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Official Records

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Friday, 25 June 2021, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Bozkir (Turkey)

In the absence of the President, Ms. Picco (Monaco), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 35 (continued)

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/75/891)

Mr. Fifield (Australia): I have the distinct honour to deliver the following remarks on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and my own country, Australia (CANZ), on the occasion of the adoption of resolution 75/285, on the status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, in Georgia.

The CANZ countries are concerned about the forced demographic changes created by conflicts in Georgia and the humanitarian situation caused by the armed conflict in 2008 that resulted in the forced displacement of civilians. We welcome the Assembly's recognition of the right of return of all internally displaced persons and refugees and their descendants, regardless of ethnicity, to their homes throughout Georgia. We reiterate our support for the respect and protection of human rights, including the rights of forcibly displaced persons, as well as for enabling their safe, voluntary, dignified and unhindered return to their homes, in accordance with international law.

More broadly, CANZ is concerned about the fact that the ceasefire agreement mediated by the European Union and concluded between Georgia and Russia in 2008 remains largely unfulfilled. The process of so-called borderization, that is, the erection of razor-wire fences and other artificial obstacles along the administrative boundary line and the denial of access for international human rights monitors to the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions, represents a grave deterioration of the humanitarian situation on the ground. Those acts prolong the conflict, threaten peace and stability, interfere with people's enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and have a negative effect on the health and safety of citizens across Georgia, destabilizing the region as a whole. We call on all the parties to facilitate immediate access for international humanitarian organizations to populations in need so as to implement the obligations and commitments under the ceasefire agreement. Last but not least, CANZ unequivocally reaffirms its support for Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Thomas (United Kingdom): As noted in the Secretary-General's report of 21 May (A/75/891), there are still more than 280,000 individuals registered as internally displaced in Georgia. That is an important humanitarian issue that should be addressed, and that is why the United Kingdom, alongside so many other Member States from across all regions, sponsored and supported resolution 75/285, which was adopted last week. The topic of refugees and internally displaced persons remains a core issue of discussion within the

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Geneva International Discussions, and we encourage all parties to redouble the engagement with all agenda items in the Geneva International Discussions, including the session on internally displaced persons (IDPs). We also encourage all parties to implement the six-point ceasefire agreement of 2008 and its implementing measures in full.

We remain deeply concerned about the political and human rights situations in the breakaway regions of Georgia, which have been compounded by the ongoing coronavirus disease pandemic. We will continue to draw attention to the lack of access for international monitoring mechanisms. We reiterate our support for the respect and protection of human rights, including the rights of forcibly displaced persons, as well as the importance of enabling their safe, voluntary, dignified and unhindered return to their homes, in accordance with international law.

The United Kingdom remains unwavering in its support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We call on the Russian Federation to end impediments to the return of IDPs to their homes, as well as its blatant disregard for international law with respect to Georgia's internationally recognized borders. The United Kingdom therefore welcomed the adoption last week of resolution 75/285, on IDPs, which is a simple statement of humanitarian principles regarding IDP rights of return and a call for meaningful action to be taken on them.

Mr. Hunter (United States of America): The United States was pleased to once again become a sponsor and supporter of this annual resolution (resolution 75/285). Its adoption sent a strong message of support to the people of Georgia. We support the human rights, dignity and humanitarian needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees and are actively working with the United Nations to draw attention to and address their plight.

Under the Biden Administration, we are also renewing our focus on climate change, including its connection to displacement and migration. The United States fully supports Georgia's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are integral parts of the Georgian territory, and we call on Russia to cease its recognition of their so-called independence. Russia's military presence in the Georgian regions of

Abkhazia and South Ossetia violates the territorial integrity of Georgia and undermines Georgia's sovereignty. Russia's military presence further divides communities and puts at risk the health and lives of the conflict-affected population. We call on Russia and the de facto authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia to take immediate steps to ensure respect for human rights, cease construction of barriers along the administrative boundary lines and create security conditions that are conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and unhindered return and reintegration of IDPs and refugees. We also call on Russia to fulfil its obligation under the 2008 ceasefire agreement to withdraw its forces to pre-conflict positions and to allow unhindered access for humanitarian organizations. Russia's actions in Georgia are not isolated but are rather part of a clear pattern. It has violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine as well.

The United States also supports the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement established by the Secretary-General, and we urge Member States to look towards implementing its recommendations, including integrating IDP concerns into development efforts.

Mr. De Souza Monteiro (Brazil): Brazil once again abstained in the voting on resolution 75/285, concerning the status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/ South Ossetia, in Georgia, as we believe the text will prejudice or influence the considerations of the issue and the relevant negotiations in Geneva.

Brazil reiterates its recognition of the territorial integrity of Georgia and expects its dispute with the Russian Federation to be resolved peacefully and through dialogue as soon as possible. We encourage all actors to seek lasting solutions to the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees in order to create favourable political conditions for their safe return and dispel any fears that the conflict might be resumed.

Brazil calls on all the parties concerned to pursue further cooperation and adopt confidence-building measures, including in the framework of the Geneva process.

Mr. Baror (Israel): Israel welcomes the steps taken by the Government of Georgia to improve the status of internally displaced persons in the areas under its control. Israel appreciates the work done within the framework of the Geneva International Discussions

and its mandate of 12 August 2008, which led to concrete action on humanitarian issues, including those related to environmental protection, and supports the constructive discussions in that context.

Israel also has a positive view of Georgia's programme of engagement through cooperation, which aims to build trust and confidence among divided communities. We support the spirit of reconciliation through direct dialogue promoted by the Georgian Government. Israel would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate its support and recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity. We reiterate our position on this issue as on all similar matters, which is that the way to resolve conflict is through negotiations and any solution must be based on a mutually agreed approach rather than unilateral actions.

The Acting President (*speak in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 35?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 14 and 122 (continued)

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

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolutions (A/75/L.101 and A/75/L.102)

Draft amendment (A/75/L.104)

The Acting President (*speak in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea to introduce draft amendment A/75/L.104 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Diane (Guinea): The Group of 77 and China attaches enormous importance to the reviews of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. In that regard the Group has engaged very constructively throughout the process, showing tremendous flexibility in several areas for both draft resolutions (A/75/L.101 and A/75/L.102) and their annexes, accepting many proposals of compromise in both review processes,

always in the best possible spirit and with the best possible effort, in order to reach a consensus on both draft resolutions.

However, regarding draft resolution A/75/L.101 and its annex, despite all of the Group's attempts to ensure a focused and balanced text that addresses all outstanding issues in accordance with the context, mandates and role of the Economic and Social Council, the Group felt that some of its remaining concerns, which were conveyed in a clear, transparent and consistent manner at all times, were not properly addressed in the final version of the text that we are considering today.

It was in that spirit that the Group decided not to break the silence procedure for the second time on both draft resolutions and instead to introduce a draft amendment, contained in document A/75/L.104, to draft resolution A/75/L.101, on the review of the Economic and Social Council. The draft amendment proposed addresses the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution and paragraphs 19 and 25 of the annex in order to bring to the text a more balanced approach that builds on language and definitions previously agreed by all, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the previous resolutions on the review of the Economic and Social Council. The draft amendment reads as follows:

“Replace the third preambular paragraph with the following text:

‘Recalling that the 2030 Agenda is guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law, is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and is informed by other instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development’;

“Replace paragraph 19 of the annex with the following text:

‘During the coordination segment, the Economic and Social Council may also hold discussions on existing coordination-related mandated agenda items that have been thus far considered during the management segment’;

“In paragraph 25 of the annex, replace the third sentence with the following text:

'It may also discuss, among other relevant issues, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and providing access to justice for all in accordance with the respective mandates of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies.'"

The Group feels it is important that we neither rewrite the 2030 Agenda nor discuss the mandates, remits and scope of the Economic and Social Council. We should address every issue in a holistic, balanced and comprehensive manner to avoid overemphasizing certain issues over others or treating particular issues in a selective manner, to the detriment of the development pillar. We are confident that by doing so we will be able to accelerate our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in this Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as build back better in our recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic.

We call on all delegations to look favourably on the proposed draft amendment (A/75/L.104) to draft resolution A/75/L.101 in the spirit in which it has been put forward. The Group truly believes that it will help us all achieve final consensus on this very important draft resolution. However, if a vote should be requested on the proposed amendment, we ask all delegations to vote in favour of it.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): Before we proceed to take a decision on draft resolutions A/75/L.101 and A/75/L.102 and draft amendment A/75/L.104, delegations wishing to make a statement in explanation of vote before the voting on any of the two draft resolutions or on the draft amendment are invited to do so now in one intervention.

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

Mr. Niang (Senegal): I would like to make a brief statement on behalf of Ambassador Alexander Marschik of Austria and myself, as co-facilitators for the review process of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

We were honoured to undertake that challenging task, and we would like to sincerely thank all delegations for their active engagement over the past six months. It has been a difficult process, but we managed to come

to a conclusion. Draft resolutions A/75/L.101 and A.75/L.102, which are before us today, were placed under silence. As co-facilitators, we did our best. After thorough consultations with all delegations aimed at presenting drafts that we think are balanced, reflect the middle ground and are agreeable to all delegations, we are grateful that the silence was not broken by any delegation. We hope that the same constructive spirit will prevail this morning for the adoption of the drafts.

Our common endeavour in this exercise was to strengthen the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum, especially in the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic and our collective efforts to build forwards better. We should not lose sight of that bigger picture and our common endeavour. I would once again like to thank the President and the delegations on behalf of Ambassador Marschik and myself for the active engagement of all delegations in this process.

Mr. Lages (Portugal): Portugal, on behalf of the European Union (EU) member States, has, together with the United Kingdom and the United States, called for a vote on the proposed amendments to the third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/75/L.101, entitled "Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council; Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level", as well as to paragraphs 19 and 25 of the annex to the draft resolution.

We deeply regret that the process to which we have devoted the past couple of months was concluded in an unnecessarily rushed and polarizing manner. We acknowledge the dedication of the co-facilitators, who have gone above and beyond to achieve consensus on the text. We applaud the constructive engagement shown by a majority of the delegations, which participated in this process with an open mind, discussing possible improvements to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum with the goal of making both of them more efficient, relevant and focused.

We had hoped for an outcome that would enjoy the support of all parties involved, particularly given

the great flexibility shown by most delegations, including the EU and its member States. It is worth noting that last week the third version of the final text of draft resolution A/75/L.101 passed the silence procedure and was therefore assumed to be enjoying the support of the entire United Nations membership. We are appalled by the fact that we are now faced with draft amendments to three paragraphs in that very text (A/75/L.104). We believe that proposing amendments in such circumstances undermines the trust in the co-facilitators, the process and the entire premise of multilateral negotiations, particularly as the draft amendments were discussed in detail during the negotiations. They were deemed unacceptable and were subsequently replaced by language that was meant to serve as a compromise. In one case the language was in fact proposed by the Group that now proposes further amendments.

On the substance, we would like to note that the third preambular paragraph is agreed language from the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1), and as such should be acceptable to all. On paragraph 19, we strongly oppose the proposed removal of the current wording, which lists two specific and existing Economic and Social Council agenda items. With regard to paragraph 25, we are dismayed by the new language, which further deviates from the concept of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and the idea behind the reimagined meeting on the transition from relief to development to deepen the discussion on the relationship between humanitarian action, development and sustaining peace. For those reasons, we will be voting against the draft amendments.

Mrs. Stern (Australia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and my own country, Australia.

Draft resolution A/75/L.101 is part of our ongoing work to ensure that the Economic and Social Council is fit for purpose. After months of challenging negotiations, the draft resolution — which successfully passed the silence procedure last week — reflected numerous concessions from all delegations, including ours. While our delegations continued to have concerns with some language in the final version of the text, we were ready to join others and adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

We are disappointed to find ourselves considering multiple draft amendments (A/75/L.104) being presented after the text had successfully passed silence procedure. We are also deeply disappointed that one of the draft amendments proposes to delete a much-needed discussion on mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system as part of the Economic and Social Council coordination segment. The proposed amendments also remove important language on human rights, which was agreed as part of the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1). For those reasons, our delegations cannot support the draft amendments.

Mr. Chung (Republic of Korea): On behalf of the Republic of Korea, I would like to first express our gratitude to the co-facilitators and their respective teams for their leadership, dedication and hard work throughout this process.

We nonetheless must regrettably express our disappointment that draft amendments to the final text (A/75/L.104) have been proposed even after the silence procedure was successfully concluded without objections. While we were not entirely happy with certain parts of the final text, along with many other delegations we chose not to break the silence, in a spirit of flexibility and compromise. We have also recognized the imperative to reach a collective decision on this process, which has important implications for the functioning of one of the principal organs of the United Nations, as well as a principal mechanism for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The silence procedure is a time-tested practice and tradition at the United Nations, and indeed in many other multilateral arenas. It is built on the mutual trust between all partners that collective decisions made through it will be honoured and considered by all those participating to be agreed on as final. This proposal for amendments introduced after the successful conclusion of the silence procedure represents a serious breach of trust among us. It also undermines one of the fundamental building blocks of multilateral dialogue, based on mutual respect, trust and equal commitment. We are therefore deeply concerned about the possibility that it could set a dangerous precedent for the future.

Lastly, we regret that the draft amendments devalue the tireless work of the co-facilitators and the months

that they poured into this process in the goal of achieving a consensus outcome. In that regard, the Republic of Korea will vote against the proposed amendments.

The Acting President (*speak in French*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

Before we proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.101, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly will first take a decision on draft amendment A/75/L.104. A recorded vote has been requested on the draft amendment contained in document A/75/L.104.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, 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

Abstaining:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay

Draft amendment A/75/L.104 was adopted by 71 votes to 51, with 10 abstentions.

The Acting President (*speak in French*): Since draft amendment A/75/L.104 is adopted, we shall now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.101, as amended.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.101, as amended, entitled "Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council; Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, 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

Draft resolution A/75/L.101, as amended, was adopted by 90 votes to none, with 47 abstentions (resolution 75/290 A).

The Acting President (*speak in French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.102, entitled “Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council; Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.102?

Draft resolution A/75/L.102 was adopted (resolution 75/290 B).

The Acting President (*speak in French*): Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote after the voting, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by representatives from their seats.

Mr. Lages (Portugal): We would like to start by thanking the co-facilitators, Ambassadors Marschik of Austria and Niang of Senegal, as well as their teams, for their perseverance and what can only be described as a heroic effort, both of which have brought us here today for the conclusion of a lengthy and difficult negotiation process. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Economic and

Social Affairs and other colleagues from the Secretariat for their support, including their substantive support, throughout the process. I want to repeat that we are extremely disappointed by the final stages of the process, in particular the introduction of amendments to a finalized text that had passed the silence procedure. We disapprove of this way of proceeding and do not see it as a precedent for the future.

The member States of the European Union (EU) abstained in the voting on resolution 75/290 A on the review of the Economic and Social Council and joined the consensus on resolution 75/290 B on the review of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. We did not do it without reservations. First of all, we are disappointed that a process that started as an ambitious exercise to thoroughly assess the functioning and organization of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum and to introduce necessary adjustments in order to make both more efficient, effective and impactful concluded with a product that does not reflect the initial ambition of either the co-facilitators or the delegations that have engaged in the process since the beginning. On the contrary, to a large extent it maintains the status quo, in particular the largely obsolete high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council and the somewhat duplicative Development Cooperation Forum. We hope nonetheless that the discussion we had on those meetings will inspire the organizers and the participants to improve them as well as make them useful and meaningful.

Another major problem for the EU and its member States in the adopted text is the allocation of additional time for the annual session of the Economic and Social Council. We have consistently argued against such a solution. We are convinced that that is not the right way to go and that the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum needs to be rationalized. It seems easy to add days and meetings to the current calendar, and yet it is almost impossible to eliminate them, even if they are shown to be obsolete or unable to fulfil their expected function. We will be watching carefully how the Council and the Secretariat use the additional time, and we expect every effort to be made to ensure efficiency in the proceedings of the newly created coordination segment and meeting on the transition from relief to development so that the additional time is not used unless absolutely necessary.

We remain extremely concerned about what we see as attempts to weaken stakeholder participation in both the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum. It is our view that the participation of a variety of stakeholders adds value to the meetings of the Council and the forum, enriching our discussion and bringing in perspectives that we often lack at the United Nations. We would like to see the uninhibited participation of all stakeholders across the United Nations. That refers to the participation of such institutions as national human rights institutions, among others, which cannot be qualified as either governmental or non-governmental and therefore are often unable to access the United Nations. It is a shame that collectively we have failed to secure a solution allowing for that. We do not support the current formulation of, for example, paragraph 21 in the annex to resolution 75/290 A or paragraph 25 of the annex to resolution 75/290 B. We appeal to Member States to include representatives of civil society, the private sector, academia and national parliaments in all activities pertinent to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as in their delegations to various meetings of the Economic and Social Council.

We are appalled by the persistent questioning of the relevance of human rights to the work of the Economic and Social Council and of the high-level political forum, and by the fact that the broader United Nations membership refuses to refer to the clear mandates of the Council in this area, as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations. That is apparent in the current formulation of paragraph 1 of the annex to resolution 75/290 A. We want to reiterate that human rights and fundamental freedoms are an undeniable part of the concept of sustainable development, underpinning all actions related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They cannot be separated from development. They are development. We are glad that the text seems to acknowledge that fact, and yet we could have wished for far more explicit and specific language in that regard.

Finally, we are disappointed that our proposal to hold the next review of the Economic and Social Council and high-level political forum during the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session was disregarded despite the lack of opposition. We believe it would make sense to have a comprehensive and hopefully constructive

discussion on the topic before the beginning of the next cycle of the high-level political forum.

Despite the aforementioned reservations, the EU and its member States do see and appreciate the potential of the text to make the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum work better. One of the examples is certainly the elimination of the integration segments, which we have long deemed obsolete. Another is the establishment of a new coordination segment with an ambitious and extensive mandate. Let us collectively make an effort to make this meeting matter. We also see value in the language on the enhanced cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. And we support the new iteration of the meeting on the transition from relief to development, which has the promise to become a bridge between humanitarian and development discussions and will surely be used by the EU and its member States to highlight the implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, as well as to look into the issue of sustaining peace as it relates to the items now moved over from the management segment and placed on the agenda of the transition meeting. We regret that it was impossible to reflect the changed focus of the meeting in its name or to use such formulations as “the humanitarian-development-peace nexus” or “sustaining peace” to describe its content.

We also want to underline that we expect the broadest possible participation of stakeholders in the meeting’s deliberations, as was the case with the transition events. We similarly hope that the adjusted Partnership Forum will contribute to stronger ties between the Economic and Social Council and a broad range of stakeholders, as well as to the creation of lasting partnerships, which are desperately needed in the last stretch to 2030. We hope that even though there was no agreement to reflect that in the name of the meeting, the forum will have genuine multi-stakeholder participation.

On the high-level political forum, we are glad that we have reached an agreement on its themes for the years 2022 and 2023, as well as on the subsets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be reviewed in depth in those years. The same goes for the reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda principles that should be applied to the voluntary national reviews and for ensuring an early delivery of reports informing the work of the high-level political forum on an annual basis, in the case of the SDG progress report, or quadrennial, in the case of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

In conclusion, we should make it very clear that we do not read any provision of the newly adopted resolution as undermining or changing related provisions of the 2030 Agenda, even though some paragraphs do deviate from the Agenda's language, as for example paragraph 27 of the annex to resolution 75/290 B.

Ms. Mendoza Elguea (Mexico) (spoke in Spanish): Mexico would like to thank the co-facilitators and their team for their very hard work and intensive efforts to achieve a consensus text.

While Mexico joined the consensus on resolution 75/290 B and voted in favour of resolution 75/290 A, we believe that the potential and the value of those texts were watered down throughout the discussions, addressing the priorities of only one negotiating group. We want to underscore the fact that the third preambular paragraph, which contained agreed language from the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1), was one concession that originated in a modification to paragraph one of the annex of resolution 75/290 A, to the detriment of the Charter of the United Nations. That foundational document should not be questioned, and nor should it be done away with in a draft resolution that has to do with the functioning of one of the main bodies of the Organization. Not recognizing that the Economic and Social Council should be dealing with economic, social, cultural, educational and health issues as well as making recommendations to promote the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is to deny the normative and founding principles of the Organization.

My delegation is taking this opportunity to reiterate once again Mexico's view that sustainable development and human rights are two sides of the same coin. We cannot hope to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development if we do not comply with our international obligations in the area of human rights. Both thematic bodies have the common purpose of ensuring the well-being of our peoples.

With respect to paragraph 25 and the various modifications it has undergone, Mexico underlines that sustainable peace is not the same as Sustainable Development Goal 16. To replace one with the other is to confuse their meanings and is a failure to recognize that the intrinsic link between development and peace has already been dealt with routinely in the discussions of the Economic and Social Council. Mexico is of the view that the review of the Economic and Social

Council is intended to improve its working methods, as opposed to reaffirming the status quo. Despite the most recent changes to the aforementioned paragraph, the resolution denies what has already taken place in the meeting on the transition from relief to development, the humanitarian segment and the operational segment.

Mexico has also taken note of the way in which language in the texts relating to the participation of civil society has been watered down, which we disagree with. The participation of civil society in our deliberations enriches dialogue and promotes understanding between decision-makers and individuals on the ground, with a view to ensuring that our agreements have an effective and positive impact on their lives.

Finally, Mexico would like to highlight that discussion of the inclusion of human rights and gender as topics that can be "cherry-picked" is neither wise nor appropriate. The United Nations has acknowledged in numerous documents adopted since the turn of this century that development, peace, security and human rights are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. As we have said on numerous occasions, Mexico does not envisage sustainable development without ensuring that we respect, promote and protect human rights and the empowerment of women and girls. We have promoted that comprehensive view in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and the Security Council.

The documents that we have adopted fall far below our expectations. Despite that, we hope that in future we can go beyond our ideological positions, face our realities and improve our intergovernmental forums for the well-being of our peoples. In that regard, Mexico can be trusted to redouble its efforts to promote a functional and accountable Economic and Social Council.

In conclusion, Mexico dissociates itself from the practice of proposing amendments after the successful conclusion of the silence procedure, which goes against established policy.

Mr. Thomas (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Austria and Senegal, and their teams for their tireless efforts to bring delegations together on resolutions 75/290 A and 75/290 B.

We sincerely regret today that all delegations could not come together to set the text presented this morning, which passed the silence procedure, and that draft

amendments (A/75/L.104) were put forward that led to the need for the vote we witnessed today. That is not in the spirit of constructive negotiation and compromise that we aspire to here at the United Nations.

The overarching goals of the United Kingdom for this text were made clear throughout the six months of negotiations: maintaining the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the principle focus of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development; ensuring that all activities are aligned to their delivery as we begin this crucial moment of the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030; focusing on cross-cutting priority areas — which enable wider progress on the SDGs but were undermined by today's amendments — including human rights, climate, environment and gender; guaranteeing the highest level of civil-society participation possible, as its actors are the critical stakeholders and delivery partners for the achievement of the SDGs, especially at the high-level political forum, which must be included; and finally, streamlining and ensuring the efficiency of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum, including by preventing an expansion of their mandates, functions and budgets.

Overall, we are pleased that the focus of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum remains on the 2030 Agenda. We are pleased that there is no expansion of roles with knock-on budget implications. It is important that we managed to reach agreement on the high-level political forum themes for 2022 and 2023 and on the SDGs to be reviewed. However, it is with profound regret that we express our disappointment that the Economic and Social Council calendar has been lengthened. We believe the practical ability, particularly for the new February segment to be productive, is slim. The calendar is now longer and more complicated instead of more efficient. The unproductive high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council and the Development Cooperation Forum have been retained.

We are also disappointed that we did not achieve greater ambition on civil-society engagement. As I mentioned, our efforts can only be strengthened by working with partners. Civil society is integral to SDG delivery. I would also like to emphasize that development and human rights cannot be separated. They must go hand in hand. We cannot achieve the SDGs without a strong rights-based approach, which

includes empowering all women and girls. That we do not acknowledge that today in the text in the strongest possible terms continues to be a source of dismay for my delegation.

Finally, we share our disappointment today in this process. For our part, we did not feel as though our efforts to continually compromise in good faith were matched by other delegations, nor did we hear convincing arguments as to why certain language was unacceptable, including consensus language from the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1).

The United Kingdom stands ready to continue to engage constructively and in good faith in all future negotiations. In conclusion, beyond today, I will express the aspiration of the United Kingdom for a strong and ambitious ministerial declaration for the 2021 high-level political forum.

Mr. Mack (United States of America): I would like to begin by thanking the co-facilitators, Austria and Senegal, for their efforts to achieve a consensus on this important issue. The United States abstained in the voting on resolution 75/290 A to protest the failure of some Member States to approach the negotiations on this vital issue in good faith. Our collective goal should be to make the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum more effective and responsive to meet the challenges that we face as Member States.

The concessions made by many were a true effort to reach consensus. However, the repeated breaking of the silence and the amendments (A/75/L.104) made following the passage of the silence procedure suggest that not all Member States share that goal. It is our hope that in future negotiations on the issue, Member States will come to the table to address the issues at hand. The amendment offered today undermines the importance of human rights, the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the policies and programmes of the United Nations system and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, including the vital necessity for effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. We reject any attempt to undermine those principles and underscore their importance to the fundamental work of the United Nations, including the need to incorporate the voices of civil society in informing our efforts and achieving our goals.

The addition of one and a half days to the calendar of the Economic and Social Council does not advance

the goal of a more effective Council. We urge Member States and the Secretariat to focus on making the existing meetings more relevant to Member States' concerns before adding additional days, with additional costs, to the Economic and Social Council calendar.

Finally, we should note once again that the term "right to development", including references in resolution 75/290 B, lacks an internationally accepted definition, and our views on this matter are well known. Additionally, the United States underscores that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was conceived as a whole, and we are concerned about the decision to selectively highlight a particularly sensitive paragraph from the Agenda to suit the interests of some delegations. The United States therefore dissociates itself from the third preambular paragraph of resolution 75/290 A, as amended, and the sixth preambular paragraph of resolution 75/290 B.

Mr. Skoknic Tapia (Chile) (spoke in Spanish): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Lebanon, Uruguay and my own country, Chile, to explain our vote on resolution 75/290 A, which we have just adopted, and the amendment (A/75/L.104) that was introduced.

We would first like to express our sincere thanks to the co-facilitators of the resolution, Ambassadors Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal, and Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria, for their excellent work during this lengthy negotiation process, which has concluded today.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is a cross-cutting and unresolved challenge that has been negatively affected by the coronavirus disease pandemic. Today more than ever, we must work together to recover the progress achieved in previous decades in terms of gender equality. Women and girls are one of the groups most affected by the socioeconomic fallout of the current pandemic. The agenda of the Economic and Social Council addresses a range of issues that affect our societies. The appropriate inclusion of a gender perspective in its work reflects considerations of justice while also facilitating progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, reflected in the 2030 Agenda and its Goals and targets.

Fortunately, the resolution takes on those considerations in paragraph 13 of the annex to

the resolution, stating that the Council should also strengthen its efforts to mainstream a gender perspective across its agenda and programme of work. However, we also believe it is equally important to promote a discussion on including a gender perspective in all policies and programmes in the United Nations system as a whole, including during the Economic and Social Council coordination segment, as pointed out in paragraph 19 of the annex. In that way, we recognize that mainstreaming a gender perspective in all the work of the United Nations is absolutely essential to achieving our international commitments and moving forward with the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Castañeda Solares (Guatemala) (spoke in Spanish): Guatemala would like to take this opportunity to briefly explain its vote on the amendment (A/75/L.104) to resolution 75/290 A, concerning the Economic and Social Council.

We thank the co-facilitators of the consultation process, Ambassadors Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal, and Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria, and we welcome their enormous efforts to ensure consensus results in this process. Their work was exemplary.

Guatemala voted with the Group of 77 and China, representing the consensus view of developing countries on issues related to sustainable development in the United Nations. However, we want to take this opportunity to offer some clarifications of our national position. With regard to the third preambular paragraph, my country would like to reaffirm its full agreement with and support for the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1), adopted in September 2020.

With regard to paragraph 19, Guatemala would like to point out that it fully supports gender equality and the empowerment of women as essential conditions for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is crucial to shed light on the specific needs of women and girls by providing information and disaggregated data so as to ensure that no one is left behind. The language presented in the amendment does not prevent consideration during the coordination segments of specific issues in the text of the co-facilitators concerning the mainstreaming of a gender perspective throughout all the policies and programmes of the United Nations and concerning the

implementation of General Assembly resolutions related to strengthening the Economic and Social Council.

Regarding paragraph 25, Guatemala reaffirms that the three pillars of the United Nations are mutually reinforcing. We welcome a preventive approach to strengthening resilience in the three dimensions of sustainable development, which will contribute to sustainable peace, with all of it based on human rights, including the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Mr. Diane (Guinea): In my current capacity as Chair of the Group of 77 and China, I have the pleasure to refer to resolutions 75/290 A and 75/290 B, on the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council; review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development; and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level, to which the Group attaches the greatest importance.

We would like at the outset to sincerely thank Mr. Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria, and Mr. Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal, the co-facilitators of these intergovernmental negotiations, for their constant engagement, tireless efforts and feedback throughout the process. We fully understand that despite all their efforts, it eventually became very difficult to bridge the various views and positions, especially in the light of the relevant implications that this review will have on shaping our work in coming years for such a fundamental United Nations organ as the Economic and Social Council, as well as the high-level political forum on sustainable development, which serves as a platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

In keeping with that spirit of unity and constructiveness throughout the process, the Group of 77 and China continued to show maximum flexibility on various parts of the draft resolutions and their annexes, including at the last stage, showing total flexibility with regard to the high-level political forum and its annex, even though there still remain several proposals in that draft that the Group was not comfortable with.

The Group was unable, however, to show the same level of flexibility on three paragraphs in the text pertaining to the Economic and Social Council and its annex. Despite raising those concerns repeatedly, and

to no avail, the Group decided not to break the silence procedure but instead to present amendments to address those concerns and reservations — which had been raised with the co-facilitators on several occasions — on the final text. We stated from the very beginning of the process that it was important that we neither rewrite the 2030 Agenda nor discuss the mandates, remits or scope of the high-level political forum and the Economic and Social Council other than in a holistic, balanced and comprehensive manner, in an attempt to avoid putting focus on any particular development issue.

The Group resisted attempts to include individual topic areas in the texts and remains disappointed that the co-facilitators were unable to bring us back to the regular practice of these reviews, which entails taking a more holistic approach. In future, the Group believes that reviews of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum should include more dialogue on what is not working and why, and what adjustments can be made before we arrive at the irrational decision of removal. The Group firmly believes that many of the segments of the Economic and Social Council need adjustments that would promote a more effective Council and also meet the expectations of the development agenda. We want to place on record that we are disheartened that on these two extremely important documents, we were unable to find the sort of consensus that would have given an impetus to the system to continue its work in a manner that is fit for purpose.

We continue to insist that the voluntary national reviews should be country-led and not structured so as to act as a deterrent to countries. The idea of the voluntary national reviews was to ensure that countries felt free to report on their implementation of the 2030 Agenda, giving others the chance, through peer learning, to gain or share their experiences, challenges, gaps and achievements. Unlike what is constantly being said of the Group of 77 and China with regard to the participation of major groups, academia, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, the Group is of the firm belief that they bring added value to our processes. However, we believe that their participation must be guided by the provisions set out in the Economic and Social Council.

The Group of 77 and China continues to hope that we will be able to address development in its entirety and in all its three dimensions at all times, giving each issue of development our undivided and equal

attention. For our part, we know that all are very much interrelated and intertwined.

Mr. Schlaepfer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland welcomes the engagement and the efforts of the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Austria and Senegal, who have definitely done their utmost to reach a consensus. We regret that such a consensus was not possible. Switzerland would have liked to see the discussions take place in a more constructive and solution-oriented atmosphere, particularly in the final phase of the negotiations.

We would like to take this opportunity today to clarify our position on certain aspects of resolution 75/290 A. First of all, we welcome the fact that the review of the Economic and Social Council and high-level political forum on sustainable development continues to take place concomitantly, ensuring greater consistency. However, we are disappointed with certain aspects, including the fact that we were unable to further streamline the work of the Economic and Social Council. We are also disappointed that language pertaining to the participation of stakeholders as well as the references to human rights treaties and conventions have been weakened.

Beyond that, the amendment (A/75/L.104) unfortunately constitutes a missed opportunity to strengthen the voluntary national review process. We are pleased, however, that the Economic and Social Council humanitarian affairs segment as well as the

meeting on the transition from relief to development will continue to alternate between Geneva and New York, thereby maintaining a connection between the two segments.

Finally, we welcome the fact that certain agenda items, such as the discussions on certain geographical contexts, have been moved from the management segment to the new transition meeting. We regret, however, that gender mainstreaming in the new coordination segment was explicitly removed from the text of the amendment considered this morning. Retaining that language would have made it possible to have more substantive discussions on this extremely important issue.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

On behalf of the President of the General Assembly, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the co-facilitators, Mr. Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, and Mr. Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, who ably and patiently conducted the discussions and complex negotiations on resolutions 75/290 A and 75/290 B, considered today.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 14 and 122.

The meeting rose at 11:10 a.m.