



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
23 February 2022

Original: English

2022 session

23 July 2021–22 July 2022

Coordination segment

Summary record of the 7th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 4 February 2022, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Chindawongse (Vice-President). (Thailand)

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In the absence of Mr. Kelapile (Botswana), Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 8: Coordination segment (continued)

Panel discussion: "Leveraging regional perspectives for an inclusive and resilient recovery guided by the 2030 Agenda"

1. **Ms. Algayerova** (Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that the ECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development brought together multiple actors to draw lessons with a view to accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Ways to link local and national efforts in support of the achievement of the Goals would be explored at the 2022 Forum.

2. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had prompted new impetus to shape a transformative recovery that addressed long-existing challenges, such as climate change and environmental degradation. The promotion of solutions that would help to reduce environmental pressures while ensuring economic prosperity remained a central concern of ECE. Such integrated approaches led to more effective and impactful policies but often remained incomplete if transboundary aspects were not considered. ECE normative frameworks in areas such as transport and the environment facilitated cooperation across borders and the management of common resources, resulting in national initiatives such as the Environmental Performance Reviews Programme, which brought together expertise in various sectors to deliver integrated and practical advice on advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. Another important direction of the work of ECE was ensuring that the built environment met sustainable development demands, including contributing to climate change mitigation. ECE was assisting countries in increasing the energy efficiency of buildings through normative, advisory and capacity-building activities. Through its work on smart cities, ECE harnessed the potential of technologies to deliver better public services and sought financing to make transformative projects possible.

4. The Commission's statistical work would continue to provide a solid foundation for identifying problems and developing well-informed policies. The COVID-19 crisis had increased the demand for data on gender impacts. ECE was stepping up its support to national

statistical offices to meet that demand and would continue to help to improve gender statistical indicators.

5. Building more prosperous and inclusive societies that were also environmentally sustainable required new approaches to the way the world consumed and produced. At its sixty-ninth session, ECE had requested its subsidiary bodies to consider how to enhance the impact of relevant ECE instruments to foster circular and more resource-efficient approaches. Significant results were expected from the multiple technical cooperation projects that had recently been developed in that area.

6. **Ms. Alisjahbana** (Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development provided a unique opportunity to mobilize regional action to regain momentum towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals as the world recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2020, ESCAP had reported the collective results of the regional United Nations development system and had gathered feedback from Member States at the Forum. Through the Asia and the Pacific Sustainable Development Goal progress report and the Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goal partnership report, ESCAP not only tracked progress towards the Goals but also highlighted policies and solutions to ensure that no one and no country was left behind.

7. In 2022, the focus must remain on leaving no one behind while scaling up comprehensive social protection and universal health-care systems that ensured vaccines for all. ESCAP was working with the United Nations development system to translate the commitments from the action plan to strengthen regional cooperation on social protection in Asia and the Pacific into national actions. Climate action was being integrated into national COVID-19 recovery strategies. Momentum was increasing towards the development of national Sustainable Development Goal 7 road maps, an energy transition strategy and a carbon pricing mechanism. The regional action programme for sustainable transport development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) was an important step forward in strengthening transport connectivity. The Commission's work on climate-smart trade, including model provisions for trade in times of crisis, had ensured that goods and services could move safely across borders during the pandemic. Accelerating digitization and leveraging financing in line with the 2030 Agenda would be priorities in 2022. Inclusive financing instruments such as debt-for-climate swaps, especially

in the Pacific, and sustainability bonds for the least developed countries would be key.

8. By aligning its work with the United Nations development system, ESCAP had strengthened its country-level support. For example, it had helped more than 30 countries with their voluntary national reviews since 2018. ESCAP resolution 77/1 on building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific was guiding the secretariat in the preparation of key initiatives through regional and subregional cooperation frameworks. The Commission's intergovernmental platforms had emphasized the importance of integrating trade, energy, disaster risk reduction, finance and civil registration systems into post-COVID-19 national policy priorities.

9. The year 2022 marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of ESCAP. The forthcoming seventy-eighth session of ESCAP would therefore be a landmark occasion to redouble the commitments to placing people- and planet-centred regional cooperation at the heart of the common agenda.

10. **Ms. Dashti** (Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that the Arab region had one of the highest inequality rates globally, and wealth inequality had increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, with almost 45 per cent of aggregate wealth in the region held by the wealthiest 1 per cent by the end of 2020. Almost 27 per cent of people were poor on the basis of national poverty lines. The region had the highest concentration of refugees and displaced persons. It was estimated that the region required an additional \$462 billion for a fast and more inclusive recovery from the pandemic.

11. The COVID-19 pandemic had pushed gross public debt in the Arab region to a historic high of \$1.4 trillion. ESCWA had launched a climate/Sustainable Development Goal debt swap mechanism to enable debtors and creditors to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement commitments, and to advance North-South and triangular cooperation.

12. ESCWA was bringing together ministers and their technical teams to reform social protection schemes and reduce inequality in the region. During the Arab Ministerial Forum on the future of social protection in the Arab region, held in November 2021, a ministerial declaration had been adopted, and the ministers had agreed on key principles of social protection coverage, financing, shock responses and governance.

13. Optimizing fiscal spending and enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness were key to addressing limited fiscal space. ESCWA had developed a smart spending approach to support Member States in optimizing social expenditure.

14. The Arab Forum for Sustainable Development, to be held in 2022, would provide an opportunity not only to highlight challenges but also to raise the ceiling of what the United Nations and the region could achieve. It would take the efforts and creativity of multiple stakeholders to achieve an inclusive and resilient recovery.

15. **Ms. Songwe** (Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that responding to the COVID-19 crisis had been a focus of discussions during the United Nations-African Union annual conference. ECA had worked tirelessly with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the United Nations Children's Fund to be the first institutions to deliver vaccines in bulk to the African continent. Together with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the International Telecommunication Union, ECA had provided training to about 25,000 young women in coding and information technologies, which had allowed them to continue their businesses. During the crisis, women who had access to information and communications technology platforms had fared much better than those who did not. ECA had therefore continued to advocate better access to such platforms.

16. When the COVID-19 crisis had begun, only four African countries had been at a high risk of debt distress, but that number had since increased to 17. ECA had worked with many of those countries to devise new and innovative financing methods and to explore how to build domestic resources and create sovereign wealth funds. At its forthcoming session, ECA would focus on financing trade. The African Union had recently adopted an agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. Against the backdrop of disrupted global supply chains, inflation, increasing prices and scarcity, improving trade among African countries could reduce poverty and inequality on the continent. ECA was developing a trade platform, the African Trade Exchange, that would help to monitor exchanges within the continent.

17. The twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would be held on the

African continent. Together with the United Nations Environment Programme, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ECA was exploring potential advocacy measures and how to put nature-based solutions front and centre of the Conference. With regard to carbon pricing, ways must be found to provide additional financing to the continent using market-based mechanisms rather than donor agencies.

18. The COVID-19 pandemic had shown that there would be more risk in Africa. Cross-cutting insurance systems must be developed for future pandemics and crises. ECA was working on the development of new financial institutions to build more risk-resilient countries on the continent.

19. A total of 22 new ECA countries had signed up for voluntary national reviews, leaving just one to complete its review.

20. **Ms. Bárcena** (Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that regional integration and solidarity were essential in confronting the deepening global asymmetries and disparities between developed and developing countries. The Latin American and Caribbean region would show the least growth of all regions in 2022 and was the most indebted developing region. Countries of the region had very low growth rates, low investment levels, limited fiscal space, high inflation rates and high rates of unemployment and informal employment, affecting women and young people in particular. Regional poverty rates were rising, with 201 million people in poverty and 86 million in extreme poverty.

21. Children and young people had been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and schools must be reopened. ECLAC was calculating the costs of creating national care systems to enable women to return to the workforce. Equitable global access to vaccines was the single most important measure to sustain the recovery from the pandemic. More access to vaccines was needed in the Latin American and Caribbean region, where 26 countries had not yet vaccinated 70 per cent of their population. The plan for self-sufficiency in health matters in Latin America and the Caribbean was aimed at boosting vaccine and pharmaceutical production and distribution regionally and establishing a regional procurement system that could strengthen local manufacturing capabilities and provide vaccines for all. To promote a green recovery, the ecosystems in the

region must be taken into consideration in the accounting of economic progress.

22. At the national level, fiscal compacts were needed to support the new social contract. By tackling tax evasion, which had reached 6.1 per cent of regional gross domestic product (GDP), almost one point of GDP could be gained per country. ECLAC was also reviewing the royalty regimes for natural resources extraction. At the international level, the Commission was considering the proposal of the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, to issue \$500 billion in special drawing rights to finance climate action and was working hard on debt-for-climate swaps in the Caribbean. ECLAC was promoting universal digitalization to cover 66 million households without Internet connectivity. The global debt architecture should be reformed, and innovative instruments should be provided to improve debt repayment and enhance resilience.

23. ECLAC had enhanced the thematic alignment of its subsidiary bodies with the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Council for Planning and the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. The key links among the Sustainable Development Goals would be reviewed at the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, to be held from 7 to 9 March 2022 in San José.

24. **Ms. Vukovich** (President of the Hungarian Statistical Office; Vice-Chair of the Statistical Commission), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that high-quality, reliable and internationally comparable statistics were indispensable, especially in times of crisis. The global statistical community had responded in an agile and innovative way to the increased demand for timely and disaggregated data during the COVID-19 pandemic.

25. Among the issues to be addressed at the forthcoming fifty-third session of the Commission were Sustainable Development Goal indicators, open data, national accounts and climate change statistics. The role of national statistical offices in the larger data system and sustainable funding and investments in data were other high-level topics on the agenda. In line with the review by the Council of its subsidiary bodies, the Commission would review its 50-year-old terms of reference with a view to addressing the evolving and expanding statistical and data system and the modernization of national statistical systems.

26. The Commission was committed to working closely with other subsidiary bodies of the Council. The

Commission's many working groups brought together experts on data and statistics from across the United Nations.

27. **Mr. Manalo** (Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations; Chair of the Commission on Population and Development), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the consensus adoption by the Commission of a resolution on population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development in April 2021 had been due in no small part to the ongoing efforts to revitalize the Commission's work. In the resolution, the Commission called for the continued functioning of food and agriculture supply chains and health systems and for the achievement of universal health coverage. It also urged Member States to enable global equitable, affordable and timely access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, including through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility.

28. At its fifty-fifth session, to be held in April 2022, the Commission would review the implications of major demographic trends for ending poverty and hunger and for promoting health, education, gender equality and sustainable production and consumption. In revitalizing its work, the Commission could benefit from greater collaboration with the Statistical Commission on population data and with the Commission for Social Development on strategies to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.

29. **Ms. Squeff** (Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations; Chair of the Commission for Social Development), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that, over the past year, the Commission had addressed the role of digital technologies in social development and had made recommendations aimed at closing the digital gap and promoting digital inclusion. At its forthcoming session, to be held in February 2022, the Commission would focus on the eradication of poverty and hunger, which were affecting millions of people in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of one of the emerging issues of the session, "National policies and measures implemented by Member States to combat hunger and poverty in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond", was to encourage the sharing of good practices and create opportunities for international cooperation. The session would provide the opportunity to strengthen global solidarity and develop a new social contract whereby all individuals had the same chances.

30. **Ms. Joyini** (Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations; Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women), panellist, in a pre-recorded

video statement, said that, at its sixty-sixth session, to be held in March 2022, the Commission would consider the priority theme "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes" and the emerging issue "Harnessing the COVID-19 recovery for gender equality and a sustainable future". The outcomes of the discussions on the priority theme and the emerging issue would serve as the Commission's contributions to 2022 theme of the Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

31. **Mr. D'hoop** (Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna; Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on efforts to address the world drug problem must be acknowledged when discussing how to build back better. Coordinated multidisciplinary efforts were required, as the Commission had stressed in its statement on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of Member States' joint commitments to address and counter all aspects of the world drug problem, adopted during its sixty-fourth session, in 2021. The Commission was supporting Member States in the implementation of that statement.

32. During its annual thematic discussions and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies, the Commission fostered the exchange of good practices and lessons learned. In regional meetings, national practitioners exchanged knowledge concerning the regional impact of COVID-19 on the world drug situation. The Commission would continue its work to accelerate the implementation of joint commitments, especially in areas that had been significantly affected by the pandemic. A key priority would be to improve the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

33. **Mr. Hikihara** (Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna; Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the Commission made concerted efforts to assist Member States in preventing and combating crime by making criminal justice systems more effective, accountable and inclusive and by strengthening international cooperation in that area. Through such efforts, the Commission contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 16.

34. In March 2021, the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had adopted the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The COVID-19 pandemic had created new opportunities for crimes and posed serious challenges to criminal justice systems. In November 2021, the Commission had held the first round of thematic discussions focusing on crime prevention to foster the implementation of the Declaration.

35. **Mr. Major** (Advisor at the Ministry for Technology and Innovation of Hungary; Vice-Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that, at its twenty-fourth session, held in May 2021, the Commission had discussed the ways in which science, technology and innovation could support the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5, 9 and 17. Among the key messages and recommendations were the following: treating diseases that disproportionately affected the poor remained a priority, and countries should upgrade their science, technology and innovation capabilities, digital connectivity and regulatory frameworks for digital health; global solidarity must be enhanced in using science, technology and innovation in efforts related to the COVID-19 response and recovery and the achievement of the Goals; and legal requirements and policies to support and empower women to enter science, technology and innovation fields should be considered.

36. At its forthcoming session, to be held in March and April 2022, the Commission would discuss the role of science, technology and innovation in building back better from the pandemic while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and in implementing the ministerial declaration adopted at the 2021 high-level political forum. The Commission would also hold high-level panels on the following topics: Industry 4.0 for inclusive development; science, technology and innovation for sustainable urban development in a post-COVID-19 world; and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

37. **Ms. Mac Intosh** (Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation of Suriname; Chair of the United Nations Forum on Forests), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that, since its inception, the Forum had led global policy-setting on

forests and had enhanced collaboration within the United Nations system to promote a coherent agenda for forests and sustainable development.

38. At its sixteenth session, the Forum had considered the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on forests and the forest sector, and the means to address those impacts. It had also launched the *Global Forest Goals Report 2021* and an online clearing house with databases of information on forest financing opportunities. The Forum had highlighted the critical need to sustainably manage forests and halt deforestation and forest degradation as part of global efforts to offset the economic, social and environmental impacts of the pandemic and tackle other challenges. The United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, the implementation of which was being overseen by the Forum, provided a framework for forest-based actions in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the global biodiversity framework. At its forthcoming session, to be held in May 2022, the Forum would consider the midterm review of the international arrangement on forests.

39. **Ms. Ruskin** (Chair of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that, to facilitate the global supply chain of COVID-19 vaccines and help to mitigate the spread of the pandemic, the Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods had confirmed, at its session in December 2020, that vaccines authorized for use, including those in clinical trials, were not subject to the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations as currently written.

40. The recommendations developed by the Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals during the period 2021–2022 would be considered by the Committee in December 2022. The Committee would consider a draft resolution on its work for the consideration of the Council in 2023.

41. The Committee and its two subcommittees cooperated with a wide range of organizations dealing with all aspects related to chemical safety, such as WHO, the International Maritime Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The work of the Committee and its two subcommittees supported the implementation of the

2030 Agenda and was in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, in particular Goals 3, 6, 8, 12, 13 and 14.

42. **Mr. Bolwijn** (Head of the Investment Research Branch of the Division on Investment and Enterprise of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the work of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting involved promoting consensus-building, developing policy guidance and tools, and providing technical assistance. Among its achievements were the Guidance on Core Indicators for Entity Reporting on Contribution towards Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the accounting development toolkit. The Group had strengthened its focus on measuring the contribution of the private sector to the achievement of the Goals and assisted Member States in preparing their voluntary national reviews.

43. At its thirty-eighth session, the Group had called upon UNCTAD to convey to the newly created International Sustainability Standards Board the views of the Group on sustainability reporting, to support regional efforts and partnerships to promote a common approach to sustainability reporting, to monitor progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures and to further disseminate the accounting training manual and tools to facilitate access to finance for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises.

44. The Group's work was thus fully in line with the theme of the Council and the high-level political forum. The Group would promote the preparation of reliable and comparable sustainability reports to enable responsible investment and facilitate the mobilization of funds for investment towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

45. **Mr. Jaillard** (President of the National Toponymy Commission of France; Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the most recent session of the Group had been held in May 2021 in a virtual format. He hoped that the forthcoming session, scheduled for May 2023, would be held in person, because virtual meetings did not seem to be as efficient for sensitive debates.

46. The Sustainable Development Goals had been recognized in the Group's strategic plan and programme of work until 2029, and monitoring thereof must be supported by thematic analyses based on geospatial data, of which geographical names were a core element.

Another important line of the Group's work was exploring current and potential connections between geographical names standardization and the environment in support of sustainable development.

47. Forging and maintaining relations with relevant organizations was a central tenet of the Group's work. The United Nations bodies and agencies and the international organizations with which the Group intended to strengthen existing relations or create new ones, including the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, ECA and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, had been listed in its decision on cooperation and liaison with other organizations adopted at its most recent session.

48. The Group reaffirmed its commitment to guiding and supporting the standardization of national geographical names in order to identify locations and promote respect for the culture and heritage associated with such names.

49. **Ms. Merodio Gómez** (Vice-President of the Subsystem of Geographical Information, Environment, Territorial and Urban Planning at the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico; Co-Chair of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the full integration of location-based information with other data was key to providing better information and enabling shared understanding, which in turn facilitated the achievement of local, national and global goals, including the 2030 Agenda, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate agenda. The Committee was pursuing those aims in accordance with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, a comprehensive overarching framework encompassing the globally adopted strategic frameworks, guides, methods and standards developed by the Committee over the past decade, often in coordination with the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. The Framework provided a pathway for countries to address national development priorities, implement the 2030 Agenda, respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and address other complex issues, such as climate change and disaster resilience.

50. To contribute to the growing demand for geospatial knowledge, innovation and capacity development, the Committee was overseeing the establishment of a global geospatial knowledge and innovation centre in Deqing, China, and a global geodetic centre of excellence in Bonn, Germany. The Co-Chairs were working with Member States to report

on the implementation of Council resolution [2016/27](#) on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management.

51. **Mr. Ocampo** (Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs at Colombia University; Chair of the Committee for Development Policy), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that, at its 2021 session, the Committee had recommended that the Council put in motion an open and transparent process to identify and bring about changes to ensure that the multilateral system supported equitable, sustainable and resilient development through structural transformation. The Committee's analysis of voluntary national reviews had revealed underreporting on key issues, including the environment, inequality and the least developed countries. While the Committee recommended the graduation of Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nepal from the list of the least developed countries, those countries required a longer preparatory period and additional graduation support owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Supporting the development of productive capacity should be the central issue in the programme of action for the least developed countries to be adopted in Doha in 2022.

52. At its forthcoming session, the Committee would continue to support the least developed countries, including by enhancing monitoring of countries that were graduating or had recently graduated. In its contribution to the 2022 theme of the Council, the Committee intended to focus on the development of productive capacity and to continue its analysis of voluntary national reviews.

53. **Ms. Fraser-Moleketi** (Chancellor of the Nelson Mandela University; Chair of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the 11 principles of effective governance developed by the Committee and endorsed by the Council in 2018 provided a framework for assessing institutional capacities and were meant to assist countries in identifying ways to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

54. **Mr. Gbonjubola** (Director of the Tax Policy and Advisory Department of the Federal Inland Revenue Service of Nigeria; Co-Chair of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the Committee was advancing the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 17 by strengthening international tax cooperation and supporting developing countries in domestic revenue mobilization. The

Committee had produced detailed guidance on carbon taxation, tax treatment of government-to-government aid and taxation of the extractive industries. It had also developed a model bilateral tax treaty focused on developing countries and guidance on treaty negotiation, including suggestions for effective taxation of the digitalized and globalized economy. The Committee was addressing health and wealth taxes and the relationship between tax, trade and investment. The Committee's work was therefore in line with the current priorities of the Council. The Committee would explore opportunities to work with other subsidiary bodies to promote effective, efficient and fair tax systems for sustainable development.

55. **Ms. Nuorgam** (Member of the Saami Parliament of Finland; Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that indigenous peoples had faced serious challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic because of the absence of State support. The relaxation of environmental and human rights standards to support economic growth had also threatened indigenous peoples' territories. The pandemic had highlighted the lack of disaggregated statistical data on the situation of indigenous peoples. Member States must reinvestigate their commitment to collecting, disseminating and using disaggregated data to support evidence-based policymaking and programming. In building back better, there were opportunities to recognize and value the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples in safeguarding and conserving the environment. Such actions could significantly advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

56. The 2022 theme of the Forum was "Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence, including free, prior and informed consent". The Forum's work was linked to the theme of the high-level political forum, during which regional dialogues on indigenous peoples and pandemic recovery would be held.

57. It would be helpful if the Council could enhance the coordination of relevant subsidiary bodies to advance the Forum's recommendations on issues such as data disaggregation and indigenous women.

58. **Mr. Mohammad Aamir Khan** (Observer for Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Council had an essential role to play in rallying the United Nations system to take coherent and coordinated action with the aim of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals within the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. The Council and its subsidiary bodies and regional

commissions could make a significant contribution to the following objectives: ensuring equitable and universal access to vaccines and related health-care technologies for a people-centred, inclusive and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; mobilizing adequate finance to enable developing countries to achieve the Goals and balanced growth; providing universal and equitable access to social protection and high-quality health services; promoting urgent action on climate change and biodiversity laws; investing in sustainable and resilient infrastructure; and reforming the global financial architecture to provide fair and equitable access to concessional financing for developing countries and end illicit financial flows.

59. The Council should urge countries to establish nationally appropriate social protection systems that guaranteed the well-being of all without discrimination and to share best practices. The review of Goals 14 and 15 by the Council provided an opportunity to strengthen climate action and reverse biodiversity loss. The forum on financing for development follow-up, including the annual meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, provided an opportunity to address the financial needs of developing countries. Through the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, the Council should discuss ways to strengthen international tax cooperation, including by addressing tax avoidance and evasion. During the high-level political forum and the high-level segment, the Council should explore innovative solutions to bridge the digital divide.

60. **Mr. Richard** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; 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 European Union remained fully committed to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement, and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The Goals were at the heart of European Union policies across all sectors and served as a common road map for building back better and greener. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda required effective multilateralism, with a reformed United Nations and increased support for the rules-based international order, underpinned by respect for international law.

61. The European Union had participated actively in strengthening the Council and reviewing the high-level political forum. The informal note by the Secretariat on leveraging the Council for an inclusive and resilient

recovery guided by the 2030 Agenda provided a basis for reinvigorating the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies with a view to contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The European Union welcomed the aim of streamlining and strengthening the contributions of the subsidiary bodies under one common theme of the Council.

62. Climate change had not been adequately addressed in the 10 priority areas of the note. Each subsidiary body should contribute to the implementation of the Paris Agreement and to the Glasgow Climate Pact. The European Union commended functional commissions such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Forum on Forests that addressed the climate and environment crises. By addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, the subsidiary bodies could bring their work into line with the implementation of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda” (A/75/982) and contribute to the meeting entitled “Stockholm +50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity” to be held on 2 and 3 June 2022.

63. The regional commissions were well placed to support countries in the design and implementation of policies and programmes addressing the vital issues of young people and gender. Reliable and high-quality data, including disaggregated data, were needed to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and monitor the Sustainable Development Goals. The Statistical Commission played an important role in that regard, as did many other subsidiary bodies that were monitoring progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The European Union stood ready to share relevant experience through policy dialogue and cooperation programmes, especially given that 2022 had been declared the European Year of Youth and that female entrepreneurship programmes and youth initiatives would be highlighted at the forthcoming European Union-Africa Summit.

64. **Mr. Hunte** (Observer for Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that new mandates for the United Nations development system had been established through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in 2021, and the Alliance looked forward to the Council bringing them into line with the work of the subsidiary bodies and the regional commissions. Further guidance on the realization of the Paris Agreement had been provided at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The alignment and

streamlining of strategic workplans, programmes and policies would be essential to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

65. Only well-coordinated and timely responses to challenges would make a difference for small island developing States and their ability to survive and build resilience. It was worrying that the first response to the recent volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga had come five days after the disaster, especially after the reform of the United Nations development system and the multi-country office reviews. In the light of the unique circumstances and challenges of small island developing States, preventive measures should be accelerated, and timely and effective response measures should be put in place.

66. The Council must continue to address the challenges and concerns of the most vulnerable in a holistic, coherent and strategic manner, including by complementing and enhancing the work of the Charter-based bodies. Progressive efforts must be made to address current challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, poverty, climate change and inequalities. Responses must be shaped to ensure that meaningful and tangible outcomes could be delivered.

67. The Alliance wished to know whether the regional commissions had any concrete proposals for addressing the struggles facing countries and how they envisaged Member States moving forward towards the attainment of the 2030 Agenda.

68. **Mr. Manurung** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends for Disaster Risk Reduction, said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a stark demonstration that, in an interconnected and globalized world, risk was more systemic than ever. Disaster impacts could cascade across economic, social, and environmental systems and borders with consequences on a scale never seen before in human history. What was initially a health disaster had quickly become a socioeconomic one with long-term impacts. There was thus an urgent need for whole-of-society and all-of-government approaches towards prevention and risk-informed recovery and development.

69. Resilience to disasters was fundamental to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It was not possible to have resilient and inclusive economic recovery without addressing existing risks and preventing the creation of new ones. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda and gave the global blueprint for comprehensive risk management.

70. Member States had collectively reaffirmed their commitment to disaster risk reduction and a risk-informed approach to development in the ministerial declaration of the 2021 high-level political forum. It was therefore imperative for States to take a coordinated approach to ensure risk reduction was integrated throughout the work of the Council as they worked toward the 2022 high-level political forum. That could include the promotion of gender-responsive disaster risk reduction at the Commission on the Status of Women, a focus on financing for prevention and risk reduction at the Council's forum on financing for development follow-up and advancing a comprehensive approach to multi-hazard risk management during the Council's humanitarian affairs segment.

71. The midterm review of the Sendai Framework would provide the Council with a more in-depth understanding of the extent to which economic and social development policies were reducing rather than creating risk, culminating in a high-level meeting at the General Assembly on 18 and 19 May 2023. The work and outcomes of the Council in 2022 and 2023 would also provide valuable inputs to review and take stock of the Sendai Framework.

72. **Ms. Stoeva** (Bulgaria) said that the present discussion could not be more timely as the suggestions and proposals would provide valuable food for thought for the review of the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies that was already under way and which she herself was facilitating in her capacity as Vice-President of the Council. The mandate for that review stemmed from General Assembly resolution [75/290 A](#) and was intended to ensure that the subsidiary bodies were fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda, produced high-quality assessments and policy recommendations on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and adequately supported the work of the Council. In order for the review to be meaningful and have consequential results, it was important that Member States provided feedback to the respective subsidiary bodies. All subsidiary bodies would in turn be asked to provide their assessments and recommendations so that discussions could begin in April 2022, with a view to obtaining a final product in June 2022.

73. **Ms. Buenrostro Massieu** (Mexico) said that while the COVID-19 pandemic had given rise to many challenges, it had also taught some important lessons. The new coordination segment provided a welcome opportunity to create synergies between the agendas of the subsidiary bodies and the entire United Nations system in order to provide effective support to Member States both in their recovery from the pandemic and in

their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Full advantage should be taken of the Council as platform for sharing knowledge and experience in that regard. Reliable data were needed so that informed and evidence-based decisions could be taken by Member States. Mexico particularly appreciated the technical expertise provided by subsidiary bodies such as the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

74. **Mr. Marschik** (Austria) said that he was encouraged to see how the deliberations were taking shape on a more focused and coordinated approach by the Council. One of goals of the review process undertaken the previous year had been to make the Council and the high-level political forum more effective and focused. To that end, it had been proposed that the partnership forum and the coordination segment should contribute by assessing and strengthening follow-up to the work of the Council and the high-level political forum from the previous year, including follow-up to the ministerial declaration.

75. The recently launched partnership forum had brought together a broad range of partners and had highlighted many ideas that should be integrated into the work of all segments and subsidiary bodies during the Council's upcoming cycle.

76. The Sustainable Development Goals under review in 2022 provided an excellent opportunity for the subsidiary bodies to strengthen their common focus. His delegation fully agreed that the subsidiary bodies could further strengthen gender mainstreaming in their work. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic was a reminder of the interlinkages between the Goals. The current year's topic of the Commission on the Status of Women was an excellent example of how interlinkages could be addressed through the Council's work and his delegation looked forward to seeing how they would be integrated in the review of the Goals at the 2022 high-level political forum.

77. Austria was encouraged by the examples of collaboration among the Council's subsidiary bodies, including collaboration on data and statistics, on institution building and on gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Those examples should be built upon to achieve a truly systemwide approach.

78. In "Our Common Agenda" the whole Council system was called upon to take a coordinated and focused approach. Each functional commission and subsidiary body should contribute to the issues most relevant to its mandate. It would be important to draw

on the expertise of the entire United Nations system in that regard.

79. **Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) said that, given that the COVID-19 pandemic had thrown the international community off track in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, all bodies of the Council should make concerted efforts and issue recommendations that were realistic and based on reliable data. An effective and inclusive recovery from the pandemic could be achieved only through balanced progress across the three pillars of sustainable development. Establishing a common theme of the work of the Council, the high-level political forum and the subsidiary bodies was an important part of strengthening coordination. The theme should be relevant and take into account the changing environment of sustainable development. Nevertheless, each subsidiary body had its own unique mandate, which ultimately determined the theme of its work.

80. The increasing calls to move the work of the Commission for Social Development and the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to a virtual format and to expand the influence of civil society on their work were premature. Those bodies should gradually return to normal ways of working, taking into account the public health situation and the measures imposed by local authorities. The current working methods of the Commission for Social Development and the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations were optimal and had proved to be effective. Working virtually not only went hand in hand with technical problems but also reduced the effectiveness of those bodies and their ability to reach agreement.

81. The recommendations in the reports prepared by the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies should be based on relevant proposals and concepts that were accepted by all Member States and should reflect the consolidated position of Member States. A number of organizations of the United Nations system were already striving to implement the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Our Common Agenda", despite the fact that intergovernmental discussions on the initiatives therein had only just begun. Striving to implement initiatives and concepts that had not been agreed was contrary to the mandates of those organizations and the approaches agreed by all Member States.

82. **Ms. Fraser-Moleketi** (Chair of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration), panellist, speaking via video link, said that her Committee had ensured that its work was aligned with the 2030 Agenda. During the intersessional periods, it had engaged very directly with matters related to the implementation of the Sustainable

Development Goals and would be addressing the 2022 themes of the Council and the high-level political forum from the governance and administration perspectives. The Committee would also explore such matters as building strong institutions to combat climate change and promote the sustainable management of natural resources. It would be looking closely at lessons in institution building in conflict-affected settings, such as Afghanistan, and progress in transparent and participatory budgeting as well as public sector workforce matters. The Committee had invited selected countries to engage in an interactive dialogue on institutional aspects of the Goals. In its current work, the Committee took stock of progress, lessons learned, challenges and the impact of COVID-19 on implementation of Goals 4, 5, 14 and 15, and on leaving no one behind. Building strong and effective public institutions was crucial for achieving the Goals and building forward better against COVID-19 and protecting all countries against future shocks.

83. **Mr. Ramos de Alencar da Costa** (Observer for Brazil) said that he was optimistic about the role of the new coordination segment in providing direction and promoting coordination of the work of the subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies. He wished to highlight the quality of the background documents released in preparation for the coordination segment, which provided a comprehensive view of the workings of the Council's bodies. However, in recent years, there had been a multiplication of initiatives and documents, many of which were not the result of intergovernmental negotiations. While the Council would continue to be open to multi-stakeholder participation, there were appropriate forums for that, such as the recent partnership forum. His delegation was increasingly concerned by the traction gained by non-negotiated texts which, in some instances, had replaced references to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda or even the 2030 Agenda. In moving forward, it was crucial to preserve the intergovernmental character of the Council and the Organization. Failure to do so would not only weaken the Council at a time when its revitalization was sought but would also have serious negative repercussions for the United Nations and the multilateral system as whole.

84. **Mr. Abdelaal** (Observer for Egypt) said that his delegation wished to express its appreciation for the important work done by the regional commissions, especially ECA and ESCWA, to further strengthen the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It welcomed the continuous cooperation of ECA and ESCWA in many areas related to the preparation of the financing for development national report of Egypt, which was the first of its kind and would be launched in

the next few weeks. His delegation looked forward to cooperating with ECA, ESCWA and other relevant bodies in connection with the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022. It also commended ESCWA for taking the initiative to launch Vision 2045, which provided inputs to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Egypt remained committed to joint efforts to achieve the Goals, despite the challenges facing developing countries as a result of the negative socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

85. **Mr. Zambrana Torrelío** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the regional commissions were essential to the work of the Council and the high-level political forum as they provided a picture of the situation and the path forward towards sustainable development. In the face of widening structural gaps as a result of the impact of COVID-19, health challenges must be tackled within the framework of a global partnership. Innovative financial, technological and institutional solutions were also needed to accelerate inclusive recovery and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Coordination and cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies would be very important in that process.

86. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Observer for Morocco) said that regional and subregional action was central to achieving a sustainable and resilient recovery in era of COVID-19 and beyond. Her delegation looked forward in that regard to the outcomes of the regional forums for sustainable development, including for the Arab and African regions, which would transmit the regional dimensions, perspectives, challenges and opportunities to the 2022 high-level political forum. It was important, however, to avoid any overlap in the work of the Council's different subsidiary bodies and to ensure timely input for the high-level political forum.

87. The added value of the regional commissions was not limited to providing studies and analysis. They also played a central role in promoting peer learning among countries and stakeholders, strengthening capacity-building and developing integrated solutions to address regional challenges. The catalytic role played by the commissions in promoting regional partnership, including with the private sector, was particularly welcome, as were their efforts to promote South-South and triangular cooperation at the regional level. Morocco continued to have close cooperation with ECA and ESCWA and welcomed their work in key action areas such as vaccine equity, climate finance, debt relief, strengthening social protection and enhancing fiscal space for the countries of the African and Arab regions.

88. Her delegation wished to stress the importance of the interlinkages between the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, on the one hand, and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, on the other. It supported strengthening collaboration between the Council and the Commission in order to improve work on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

89. **Ms. Maitra** (India) said that, in their work, the subsidiary bodies of the Council and the specialized agencies needed to keep in mind that in order for the 2030 Agenda to succeed, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals was an imperative. That not only meant policy formulation and implementation in accordance with national priorities, but also breaking down the Goals and their implementation to the subnational and local levels. Localization also allowed local solutions to be developed to address local challenges by empowering provincial and local levels of government.

90. The current crisis was an opportunity to reflect on practices and approaches that had proven to be less than optimal or even unsustainable, and to learn from experience. Investments should follow the principles of financial responsibility and viability, and projects that would create a further unsustainable debt burden for vulnerable communities should be avoided. Projects should also be accompanied by the transfer of skills and technology to help local communities in the long-term running and maintenance of their new assets and to help generate employment for the population. In an interdependent world, the attainment of the Goals would be determined by much more than the efforts of individual countries: it was a collective global effort.

91. **Ms. Bárcena** (Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)), speaking via video link, said that financing for development issues must be addressed at the highest possible level. “Our Common Agenda” contained a pertinent proposal in that regard for a biennial summit to be held between the Council, the Group of 20 and the international financial institutions. Future financing for development discussions would also need to include innovative instruments, such as debt-for-climate swaps, hurricane clauses and ways to improve debt repayment capacities and enhance resilience.

92. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Observer for Armenia) said that the coordination segment was a platform for bringing together the expertise and analysis of the Council and the broader United Nations system. It provided policy guidance on a more harmonized support to Member

States in responding to the socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic so that they could get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

93. The informal note by the Secretariat identifying priority areas for further coordinated action was a good basis for further streamlining the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies. Its focus on vulnerable people, including those living in conflict-affected countries in the context of response and recovery from the pandemic, was crucial for operationalizing the pledge of leaving no one behind. In designing recovery policies and strategies, his delegation wished to highlight the importance of a human rights-based approach and the need for tailor-made solutions that took into account country-specific challenges and structural vulnerabilities. Armenia welcomed the suggestion for more systematic mainstreaming of the needs of countries in special situations, which could ensure the achievement of an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery. The regional commissions could be instrumental in providing an efficient and integrated United Nations response that took into account country and regional contexts. Building further synergy between the subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies could also contribute to the more efficient delivery of respective mandates. Integrated solutions should be explored on cross-cutting topics in economic, social, environmental and other related fields.

94. **Ms. Larue** (Observer for the Dominican Republic) said that it was impossible to speak about coordination or coherence without addressing the lack of vaccines around the world. A response to that challenge would be needed in order to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Strengthening the regional commissions would also be essential to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

95. In terms of the priority areas that should form the basis of the recovery from the pandemic, any action proposed must be assessed to ensure that it was sustainable, inclusive and resilient, especially in the most vulnerable contexts. It should also be clear which Goals, targets and indicators would be most impacted by the proposed action. The priorities established by her country were in the following five areas: social protection and the reduction of inequality gaps; inclusive and transformative social recovery; sustainable economic recovery; environmental sustainability and risk reduction; and governance and digital transformation for resilience.

96. There was a need for less bureaucracy and more supervision, transparency and accountability to the General Assembly. For example, the mandates in the

ministerial declaration should be assessed to see what had been achieved and what could be improved; and the voluntary national reviews should consider whether the resident coordinators had been sufficiently involved in the process.

97. **Mr. Beleván** (Peru), welcoming the work done by ECLAC to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, said that universal, equitable and timely access was needed to COVID-19 vaccines and treatment. At the same time, efforts must be focused on establishing economies that were more sustainable, resilient, equitable and fair. The work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies was essential in providing guidance, assessment and assistance for the implementation of the various components of sustainable development. Such work must be applied in a coherent, complementary and cross-cutting manner that was specific to the given needs. For example, the issue of infrastructure was particularly relevant to all middle-income countries and should be included as a cross-cutting issue.

98. His delegation looked forward to the sixth annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, which should provide innovative solutions to implement systems of production and consumption that made full use of technologies in order to achieve more sustainable, equitable and fair societies in the future.

99. The timely collection of reliable information and data was particularly important for the development of sustainable development policies and plans. The work of bodies such as the Statistical Commission was very important in that regard.

100. **Mr. Al-khalidi** (Observer for Iraq) said that the economic impact of COVID-19 had exacerbated many disparities among countries. The Council and its subsidiary played a key role in forming innovative and flexible solutions to meet numerous development challenges, including the search for effective responses to combat the pandemic. Actions such as the national integrated financing framework set up by ESCWA to address debt burdens had enabled many countries to get back on track to implement the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, progress was still needed in reforming the United Nations development system with a view to helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

101. **Mr. Klíma** (Czechia) said that his delegation remained committed to the revitalization process of the United Nations, including that of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, in order to strengthen their relevance, impact and credibility and make them “fit for purpose” in addressing current global challenges. The Council’s

role had never been more important in providing meaningful and action-oriented policy guidance, coordinating the United Nations system to ensure more coherent and effective support to the Member States in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and supporting their efforts to achieve an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery.

102. The Council and its subsidiary bodies should continue to support Member States in building forward better and greener, in line with the 2030 Agenda as a blueprint for the recovery. In order to fulfil that important task effectively and efficiently, the Council should systematically review its structures, in particular those established before 2015, and should align their work with the 2030 Agenda.

103. His delegation welcomed the fact that some of the Council’s subsidiary bodies, while respecting their mandates and specialized expertise, had aligned their thematic focus with the Council’s overarching theme. That would help to promote balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, while ensuring better coherence in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

104. The new coordination segment was an opportunity to ensure better coordination in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies by addressing gaps, overlaps and duplication, creating synergies and ensuring complementarity not only in their agendas, but also in their mandates and structures. While the reforms of the Council carried out the previous year had brought some achievements, there was always a room for improvement and no efforts should be spared to strengthen the Council so that it could better deliver on its role as set out in the Charter of the United Nations. The Council’s system should remain an open and unique platform for countries and stakeholders to exchange views and obtain coherent policy guidance. A stronger and better coordinated system could contribute to achieving the objectives of “Our Common Agenda” and lead to stronger international cooperation and reinvigorated multilateralism.

105. **Mr. Kaddouh** (Observer for Lebanon) said that Lebanon was home to ESCWA and had hosted a number of regional forums which had served as a main platform to prepare for the reviews of the Council’s high-level political forum. The region had been dealing with several challenges, including a socioeconomic crisis, conflict, climate change, forced displacement and the COVID-19 pandemic, which had exacerbated inequalities in key sectors. His delegation was grateful to ESCWA for its proactive efforts to stand by Member States in their response to the pandemic through Vision

2045 and through concrete support on debt, social protection and fiscal policy.

106. ESCWA had been a solid partner for Lebanon by supporting reform, providing capacity-building programmes and policy advice on taxation, social expenditure and poverty eradication, integrating persons with disabilities and promoting renewable energy. ESCWA initiatives supporting the engagement of women and youth to implement the Sustainable Development Goals were commendable, especially in a region where they were at the forefront of change.

107. The regional role of the commissions could however be enhanced by further leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation to accelerate the implementation of the Goals and establish regional solidarity funds to accelerate recovery from COVID-19. Regular coordination meetings between the commissions and the missions of Member States in New York could further identify interlinkages across the Goals and reflect regional priorities in the deliberations of the high-level political forum, as well as in the forum on financing for development follow-up. The commissions' support to Member States and their advocacy in voluntary national review processes were crucial, especially in crisis-affected countries where global priorities were systematically overshadowed by national pressing needs. Stressing the strong interlinkages between development and peace, he stressed that it was high time to tackle multidimensional vulnerabilities while mobilizing affordable and predictable financial resources to bridge the gap in funding the Goals.

108. Lastly, his delegation supported the harmonization work of the subsidiary bodies, which had aligned their discussions around key priorities to achieve both recovery and the Goals. That would also require close follow-up on the upcoming consultation on "Our Common Agenda".

109. **Mr. Mira Ramirez** (Observer for El Salvador) said that it was essential to find opportunities for improvement in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, in view of their important intergovernmental role and the fact that there was clearly agreement among Member States about the central areas that should be addressed. For El Salvador that included ensuring a sustainable recovery and economic resilience through the mobilization of the necessary resources, providing universal and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and making improvements to health-care services. It was important to continue efforts aimed at reducing the digital divide, including the gender gap, promoting innovation and

financial inclusion and ensuring inclusive and accessible social protection systems. There was also a need to prioritize efforts in favour of food security, capacity-building and technology transfer.

110. **Mr. Hill** (United States of America) said that the Council must rationalize and prioritize its limited resources in order to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and fulfil its work towards achieving the 230 Agenda. The Council system, which comprised 15 specialized agencies, eight functional commissions and five regional commissions that covered diverse expertise and mandates, must be made more relevant and effective. To that end, existing bodies and resources must be leveraged to achieve shared goals, rather than spending time and resources on creating new ones. It was also important to clarify the Council's mandates and improve coordination among its subsidiary bodies, segments and forums to enable those bodies to focus on core tasks. Meeting the ambition of the 2030 Agenda required commitments to the cross-cutting and foundational values that must be the core of sustainable development, including transparency, good governance and the rule of law by all stakeholders.

111. Corruption, whether within a government, business or organization, took away from public and private resources and stymied growth. His delegation therefore wished to see stronger transparency and oversight mechanisms, including whistle-blower protections, to ensure that the Council and its subsidiary bodies operated with the highest possible ethical standards and with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

112. Diversity and inclusion were critical when developing policies and programmes for sustainable development. The Council and its functional commissions, which helped to ensure that regional perspectives were represented in the Council's work, should forge multisectoral partnerships with non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector. Inclusive and multi-stakeholder cooperation in the United Nations system was essential for tackling the COVID-19 pandemic and building back better.

113. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** (Chair of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), panellist, speaking via video link, said that his Committee was the only human rights treaty body that was a subsidiary body of the Council. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee had been working on important issues of immediate relevance, including the drafting of a special general comment on sustainable development and the development of three important

documents on vaccines. It was also giving priority to constructive dialogue with States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in order to assess the exact impact of COVID-19 on the enjoyment of those rights. Article 12 of the Covenant, which concerned the right to health, should be revisited, studied and above all implemented. In order to provide the most comprehensive framework available for safeguarding the human rights to health, the article could be combined with the paragraphs relevant to health in the Sustainable Development Goals. Unless all economic, social and cultural rights were realized, the right to health would remain vulnerable. For the overwhelming majority of the world's population, the fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights could not be achieved without genuine international cooperation focused on the full enjoyment of the human right to development.

114. **Ms. Squeff** (Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations; Chair of the Commission for Social Development), speaking via video link, said that it was crucial to promote synergies across the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies so that topics were considered in a cross-cutting and holistic way. Bridges should be built between the regional commissions so that they worked in a more coordinated fashion rather than in silos. The possibility should be considered of the commissions holding intersessional meetings, instead of one annual meeting per session. There was also an urgent need for the current challenges to be analysed from a multidimensional perspective by the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Such important topics as education and social inclusion should be considered not only at high-level events but also on a daily basis.

115. **Mr. D'hoop** (Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna; Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs), speaking via video link, said that the subsidiary bodies of the Council should step up their joint efforts to further support Member States in addressing the evolving challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the specific area of narcotic drugs, those challenges included the increased abuse of narcotic drugs and the ease of access to controlled substances, even ones such as painkillers, in some parts of world. The Commission was very much in favour of strengthening horizontal cooperation among the subsidiary bodies, especially in areas of a cross-cutting nature, and was itself working to facilitate information-sharing and the exchange of good practices and lessons learned. The exchange of information on post-COVID-19 working methods would

be important in order to enhance the continuity of intergovernmental work and to build back better.

116. **Mr. Ocampo** (Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs at Colombia University; Chair of the Committee for Development Policy), speaking via video link, said that the least developed countries and the countries that had graduated from that status, or were expected to do so, were a priority in the agenda of the United Nations. Increased productive capacity and economic growth would be essential elements in the post COVID-19 recovery because of the great collapse in employment that had occurred in developing countries in general, not only in the least developed countries. With respect to vaccinations, many believed that there was a need for a new round of negotiations within the framework of the Group of 20 in order to rebalance the negotiations that had taken place the previous year and had not been very favourable for developing countries.

117. **Ms. Vukovich** (President of the Hungarian Statistical Office; Vice-Chair of the Statistical Commission), speaking via video link, said that statistics were important in various policy areas. The integrated and cross-cutting nature of statistics supported the planning and monitoring of the core dimensions of development, as well as the systematic analysis of complex issues. For example, the 2021 report on the Sustainable Development Goals produced by the statistical division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs had recently put together an impressive set of data within the Goals framework. The Statistical Commission continued to cooperate with all functional commissions to serve their data needs in all policy areas.

118. Good and reliable data were a key element of resilience and inclusive recovery. There was thus a need to address the vulnerability of the data infrastructure in many countries. Investment in data was essential to ensure that national statistical systems were sustainable.

119. **Mr. Manalo** (Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations; Chair of the Commission on Population and Development), speaking via video link, said that environmental changes were integral to the programme of action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. During the current year, the Commission would focus on chapter 1 of the programme of action, which addressed the interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The Commission's deliberations should therefore be able to make an important contribution to the critical issues of environmental degradation and

climate change. As a data-driven functional body, the Commission would continue to highlight the importance of disaggregating demographic data, which would be critical for fulfilling the pledge to leave no one behind. The Commission's work would also continue to be led and driven by Member States.

120. **Ms. Vanden Berghe** (Co-Chair of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management), speaking by video link, said that geographical information was needed for adequate policy development, execution and evaluation. Geospatial information was about completing the data provided by statistics, and it was important for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals to know what was happening where. Many speakers had underlined importance of adequate disaster response. In that context, the technical community had recently come together, for example, to support Tonga with geospatial data analysis and information.

121. The Committee provided Member States with guidance for national policy development through the frameworks for effective land administration and integrated geospatial information. It also paid particular attention to knowledge development and capacity-building, thereby contributing to the goals and priorities set by the Council.

122. **Ms. Algayerova** (Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)) said that all five regional commissions had efficient intergovernmental structures with close collaboration. ECE would do its best to continue to create synergies with the Council's other subsidiary bodies and strengthen its cooperation with them.

123. **Ms. Kana** (Head of the Department of International Taxation of the Internal Revenue Service of Chile; Co-Chair of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters), panellist, speaking via video link, said that an efficient and effective tax system was vital to meet the Sustainable development Goals. She stressed that the messages received from Member States at the current meeting would be relayed to the Committee and invited them to participate further in the Committee's work.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.