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### Summary record of the 45th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 26 July 2023, at 10 a.m.

*President:* Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Vice-President) . . . . . (Chile)

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*In the absence of Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria), Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

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

**Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation** (continued) (E/2023/L.33)

*Draft resolution E/2023/L.33: Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 75/233 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system* (continued)

1. *Draft resolution E/2023/L.33 was adopted.*

**Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions** (continued)

**(e) Long-term programme of support for Haiti** (continued) (E/2023/L.21 and E/2023/L.25)

2. **Mr. Shen** Xiaokai (China) said that the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti in its report (E/2023/63) would play an important role in promoting the country's economic and social recovery, following its political, security and humanitarian crises. China fully supported the coordinated action of United Nations agencies and regional and international partners to provide humanitarian assistance to Haiti in the face of the worsening situation in the country.

3. China called on all Haitian parties and factions to urgently advance the political transition process, which would be the fundamental solution to the crisis in Haiti, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2692 (2023) and in the best interests of the country and its people. China supported the adoption of a resolution on long-term support for Haiti and called on the Haitian authorities to take steps to achieve long-term stability and sustainable development in the country.

*Draft decision E/2023/L.21: Appointment of an additional member of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti*

4. **Mr. Rodrigue** (Observer for Haiti) said that the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (E/2023/63) had accurately depicted the situation in his country, in which general instability and armed violence had left around 5.2 million people, or half the Haitian population, in need of humanitarian aid. Alarming levels of food insecurity and resurgent cholera epidemics were also major causes for concern.

5. Despite chronic social and political instability, budgetary constraints and recurrent natural disasters, the Government of Haiti was taking measures to ensure and maintain effective coordination of planning, programming and management of the country's development. An integrated national financing framework for sustainable development had been implemented and was focused on the engagement of intergovernmental actors through the integration of the private sector, the financial sector and civil society organizations with the technical and financial support of international partners. The framework aimed to strengthen the system for national development planning and to ensure efficient implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals through the evaluation, follow-up, monitoring, governance and coordination of financing and the financing strategy.

6. He called for the effective implementation of the recommendations contained in the Group's report, particularly the implementation of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period 2023–2027, which was aligned with the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. His delegation appreciated the work of the Group, particularly its recommendations to ensure that international aid provided through the long-term programme of support for Haiti was adequate, coherent, coordinated and effective, and its commitment to fulfilling its mandate. He invited the Group to continue to support the country's recovery, reconstruction and social and political stability as part of its long-term development strategy. The success of all humanitarian, socioeconomic and electoral actions depended on the re-establishment of a security situation that promoted peace and the free movement of goods and persons in Haiti.

7. *Draft decision E/2023/L.21 was adopted.*

8. **Mr. Wallace** (Observer for Jamaica) said that his delegation appreciated the Council's support for the appointment of Jamaica as a member of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. The political, social and security situation in Haiti and the challenges hindering the country's aspirations for human and national development remained deeply concerning. Global action to support Haitian-led solutions was thus urgently required. Multifaceted challenges required multipronged responses and, as such, the strategies being pursued by Haiti and its partners needed to be focused and simultaneous in order to achieve sustainable results.

9. Jamaica was committed to taking concrete action to support the journey towards stability and

development for Haiti and had hosted the first meeting of Haitian stakeholders in June 2023, under the auspices of the Eminent Persons Group established by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). His country welcomed the determination of Haitian stakeholders to resolve governance issues and took note of the decision of Prime Minister Henri not to stand for re-election and to instead lead the transitional Government until free and fair elections were held.

10. The efforts of Jamaica and CARICOM were part of a larger package of support for Haiti, and a robust and coordinated effort was required, particularly in the short term, to address the humanitarian crisis in the country. In July 2023, the Heads of CARICOM had noted the need for the immediate creation of a humanitarian and secure stabilization corridor under the mandate of a Security Council resolution and had agreed to seek support from international partners to finance the establishment and strengthening of security in Haiti. It was necessary to support the efforts of Haiti to achieve long-term sustainable development, including through the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. Jamaica encouraged the continued and expanded support of partners and stakeholders for tangible development gains at the grass-roots, community and national levels.

*Draft resolution E/2023/L.25: Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti*

11. **Mr. Rae** (Canada), introducing draft resolution [E/2023/L.25](#), said that the resolution welcomed the Group's annual report and extended its mandate until 2024. The Group had expanded to 23 members to include Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Kenya, Saint Kitts and Nevis and, following the adoption of draft decision [E/2023/L.21](#), Jamaica. The addition of Jamaica would enrich the quality of the Group's work and provide useful insight and advice in support of the social and economic development of Haiti. Following the Group's consultations with Haitian authorities, young people and civil society organizations, as well as with the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, the United Nations country team, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank Group, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organization of American States, it had become clear that the complex and multidimensional crisis in the country, while extremely serious, was not a lost cause.

12. In solving crises and making progress in the country, a comprehensive approach that addressed economic, social, financial and security issues and supported Haitian-led solutions was needed. Urgent measures regarding security, humanitarian aid and

development were also needed to support Haiti in alleviating the suffering of its people and to strengthen the economic confidence required to create opportunities in the country. Security Council resolution [2692 \(2023\)](#) on the situation in Haiti was a step in that direction but must be accompanied by measures that addressed the root causes of violence, extreme poverty, corruption, impunity and collusion between legal and illegal actors in political and economic spheres. To that end, the Group encouraged Haitian stakeholders to ensure a broader and more inclusive national political dialogue to chart a way forward to stability and sustainable development, including through the holding of credible, free, fair and transparent elections.

13. Despite its considerable agriculture potential, Haiti had one of the highest levels of food insecurity of any country. In July 2023, at the special meeting on food security in Haiti, convened by the President of the Council at the Group's request, Haitian youth had described their daily struggle to find a meal. However, only 25 per cent of the 2023 humanitarian response plan appeal had been funded to date and, in July 2023, the World Food Programme had announced that the number of people receiving emergency food assistance would be cut due to dwindling funding levels. It was necessary to invest in the sustainable development of Haiti in order to strengthen its resilience to future shocks. The active and coordinated support of the United Nations system in that regard was essential.

14. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

15. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Argentina, Barbados, Colombia, Germany, Guatemala, Mexico and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. She then noted that Saint Kitts and Nevis also wished to become a sponsor.

16. *Draft resolution E/2023/L.25 was adopted.*

**(f) African countries emerging from conflict**  
(continued) (E/2023/92; E/2023/L.27)

*Draft decision E/2023/L.27: African countries emerging from conflict*

17. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

18. *Draft decision E/2023/L.27 was adopted.*

**(g) Sustainable development in the Sahel**  
(continued) (E/2023/L.28)

*Draft decision E/2023/L.28: Sustainable development in the Sahel*

19. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

20. *Draft decision E/2023/L.28 was adopted.*

**Agenda item 19: Social and human rights questions** (continued)

**(e) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** (continued) (E/2023/L.31)

*Draft decision E/2023/L.31: Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*

21. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

22. *Draft decision E/2023/L.31 was adopted.*

**Agenda item 14: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations** (A/78/65, E/2023/68 and E/2023/83; E/2023/L.29)

23. **Ms. Rambally** (Observer for Saint Lucia), Chair of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/78/65), said that the report contained a list of specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations to which General Assembly resolution 77/131 applied.

24. Introducing the report of the President of the Council on information submitted by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on their activities with regard to the implementation of the Declaration (E/2023/68), she said that the report contained information submitted by 12 system entities and one international organization regarding the support provided to Non-Self-Governing Territories. The General Assembly and the Council had emphasized that, without the continuing coordination and assistance of the organizations of the United Nations system, the Territories would be constrained in meeting the special challenges they faced in achieving

sustainable development. At the Special Committee's regional seminar held in May 2023 in Indonesia, and in its substantive sessions held in June 2023, the Territories had pointed out the need to bolster efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which served as benchmarks for economic and social development, and the importance of the support received from system entities. Those entities should strengthen the support provided to the Territories and engage further with the Special Committee, particularly by participating in the annual seminar and providing the information called for in relevant resolutions. The General Assembly had stressed the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations system and in the implementation of relevant resolutions and of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

25. Introducing draft resolution E/2023/L.29, entitled "Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations", she said that, in the text, the Council welcomed the assistance extended to Non-Self-Governing Territories by certain specialized agencies and other organizations. It reaffirmed that the specialized agencies and other organizations and institutions of the United Nations system should continue to be guided by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations in their efforts to contribute to the implementation of the Declaration and all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. It requested the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations to examine and review conditions in each Territory so that they could take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of those Territories on a case-by-case basis. Such assistance was of great importance in the light of the challenges posed by the fragile economies of the Territories and their vulnerability to natural disasters. The Council also requested the administering Powers to facilitate the participation of the Territories in the relevant meetings and conferences of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system.

*Draft resolution E/2023/L.29: Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations*

26. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

27. **Mr. Heartney** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said

that the draft resolution was similar to other draft resolutions considered by the Council since 2006 and identical to the draft resolution considered the previous year; the United States would therefore maintain its practice of abstaining from the voting. It agreed in principle that United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies could provide useful support to Territories that were not members of the Organization. However, the administering Power had a sovereign responsibility to determine the manner in which Territories could participate in or engage with the United Nations system. The domestic laws of the administering Power determined whether such support was allowed, and the language in the draft resolution was inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States, which gave the federal Government sole authority for the conduct of foreign relations. Consequently, his delegation could not support the draft resolution.

28. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution E/2023/L.29.*

*In favour:*

Belize, Chile, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Solomon Islands, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

None.

*Abstaining:*

Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Liechtenstein, Oman, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

29. *The draft resolution was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 29 abstentions.*

30. **Mr. Alvarez** (Argentina) said that the resolution should be applied in conformity with the relevant declarations of the United Nations, including the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and of the Special Committee on specific Territories.

**Agenda item 16: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**  
([A/78/127-E/2023/95](#); [E/2023/L.34](#) and [E/2023/L.35](#))

31. **Mr. Alami** (Director, Emerging and Conflict-related Issues Division, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)), speaking via video link and introducing the note by the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan ([A/78/127-E/2023/95](#)), said that, during the reporting period, the policies and practices of Israel had raised concerns regarding aspects of its protracted occupation and their impact on the ability of Palestinians to exercise their fundamental rights. A number of measures and policies, which were unlawful, discriminatory and appeared to constitute collective punishment, raised concerns about excessive use of force and unlawful killing, sometimes amounting to arbitrary deprivation of life or extrajudicial executions. The killing of the journalist Shireen Abu Akleh while covering a military raid on the Jenin refugee camp on 11 May 2022 was one such example. Settler violence had reached record high levels and Israel had failed to hold perpetrators accountable; indeed, Israeli security and military forces appeared to have been complicit in many attacks. The escalation against Gaza in August 2022 had resulted in extensive civilian deaths and injuries, destruction and damage to civilian infrastructure. The arrest, incarceration and arbitrary detention of thousands of Palestinians persisted and hundreds of people were being held in administrative detention without charge or trial. Amid documented cases of torture and ill-treatment, including of children, the Israeli Knesset had approved legislation aimed at punishing Palestinian "security prisoners" and, during the reporting period, Israel had withheld the bodies of 386 Palestinians.

32. Israel had continued its settlement expansion policies in the illegal transfer of its population into an occupied territory. Forced evictions, mass and individual displacement and other practices in Area C and East Jerusalem had compelled Palestinians to leave their homes. In the first quarter of 2023, the demolitions of Palestinian homes and other structures, including those funded by donors, had increased by 47 per cent compared to the same period in 2022, and punitive home demolitions of families and neighbours of Palestinians

suspected of carrying out attacks had tripled compared to the previous reporting period.

33. Israeli restrictions on movement, including the 16-year blockade of Gaza and complex physical and administrative systems in the West Bank, had disrupted Palestinians' daily lives, affecting their rights to work, an adequate standard of living, education and health. Israeli policies deprived Palestinians of access to their own natural resources to the benefit of Israeli settlements and industries. The daily consumption average of an Israeli settler was four times that of a Palestinian.

34. In 2023, approximately 2.1 million Palestinians, including 1.3 million Gazans, were in need of humanitarian assistance. Restrictive policies had hollowed the Palestinian economy of vital elements, making it vulnerable to shocks and highly dependent on Israeli and external transfers. A quarter of the Palestinian workforce was unemployed, with unemployment in Gaza at 45 per cent and unemployment among young people at 35 per cent, rising to almost 50 per cent among educated young people. Almost two thirds of Palestinian households had experienced severe or moderate food insecurity in 2022, and access to water, sanitation and hygiene services, health care and education had deteriorated. Israeli policies and practices had resulted in exacerbated cases of sexual and gender-based violence and had obstructed the access of women and girls to education and health care.

35. Active support for settlement activity in the occupied Syrian Golan and for its annexation by Israel violated international law. Syrians in the Golan suffered from discriminatory policies designed to benefit Israeli settlers at their expense, particularly in land and water allocation, planning, zoning and demining efforts. The policies had resulted in harsh economic and social conditions which were expected to worsen as a result of new Israeli plans.

36. The lack of implementation of international law, including Security Council resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine, undermined the women and peace and security agenda and the 2030 Agenda. Adherence to international law was an imperative in order to secure justice and peace for all those living in the region.

37. **Mr. Bamyá** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the dispossession of Palestinians and their forcible displacement and the fifty-sixth anniversary of the colonial occupation of the Palestinian territory, its people remained steadfast in the face of devastating adversity and tragedy. In recent weeks, an Israeli air

strike and military incursions into the Jenin refugee camp had left people killed and injured, homes and infrastructure obliterated and thousands displaced. Palestinian villages had been burnt by Israeli settlers, Palestinian families had been forcibly displaced, thousands of new settlement units had been advanced and the level of killings in the occupied West Bank had been at its highest in over 15 years. Relentlessly, the people of Palestine had continued to rebuild what the occupation had destroyed.

38. The 16-year Israeli blockade in Gaza, which had suffocated 2 million people in the world's largest open-air prison, and countless aggressions had caused unimaginable suffering and irreparable damage to the economy of Gaza, leading to economic deprivation, widespread poverty, food insecurity, environmental degradation and a deepening humanitarian crisis. Nevertheless, Palestinians in Gaza displayed creativity and determination to succeed and remain connected to the world, with children learning in makeshift tents after schools had been bulldozed by Israeli occupation forces, determined to learn, not only because education was a fundamental right, but also from hope that human potential could be unleashed in a future without occupation.

39. The note of the Secretary-General had concluded that the repercussions of the 56-year Israeli occupation had had a cumulative, multilayered and intergenerational impact on Palestinian society, the economy and the environment. The Palestinian people would not surrender to that reality but needed the help of the international community to effectively alter it. For freedom to prevail, for development to occur and for peace to be achieved, the occupation must end.

40. The Palestinian women's movement was one of the oldest in the region and beyond, having fought on national and social fronts to achieve freedom and dignity for more than a century. Palestinian women remained resilient in the face of suffering but needed the Council's attention and solidarity. Draft resolution [E/2023/L.35](#), on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, addressed the obstacles they faced and the obligations that needed to be upheld, starting with the most fundamental obligation, that of ending the Israeli occupation, while also acknowledging the commitments of the State of Palestine and of the international community. The draft resolution contained a call for the protection of women as an integral part of protecting the Palestinian people. They were leaders, the first and last lines of defence and guardians of hope. The Palestinian people, civil society, children and the whole nation was under constant assault. Much more could be done to spare Palestinian lives and suffering.

41. His delegation called on other delegations to support the draft resolutions on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation and on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, as a matter of principle and as a reflection of the Council's shared commitment to the value of life, freedom and justice, without discrimination or double standards.

42. **Mr. Al Nahhas** (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation welcomed the report contained in the note by the Secretary-General, in which ESCWA reaffirmed the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation, which contravened relevant Security Council resolutions, international law and international human rights law. The Israeli occupying authorities had significantly increased the number of settlers in the occupied Syrian Golan by offering Israelis incentives to reside there, including land for housing and for commercial agricultural development and large financial incentives. His Government condemned those acts; all settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan were illegal under international law. Moreover, the expansion of settlements and the related Israeli commercial activity adversely affected the health and agricultural and economic activities of Syrian citizens in the area.

43. His delegation deplored the occupying Power's expropriation of land and the fact that it forced inhabitants to apply for Israeli nationality by restricting their movement, access to school scholarships and access to land ownership under the pretext of using land for public parks. All those practices, as well as the construction of wind farms in the area, adversely affected the livelihoods of Syrian citizens. In addition, Syrian citizens were required to pay three times as much as Israelis for the same quantity of water. His Government condemned the illegal settlement activities of Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Syrian Golan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. It also condemned the discriminatory practices of the occupation, particularly with regard to access to land and water, and reiterated the need to implement United Nations resolutions to end the Israeli occupation and the suffering of Syrians and Palestinians living in the occupied territories.

*Draft resolution E/2023/L.34: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

44. **Mr. González Behmaras** (Observer for Cuba), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, in the draft resolution, grave

concern was expressed regarding the detrimental economic and social repercussions of the prolonged Israeli occupation and associated regime in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, with a particular emphasis on the dire situation in the Gaza Strip, and regarding the resulting violations of economic and social rights, including the rights to work, health, education, property, an adequate standard of living and freedom of access and movement.

45. The economic and humanitarian assistance provided to the Palestinian people was appreciated, and continued assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs was urged. The draft resolution underscored the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that had begun in 1967 and reiterated the need for increased and renewed international efforts for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of the internationally recognized terms of reference. The adoption of the draft resolution would alleviate the economic and social hardship of the civilians living under the Israeli foreign occupation and would ultimately contribute to international efforts to end that injustice and achieve peace, in line with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. The Group of 77 and China therefore invited all delegations to support the draft resolution in a show of support to the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan.

46. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that the Russian Federation had become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

47. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

48. **Mr. Lagatie** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that, while the European Union would continue to support the draft resolution, the use of the term "Palestine" could not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and was without prejudice to the individual positions of States members of the European Union on that issue, and hence on the question of the validity of accession to the conventions and treaties mentioned therein. The European Union had not expressed a legal opinion with regard to the use of the term "forced displacement" or certain legal terms used in the draft resolution and considered that "Palestinian Government" referred to the Palestinian Authority.

49. **Mr. Heartney** (United States of America) said that his delegation was once again unable to support the one-sided and biased draft resolution, the deficiencies of which should be known to the Council, since the draft resolution was virtually identical to others that had previously been considered. The continued bias against Israel within the Council remained concerning. The draft resolution and the accompanying report were unbalanced, unfairly singled out Israel in a forum that was not intended to be politicized and did nothing to advance the aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis for a more secure, peaceful and prosperous future. Rather than perpetuating politicized resolutions and reports, the international community should rally around productive and tangible efforts to improve the situation on the ground.

50. His delegation believed that Israelis and Palestinians alike deserved equal measures of security, prosperity and freedom, and the United States would continue to work towards those goals in the immediate term. His delegation continued to support a two-State solution and would continue to promote dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians and to seek ways to achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace.

51. **Ms. Shapir Ben Naftaly** (Israel) said that the deeply flawed draft resolution, which was based on a deeply flawed ESCWA report, pretended to focus on the causes of social and economic hardship, address cooperation and discuss the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, but had intentionally ignored the real obstacles impeding Palestinian development. The draft resolution had ignored the extreme corruption of the Palestinian Authority, its failure to recognize the right of Israel to exist, its refusal to condemn terror and its support for those who murdered innocent Israeli civilians. Furthermore, the draft resolution did not once mention Hamas, the internationally designated terrorist group which maintained its grip on power through, fear, intimidation and the use of the death penalty as a tool for the repression of its own people, or the atrocities committed by the Syrian regime against its people. Her delegation requested ESCWA to look at the impact of rule by Hamas on development, the economy, free speech, the education of women and girls, the political participation of Palestinians and the indoctrination of young children, who were taught to hate and murder Israelis.

52. In the draft resolution, the Palestinian Authority was not once criticized for its pay-for-slay policy, which had annual funds of \$167 million and under which terrorists were rewarded, for its widely reported use of torture and repression against Palestinian people or for its targeting of women human rights defenders and

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons. Such deliberate indifference to Palestinian responsibility was evidence that ESCWA and the sponsors of the draft resolution had never intended to have a constructive dialogue based on facts or to improve Israeli-Palestinian relations. Instead, their sole intention was to repeatedly target Israel.

53. The role of ESCWA was to monitor the well-being of the people in the region, not to be a one-sided propaganda tool which did not have the best interests of the Palestinian people at heart. The annual resolution had only ever been a biased political document that did a disservice to the Palestinian people; repeating the narratives that it contained year after year did not validate its false claims. The draft resolution did not address the broad economic and social problems facing the Palestinian people, promote cooperation or offer a vision for the future.

54. She urged other delegations not to vote mindlessly just to satisfy the political agenda of a few at the expense of the time, energy and resources of the many and to instead vote against the political and one-sided draft resolution. The United Nations had not been founded to promote one-sided agendas or to serve as a tool to pursue political gains, and she called for the Organization to adhere to the principles on which it had been founded.

55. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution E/2022/L.34.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Argentina, Belgium, Belize, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Canada, Israel, Liberia, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

56. *The draft resolution was adopted by 39 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions.*



*Draft resolution E/2023/L.35: Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women*

57. **Mr. González Behmaras** (Observer for Cuba), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the draft resolution addressed the obstacles and challenges faced by Palestinian women and girls, notably under occupation, and urged continued international support for them, with the aim of ensuring respect for their rights and providing them with the necessary protection and assistance.

58. The draft resolution reaffirmed that the Israeli occupation remained a major obstacle for Palestinian women and girls with regard to the fulfilment of their rights and their advancement. Israel, the occupying Power, was therefore called upon to immediately cease all measures contrary to international law, as well as discriminatory legislation, policies and action in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which violated the human rights of the Palestinian people.

59. The Group of 77 and China looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolution, which identified the means and support necessary to achieve the fulfilment of the rights of Palestinian women in line with the repeated commitments of the United Nations to advance women's rights worldwide and with international law. All delegations were therefore invited to support Palestinian women and girls and the Palestinian people by voting in favour of the draft resolution.

60. Speaking in his national capacity, he said that it was hard to understand how a draft resolution presented on behalf of a group made up of 134 countries could be considered a "one-sided narrative".

61. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

*Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting*

62. **Ms. Mimran Rosenberg** (Israel) said that the draft resolution, like many others whose authors claimed to deal with aspects of Palestinian-Israeli relations, was unbalanced, politically motivated and factually inaccurate. It did nothing to help Palestinian women and girls to assert their equal rights and, by targeting Israel, served only to postpone any self-reflection by the Palestinians.

63. The gender aspects examined in the report provided an opportunity to discuss the unyielding and oppressive patriarchal norms in Palestinian society, which had been referred to in the draft resolution only

as "traditional gender norms". Israel was not responsible for such customs, which led to gender disparity in employment and education and the widespread forced child marriage that saw one in seven girls forced to marry by the age of 17. There had been no discussion of the responsibility of Palestinian culture in accepting gender-based violence or any examination of how that culture contributed to inequality in laws pertaining to marriage, divorce and inheritance or in women's limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Although the Palestinian delegation wished to blame Israel for such disparities and limitations, they had nothing to do with Israel, which was simply a convenient scapegoat. If the Palestinians truly wished to change the troubling situation, they should look inward. In that regard, ESCWA should not give Palestinian social norms a free pass. It was also notable that some members of the Group of 77, which had put forward the draft resolution, regularly blocked discussions of gender in other resolutions.

64. In Gaza, women and girls had second-class status and were ruled by the regressive and oppressive terrorist organization Hamas; 40 per cent of them lived under conditions that were even worse than those of other Palestinian women and girls.

65. The draft resolution was the only resolution on the status of women that was not global, but instead focused on one specific group. Delegations that supported the draft resolution would send the wrong message to women in difficult places around the world who lacked any rights and suffered from a deteriorating situation in terms of education, health and the most basic protection: that such women did not deserve the attention received by others and that their lives and those of their daughters would be sacrificed for a political stunt.

66. In considering the draft resolution, delegations should ask themselves whether its adoption would bring Palestinian women any closer to respect, safety and equality or whether it would instead prevent any improvement by deliberately avoiding discussion of the urgent changes needed in Palestinian society and culture. Perhaps by acknowledging the damage that the draft resolution did to the cause of gender equality and the empowerment of Palestinian women, the Council could better serve the future of Palestinian women and girls. Israel had called for a vote on the draft resolution, which it would vote against. It encouraged those who valued the safety, dignity and equality of Palestinian women to do likewise.

67. **Mr. Heartney** (United States of America) said that his delegation had long-standing concerns about the draft resolution, which it regularly voted against. The

United States was troubled by the Council's insistence on including political elements and one-sided condemnations that detracted from real challenges. The Council should refocus its energy towards shared goals. The draft resolution was unhelpful to all involved, and politicizing the issues referred to therein called into question the impartiality of the assistance that so many countries provided to Palestinian women and girls.

68. **Mr. Gibbon** (United Kingdom) said that his country was committed to advancing gender equality domestically and internationally, and supported the legitimate and proportionate scrutiny of any country. However, his delegation opposed the singling-out and disproportionate focus on Israel in the draft resolution.

69. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution E/2022/L.35.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Argentina, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sweden, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Canada, Czechia, Israel, Liberia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Guatemala, Slovakia.

70. *The draft resolution was adopted by 37 votes to 6, with 4 abstentions.*

71. **Mr. Al Nahhas** (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation did not accept the use of the word "regime" to refer to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. His country had made great sacrifices in countering terrorism over the past 12 years and his delegation did not accept the statement made by the representative of Israel in that regard. The crimes and massacres of the Israeli occupation were well documented in resolutions of the United Nations. Any attempt to spread the internal issues of the occupying Power to other countries would not succeed.

72. **Mr. Abdelhamid** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that his delegation greatly appreciated the wide support for the resolution, which was a sign of the concerns of the international community about the

situation of the Palestinian people, including the economic and social repercussions affecting them and the situation of Palestinian women. Palestinian women should be able to enjoy their rights, but the end of the occupation was needed for them to do so. His delegation acknowledged that progress in that regard was needed domestically, but international assistance was also important. The support shown for the resolution was a testimony that, although other problems existed, the end of the Israeli occupation was a prerequisite for the achievement of peace and the enjoyment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

**Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters** (*continued*) (E/2023/L.22 and E/2023/L.23)

*Draft decision E/2023/L.22: Proposed dates of the meetings and segments of the Economic and Social Council in 2024*

73. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

74. *Draft decision E/2023/L.22 was adopted.*

*Action on draft decision E/2023/L.23: Application of the intergovernmental organization Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries for observer status with the Economic and Social Council*

75. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

76. *Draft decision E/2023/L.23 was adopted.*

77. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that it was important to maintain a constant dialogue between United Nations entities and other stakeholders, such as intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations, and his delegation supported the adoption of the decision. However, his delegation considered that more extensive discussions regarding the application of the Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries for observer status would have been beneficial. The decision was subject to rule 79 of the Council's rules of procedure and did not undermine the right of the General Assembly to discuss applications of bodies that held observer status with the Council.

78. **Ms. Mamesah** (Indonesia) said that the decision to grant observer status to the Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries, of which Indonesia, Honduras and Malaysia were members, was recognition of the vital contribution of palm oil industries to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In Indonesia, palm oil had been an important driver of economic growth, contributing to 17 per cent of gross domestic product

and employing more than 8 million people directly and 21 million people indirectly. There were 4 million small landholder farmers, who accounted for 40 per cent of total production, and the sector had lifted 2.6 million Indonesians out of poverty.

79. To ensure that the industry was sustainable, the Government of Indonesia was committed to stopping deforestation, which had fallen by 75 per cent over the past two decades, and had implemented a moratorium on opening new areas of land for palm oil production. Indonesia currently had the world's second-largest protected forest area.

80. The Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries was committed to fostering sustainable practices of palm oil production and believed that through sustainable practices, the conservation of biodiversity and adherence to labour regulations, the industry could contribute meaningfully to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to climate action, responsible consumption and industry innovation.

#### **Conclusion of the 2023 session of the Council**

81. **The President** declared that the Council had concluded its 2023 session.

*The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.*