitious adaptation plans. The world must move from words to action and the European Union was committed to continuing to lead global climate ambition.

49. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that her delegation was disappointed that the non-consensus language in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution had not been replaced by consensus language from the 2030 Agenda that reflected a shared position on sustainable development. Accordingly, her delegation wished to disassociate itself from that paragraph. Future iterations of the draft resolution should advance the interests of all Member States and eschew narrow political messaging that undermined consensus, the work of the Committee and the ability to work together in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Her delegation also wished to disassociate itself from paragraph 2 of the draft resolution. With regard to both that paragraph and the fourth preambular paragraph, the United States supported an “all of the above” approach to energy technologies and remained committed to energy access worldwide.

50. Her delegation noted that references to provisions of UNFCCC or other instruments and decisions taken by other bodies did not change or interpret the meaning or applicability of such instruments and decisions.

51. Furthermore, each country would chart its own unique path to recovery from COVID-19, specific to its own national context. Nothing in the draft resolution should be understood as implying a one-size-fits all approach to recovery and economic growth efforts.

52. Lastly, she noted that the general statement delivered by her delegation on 18 November 2020 had outlined its concerns with regard to the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework.

53. **Mr. Woodroffe** (United Kingdom) said that the world had a chance to build back better from the impact of COVID-19 and create a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy. At the heart of those efforts must be ambitious commitments to drive progress towards global net zero emissions, strengthen resilience

and enhance adaptive capacity and reduce vulnerability to climate change. His delegation therefore welcomed the adopted of the draft resolution by consensus, including language in paragraph 2 reflecting the clear necessity to tie the global recovery to enhanced efforts to tackle climate change. The gravity of the situation faced meant that Member States must take decisive and urgent action in order to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. Nevertheless, his delegation remained disappointed that compromise language could not be agreed on the importance of nature-based solutions or loss and damage. Ahead of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC, to be held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, in 2021, his Government would continue to urge others to come forward with new and more ambitious nationally determined contributions and climate adaptation plans, long-term strategies that set out a pathway towards net zero emissions and climate finance commitments to support the most vulnerable countries.

54. **Mr. Misra** (India) said that, rather than revising their targets, the developed countries must ensure that they achieved the mitigations targets pledged under the Paris Agreement by 2030 in their respective nationally determined contributions. India was one of the top five countries whose actions were on track to keep global warming below 2 °C. Its strategy included reducing emission intensity as a percentage of gross domestic product, replacing fossil fuels with renewables and creating an additional carbon sink.

55. As the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC were delicately balanced documents, a disproportionate focus on climate mitigation measures that neglected climate adaptation and financing would be a disservice to developing countries. Unfortunately, no credible pathway had yet been established for developed countries to mobilize the \$100 billion per year that they had pledged under UNFCCC to address the needs of developing countries. The developed countries must therefore meet all their commitments under the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC. Furthermore, the provisions in the present draft resolution must be fully implemented. Climate change was an existential threat and not a matter of debate.

56. **Mr. Xing Zhisheng** (China) said that his delegation firmly rejected the non-consensual approach adopted by an individual Member States at the current session. That country, motivated by its domestic political agenda, had withdrawn from the Paris Agreement and was claiming that the 2030 Agenda and

other international instruments were non-binding and therefore did not create new obligations, including financial obligations, for it. Such rhetoric was undermining the atmosphere for international cooperation and was detrimental to the consensus hitherto achieved by the international community. The failure to incorporate the important concept of nature-based solutions into the draft resolution was indeed regrettable. The language in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution on the need for collective efforts to promote sustainable development “in an innovative, coordinated, environmentally sound, open and shared manner” reflected the common aspiration to build back better, which was in the interests of individual countries and of the entire international community.

(a) Towards the achievement of sustainable development: implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through sustainable consumption and production, building on Agenda 21
(continued) (A/C.2/75/L.2/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.2/Rev.1: United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028

57. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Comoros, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Nauru, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. She then noted that Liberia also wished to become a sponsor.

58. Reading out a statement in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, she said that under the terms of paragraphs 2 and 3 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.2/Rev.1](#), the General Assembly would: reaffirm its decision, in accordance with its resolution [73/226](#), to convene, in New York, from 22 to 24 March 2023, coinciding with

World Water Day, the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028. The objectives of the Conference were as follows: a greater focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives; the implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects; and the furtherance of cooperation and partnerships at all levels in order to help to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda. A summary of the proceedings of the Conference would be prepared by the President of the General Assembly, as its outcome document, and would feed into the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The General Assembly would also welcome the generous offer by the Governments of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands to co-host and assume the costs of the Conference.

59. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.2/Rev.1](#), it was understood that the Governments of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands would co-host the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action and would assume all the costs associated with the Conference.

60. Accordingly, at the current time, the adoption of draft resolution [A/C.2/75/L.2/Rev.1](#) would not give rise to any programme budget implications.

61. **Mr. Mahmaminov** (Tajikistan), introducing the draft resolution, said that to date 190 Member States had sponsored the draft resolution and he invited all remaining delegations to show solidarity by joining the sponsors. Tajikistan looked forward to the continued cooperation of all Member States in fulfilling the mandate of the draft resolution and, in particular to convening, in New York, from 22 to 24 March 2023, the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028, in addition to other important meetings in that regard. He hoped that the present draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

62. **Ms. Brandt** (Netherlands) said that 2020 had reinforced the conviction that water-related goals and targets were truly at the heart of sustainable

development. A renewed sense of urgency was needed to accelerate action on water and build back better. It was therefore an honour for the Netherlands to co-host the aforementioned conference together with Tajikistan. The present draft resolution provided a solid foundation for an ambitious, action oriented and multi-stakeholder conference. She looked forward to the continued cooperation with all delegations to ensure a successful conference.

63. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that her delegation could not agree more on the need for an ambitious action-oriented multi-stakeholder approach to the conference. At the same time, her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution with the express understanding that its eighth preambular paragraph did not imply that States must implement obligations under human rights instruments to which they were not a party. The United States was not a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the rights contained therein were not justiciable in United States courts. In addition, a State's duty to protect the right to life under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights did not extend to addressing general conditions in society or nature that might eventually threaten life or prevent individuals from enjoying an adequate standard of living. She also noted that the general statement delivered by her delegation on 18 November 2020 had addressed other issues contained in the draft resolution.

64. *Draft resolution A/C.2/75/L.2/Rev.1 was adopted.*

65. **Mr. Teklu** (Ethiopia) said that his delegation had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution and recognized the critical role of water for the eradication of poverty and hunger and for the achievement of sustainable development in its three dimensions. The draft resolution should not however be interpreted as either expanding the scope and mandate or shifting the focus of General Assembly resolution 71/222, entitled International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028. In particular, the inclusion of the phrase "human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation" in the eighth preambular paragraph, the reference to "the Sustainable Development Goal 6 Global Acceleration Framework" in the sixteenth preambular paragraph and the use of the phrase "sustainable development and integrated management of water resources, including through collaborative approaches" in paragraph 4 (d) should not be considered as agreed language in future processes.

66. **Ms. Zeitler** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that her delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution but wished to clarify its position on a number of issues.

67. The 2030 Agenda was the agreed guiding framework for actions. Accelerating progress towards its implementation and the agreed priority areas of action in the relevant water-related goals and targets must be the focus of attention, including for capacity-building efforts. It was in that spirit that the phrase "internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those of the 2030 Agenda" should be understood. It was regrettable that some delegations had had great difficulties in including explicit references to Sustainable Development Goal 6 and other water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda in a draft resolution on the issue of water for sustainable development.

68. As the coordinating mechanism for water issues within the United Nations system, UN-Water had a key role to play in the preparatory process for the midterm comprehensive review and in the conference itself. That role should have been reflected much more clearly in the text.

69. The Sustainable Development Goal 6 Global Acceleration Framework was a key tool that enabled urgent action to scale up and accelerate progress towards Goal 6 and other water-related Goals and targets. That was the objective of the high-level meeting to be held 2021, as agreed in the draft resolution.

70. The European Union was fully committed to the implementation of Goal 6 and all its targets, including target 6.5 on transboundary cooperation. The vast majority of watersheds in the world crossed national borders. Cooperation between the different riparian countries in their management was essential and would become even more important in the future with increasing water demand and climate change driving water scarcity and competition for use in many parts of the world. It was regrettable that a firmer position had not been taken to support accelerated action on transboundary cooperation.

71. The lack of agreement on a reference in the draft resolution to the importance of the "One Health" approach was further cause for regret. In view of over

3 million deaths per year due to water-borne diseases, according to WHO, and considering the current COVID-19 pandemic which the world was facing, close cooperation between experts on water, biodiversity and health was of the greatest significance.

72. Lastly, it was also regrettable that a non-objection clause had been included in the text in a form which allowed Member States, for only very generic reasons, to object to the inclusion of organizations allowed to participate in the conference. The European Union had raised concerns about the way in which non-objection clauses had been abused in the past. Concrete reasons must be provided for objecting to the participation of stakeholders in discussions and the final decision on the list of civil society organizations must be one of the General Assembly itself and not that of a single Member State. A better approach was therefore needed for future conferences.

73. **Mr. Tamaura** (Japan), welcoming the adoption of the draft resolution, said that water and sanitation were critical issues in the fight against COVID-19 and water-related disasters were expected to become more intense and more frequent as a result of climate change. Comprehensive efforts were therefore needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement, rather than focusing only on Sustainable Development Goal 6.

74. Japan had shifted to a concept of river basin disaster resilience and sustainability for all, in order to take into account increased rainfall due to climate change. The concept applied a basin-wide perspective to river management and promoted policies in collaboration with all stakeholders. In that connection, the Fourth Asia-Pacific Water Summit would be held in Japan in April 2022 under the overarching theme of water for sustainable development. It would provide an opportunity to discuss not only access to water, but also a wide range of water-related issues, including water-related disasters and healthy water circulation.

75. Japan looked forward to sharing and discussing related initiatives with other countries at the United Nations Special Thematic Session on Water and Disaster scheduled for 2021, and to providing inputs for the midterm comprehensive review in 2023 and related preparatory meetings. In so doing, Japan wished to deepen the discussions and thereby contribute to the achievement of the targets and goals of the Water Action Decade.

76. **Mr. Al-shaikhli** (Iraq), welcoming the adoption of the draft resolution, said that water-related challenges were on the rise, given the planet's limited amount of fresh water and the steady increase in the world's population. It was important to strengthen and operationalize the concept of international cooperation in order to ensure the sustainable development of transboundary water resources, especially in areas vulnerable to the impact of climate change and drought. The United Nations was the appropriate forum for discussing international cooperation for the sustainable management of water resources.

77. **Mr. Jehanzeb Khan** (Pakistan), welcoming the consensus reached on the draft resolution, said that his delegation had participated actively in the negotiating process. Pakistan had a long-standing and unwavering commitment to water-related goals, in line with the importance that it attached to the issues of water scarcity, transboundary water cooperation and water for sustainable development. Discussions on those issues would be vital for many low riparian countries such as Pakistan. It was also clear that transboundary water-related disputes could pose threats to peace and security in many regions, including his own. In the light of the climate crisis, it was increasingly important for countries to cooperate with each other to avoid any water-related catastrophes or conflicts. The midterm comprehensive review must therefore address the most critical issues, such as water scarcity, transboundary cooperation and peace and security.

78. **Mr. Elmahs** (Egypt) said that, given the indispensability of water to human life, his country attached great importance to the current process that would lead to the holding of the first United Nations conference on water since 1977. While multiple legal frameworks had been developed on water since that time, water challenges had continued to rise as the world population had surged to almost 9 billion people. Currently, 153 countries shared a total of 263 transboundary lake and river basins across the globe. Countries therefore had no alternative but to cooperate in order to address the current existential water crisis, especially in areas vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and where water was already scarce. In that context, the midterm comprehensive review provided a timely, pertinent and unique opportunity to engage in open, inclusive and comprehensive discussions on all water-related issues. The conference should become a call for unity and collective action to secure the water needs and interests of all members of the international community.

79. **Mr. Naeemi** (Afghanistan), welcoming the adoption of the draft resolution, said that his delegation and his Government were committed to taking the necessary steps to ensure a successful preparatory process for the midterm review and a successful conference.

80. **Monsignor Hansen** (Observer for the Holy See), welcoming the adoption of the draft resolution, said that the midterm comprehensive review in 2023 would provide the international community with an opportunity to assess the progress made in the implementation of the Water Action Decade. It also provided a platform for discussions on the challenges and obstacles faced and how to accelerate progress to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda.

81. His delegation welcomed the language in the draft resolution recognizing that, in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, safe and affordable drinking water, and adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene, must be available, accessible and affordable to all. It also welcomed recognition that the public health threats of water-borne diseases, pollution and the health impacts of water-related disasters remained imminent, and the emphasis in that regard that ecosystem health and human health should be addressed holistically. It was also laudable that the draft resolution recalled that the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation were derived from the right to an adequate standard of living and were inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Ensuring the availability of safe and affordable drinking water for all as a primary good was essential in order to promote and realize the inherent right of every person to life. His delegation therefore welcomed the specific reference to the right to life and human dignity in the eighth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.