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President: Mr. Rakhmetullin (Vice-President) (Kazakhstan)

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In the absence of Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Chile), Mr. Rakhmetullin (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 8: Coordination segment

Opening of the segment

1. **The President**, opening the coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council, said that the current segment was taking place at a critical juncture in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Halfway through that ambitious journey, efforts must be intensified to transform the world. The challenges faced – persistent inequalities, escalating conflicts, climate change, rapid technological advancement and debt distress – not only hindered progress, but also underscored the interconnected nature of global issues.

2. The reversal of hard-won sustainable development gains was reflected in increasing extreme poverty and hunger, exacerbating global food insecurity and malnutrition. At the same time, the world was confronted with the triple environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution; technological advancements that demanded proper frameworks and adjustments; and escalating humanitarian needs. It was estimated that nearly 300 million people would need assistance and protection in 2024. An integrated approach to foster prosperity while addressing the impacts of climate change was more crucial than ever. Strategies must balance ecological conservation with the needs of communities and economies worldwide.

3. The increasing digitalization of societies introduced new dimensions. The advancement of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence and biotechnology, presented both opportunities and challenges. The future must be navigated responsibly, ensuring that the benefits of the digital era were harnessed effectively and ethically. Education and lifelong learning were also imperative in equipping individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to contribute effectively to the dynamic environment.

4. The current challenges must be addressed through holistic approaches that recognized the synergies between the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as the interconnectedness of the Council's work across the different pillars of the Organization. Breaking silos and using interlinkages to create multiplier effects was the supreme transformative action needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

5. Each Sustainable Development Goal – whether it pertained to ending poverty and hunger, combating climate change, ensuring inclusive and quality education for all, or building strong, resilient and enabling institutions – was part of an integrated framework that recognized the interconnected but also mutually reinforcing nature of the Goals. The Council's strategies and action must reflect that complexity and establish a solid foundation for creating sustainable and resilient societies and economies, fortified to endure and adapt to future challenges and uncertainties. That was where the coordination segment could play an integral role. Coordination was the key to turbocharging the impact of implementation efforts towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at all levels.

6. The international community must build on the knowledge and experience of the Council's subsidiary bodies and the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies, and provide effective guidance for the coordinated and coherent implementation of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to achieve the Goals and leave no one behind.

7. Robust institutions and effective financing mechanisms were crucial in achieving the Goals. Institutions at all levels – local, national, regional and global – must be transformed to restore trust in governance systems and help achieve the aspirations of current and future generations everywhere to live in a peaceful, prosperous and healthy planet. The Secretary-General's proposed stimulus for the Goals and the call for an annual increase in financing for sustainable development of at least \$500 billion a year would be instrumental in augmenting financing, tackling debt challenges and paving the way for a reformed international financial architecture that enabled just, inclusive and equitable sustainable development for all.

8. The Council must reinforce its commitment to strengthened global coordination and cooperation and act accordingly. He called on Council members to reinvigorate their commitment to the 2030 Agenda and give a decisive push forward on the path towards a peaceful, just and sustainable world for people and the planet.

9. **Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Chile)**, speaking in her capacity as President of the Council, said that the coordination segment would focus on the main theme of the Council's 2024 session: "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions." The Council's recent partnership forum had also focused on that theme, holding discussions to advance sustainable

development through inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogues. That demonstrated the Council's commitment to deepen multi-stakeholder collaboration and promote inclusiveness for the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that context, she wished to share the key messages from the partnership forum.

10. The 2024 partnership forum had emphasized the pivotal role that effective partnerships played in the pursuit of sustainable development. Those partnerships served as a crucial mechanism for pooling resources and expertise, ensuring that efforts translated into tangible impacts on the ground. Throughout the discussions, it had been widely recognized that the success of partnerships hinged on respecting country ownership and local context while upholding stringent accountability measures. The comprehensive nature of multi-stakeholder partnerships had been underscored, transcending sectors, institutions and geographical borders to tackle the interconnected challenges faced.

11. Member States had underscored the urgent need for concerted efforts to leave no one behind, especially those grappling with the depths of poverty and the weakest capacities. Participants had also collectively advocated for more open and inclusive engagement, emphasizing the need to focus on vulnerable groups and mobilize resources to overcome various capacity barriers.

12. The partnership forum had yielded tangible proposals, including initiatives and alliances that would significantly influence the discussions at the high-level political forum on sustainable development to be held in July 2024, and subsequently at the Summit of the Future in September 2024.

13. The coordination segment had demonstrated the ability of the Council to step up and fulfil its key role as a central mechanism for coordinating and guiding the Council's subsidiary bodies and United Nations system entities, including the specialized agencies, on economic, social, environmental and related matters to ensure coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

14. She encouraged Council members to carry forward the momentum generated by recent partnership forum and provide concrete guidance to the Council system on transformative policies and actions that would reinforce and accelerate the 2030 Agenda, leaving no one behind.

15. **Mr. Rattray** (Chef de Cabinet), speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, said that the coordination segment was uniquely positioned to bring agencies and bodies together from across the entire

United Nations system, and to contribute to the Council's main theme for the current session.

16. As the Council was aware, progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was falling short and the full force of the United Nations must be mustered to accelerate the pace of progress. The theme of reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty was also a reminder that the acceleration efforts must be made in a world already struggling with frequent and interconnected crises, ferocious conflicts, climate catastrophe and enduring poverty and inequality.

17. Meanwhile, the developing world was experiencing its weakest economic growth in three decades. Soaring borrowing costs had pushed more than half of the world's poorest countries to the brink of a debt crisis. Tightening fiscal budgets were preventing Governments from investing in the Goals and rampant geopolitical mistrust and divisions were blocking effective solutions. Moreover, the institutions needed to bring countries together to tackle global problems were, in so many ways, either not fit for purpose or simply did not exist; from the outdated, dysfunctional and unfair global financial system to the Security Council that did not reflect the modern multipolar world and advances in artificial technology that remained outside of the global governance framework.

18. In that difficult context, the Economic and Social Council could help to deliver meaningful change and justice for all countries. There were two areas where the Council could push for progress over the coming year. The first lay in the realization that the time had come to build on the recent Sustainable Development Goals Summit. At the Summit, world leaders had adopted a political declaration in support of a stimulus of \$500 billion for the Goals and in response to the long-standing calls to reform the global financial architecture, in order to better respond to the needs of developing countries. They had also endorsed a series of high-impact initiatives in targeted areas, from education and digital transformation to food systems and renewable energy. He therefore urged the Council and its commissions and expert bodies to develop tangible and scalable policies proposals and recommendations for discussion at the high-level political forum in July 2024.

19. In 2024, the first biennial summit would be convened to build consensus on ambitious and politically feasible reform proposals in preparation for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the proposed world social summit in 2025.

20. The Council's ideas and commitment would be needed to help revamp the multilateral system. The forthcoming Summit of the Future provided a unique opportunity to advance meaningful reforms of the governance of international and norm-setting institutions, and to promote ideas to rebuild trust and strengthen multilateral collaboration in key areas, from the New Agenda for Peace to artificial intelligence and reinforcing the commitment to human rights.

21. The commitment to leaving no one behind was quite frankly in danger of capsizing. All hands were thus needed on deck to right the course and live up to the great promise and potential of the 2030 Agenda. Council members must commit to work together to accelerate progress. He was grateful to them for lending their ideas, expertise and energy to that important endeavour.

Panel discussion: "Translating commitments into action to get back on track, tackle inequality and eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises"

22. **Mr. Montalvo** (Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues), panellist, said that the health of the planet was related to that fact that most people believed that they were separate from the natural environment. Concepts such as the green economy, the bioeconomy, the circular economy and nature-based solutions were not the same as the vision of Indigenous Peoples centred on Mother Earth.

23. The path towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals must be based on the recognition of Indigenous Peoples as having rights and being part of the solution. For example, lithium-based batteries generated fewer emissions than fossil fuels, but 85 per cent of lithium reserves were located on or near Indigenous lands. The drive to exploit more land in search of lithium to promote "green energy" was causing the degradation of the water, air and everything else in those territories, along with the violation of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

24. In addition to the increasing encroachment on Indigenous lands and territories to exploit the minerals and rare earth elements needed for the energy transition, the promotion of carbon credit contracts was also dismantling the basic rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was working to address such issues.

25. In the annual General Assembly resolution on Indigenous Peoples, Member States had recognized that Indigenous leaders and Indigenous human rights and environmental defenders were increasingly losing their lives. Measures must therefore be strengthened to protect Indigenous Peoples and prevent the proliferation

of hate speech against them in all scenarios, including as migrants.

26. Nevertheless, there were some recent positive examples of progress. In 2023, States had agreed on a resolution to develop a global plan of action on the health of Indigenous Peoples, in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, to be presented to the World Health Assembly in 2026. General recommendation No. 39 (2022) on the rights of Indigenous women and girls of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women also represented an important step forward that should guide development policies in countries. In addition, Governments had agreed to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in which they had highlighted the importance of Indigenous territories. It was vital that measures now be taken both to recognize the biodiversity conservation capacity of those territories and to reflect their contributions. At the same time, any measures related to the conservation, restoration and funding of ecosystems must henceforth avoid violating the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

27. The fact that the 2024 session of the Permanent Forum would coincide with the holding of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up provided an opportunity to establish a connection between both venues. Indigenous Peoples must have a voice in the run-up to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025.

28. **The President** asked what policies could be adapted by the most vulnerable countries to bridge the gaps towards achieving sustainable development. He also wished to know how the World Bank was redefining its strategies to effectively address poverty and inequality, and accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

29. **Mr. Lopez-Calva** (Global Director for Poverty and Equity, World Bank Group), panellist, said that Sustainable Development Goal 1 was currently out of reach and the continuation of business-as-usual would not end by poverty by 2030. After decades of impressive progress in which more than 1 billion people had been lifted out of poverty, the pace of progress had slowed. Even before the period of recent crisis, the outlook for achieving Goal 1 had not been promising. At the current pace, 7 per cent of the world's population would still live in extreme poverty in 2030. It was therefore necessary to rethink how policies could unleash the productive capacity of the poor to launch a process of inclusive and sustainable growth. However, that task

would not be easy and he wished to draw attention to three critical challenges in that regard.

30. The first challenge was a deeply constrained fiscal environment. In 2024, total debt service payments for the countries eligible for support from the International Development Association were expected to reach around 10 per cent of their combined gross domestic product. As a result, those countries were facing hard choices of how to spend scarce resources.

31. The second challenge was the need for a more sustainable model of development. Action must be taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change. However, that must be done in a way that was also consistent with the goals of poverty reduction and inclusive growth, which required taking seriously the concept of a “just transition”. In pushing for the necessary technological transformation, appropriate policies and financing must be in place to support the transfer of that technology across the developing world and vulnerable populations through the transition.

32. The third challenge was the constraint that inequality posed to prospects for inclusive growth and poverty reduction. He was therefore pleased to announce that, for the first time, the World Bank had committed to reducing the number of countries with high inequality. The institution had chosen to adopt that measure as a central indicator of progress towards the renewed mission of ending poverty on a liveable planet.

33. Getting back on track to achieve Goal 1 would thus require bold policy action to be taken in a very difficult global context. A fundamental change in policies and a strong sense of collective leadership would be needed, moving forward.

34. **The President** asked about the role that the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) could play in accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring that everyone could fully exercise their rights and achieve their full potential.

35. **Ms. Keita** (Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)), panellist, said that 2024 was a year for action, acceleration, innovation and inclusion. While progress had been made towards the Sustainable Development Goals, the coronavirus disease pandemic had interrupted three decades of steady progress of poverty reduction and had caused the largest rise in inequality in three decades.

36. A renewed commitment was needed to multilateralism and international cooperation, as called for in Our Common Agenda and as envisioned in the Summit of the Future. Inequality ran counter to the

values and principles of the United Nations and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The integral linkages between population and development had been emphasized by ICPD, and the ICPD Programme of Action placed people and their rights and choices at the centre of the work of UNFPA.

37. UNFPA supported a human rights-based approach to sustainable development and there were a number of things that it could do to ensure that solutions were equitable by design. The first was to ensure that everyone was counted, everywhere, in a world of 8 billion people. That entailed strengthened support to countries in order to enhance population data systems which reached those furthest behind. Only by disaggregating data fully could policymakers know which groups in society were benefiting, or not, from interventions. They could then better tailor interventions and address the barriers that might prevent certain groups from accessing services. The achievement of full human potential and sustainable development would only be possible once the conditions and opportunities were created for all 8 billion of the world’s people to live freely and fully, equal in dignity and rights, on a healthy, safe and prosperous planet.

38. The Equity 2030 Alliance fostered cross-sector partnerships for gender equity in science, technology, and finance – helping unlock the potential of 4 billion people and accelerate both economic and social development. The members of the Alliance were committed to equity by design, and were driving actions to develop and deliver solutions for global good.

39. However, the reality was that changing the status quo required investment. Only fractions of global research and development on health funding went to women-centric conditions and sexual and reproductive health needs in developing countries, and even less to the marginalized communities in those countries. Women’s empowerment would not be possible without addressing their health needs. The UNFPA Equalizer Accelerator Fund was therefore dedicated to supporting innovations by women, for women, alongside contributing partners. UNFPA wished to unlock pathways for women and girls to realize their ideas and innovations because they knew best what worked for them. UNFPA stood ready to support Member States on the path to building a better tomorrow.

40. **The President** asked what insights could be shared on the implementation of early warning systems and how disaster risk reduction could be key in advancing human development and climate goals to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

41. **Ms. Albrito** (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction), panellist, said that while disaster risks had increased unabated because of the climate crisis, investments in risk reduction continued to lag. Among all risk reduction and climate adaptation measures, early warning systems represented one of the best investments for saving lives and reducing economic losses.

42. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) were one year into the implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative, with its ambitious goal of ensuring that every person in the world was protected by early warning systems by the end of 2027. She wished to share some highlights from their first annual report on their progress to date, which they had recently submitted to the Secretary-General.

43. First, UNDRR and WMO had started implementation of the initiative in 30 targeted countries, with 13 of them already holding multi-stakeholder national consultations. Second, they had developed tools, products and plans across the initiative's four pillars to scale up technical offers of support. Third, major finance mechanisms, including multilateral development banks, the Green Climate Fund, the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative and the Systematic Observations Financing Facility, had all committed to enhancing coordination, alignment and support. Fourth, regional-level coordination had been enhanced, especially in the most vulnerable regions such as Africa and the Pacific. Fifth, UNDRR and WMO had established a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to hold themselves accountable for progress. The key to making progress and overcoming remaining challenges would be strengthening partnerships, both within and outside the United Nations system.

44. While early warning systems could help countries to reduce losses, it was better if countries could avoid them completely by preventing disasters in the first place. It would be impossible for many developing countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals if they were constantly recovering from disasters.

45. Countries could prevent hazards from becoming disasters if they factored climate and disaster risks into every development and investment decision, so that the resulting development was sustainable and resilient. Such was the aim of disaster risk reduction and why the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 was vital for achieving the Goals.

46. **The President** invited the Council to engage in an interactive discussion.

47. **Mr. Anyaegbu** (Nigeria) said that, in order for African countries to achieve sustainable development, greater international efforts were needed to prevent capital flight and repatriate stolen assets. The President of Nigeria had signed executive orders to prevent tax evasion, for example, but more still needed to be done at the international level, including in the form of a tax convention, in support of such efforts.

48. **Mr Liu** Liqun (China) said that the international community must unite its efforts to get back on track with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Upholding the commitments made at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit should be taken as a starting point in that regard. Global governance must also be improved to create a favourable international environment for developing countries, including building a more just international economic order and more inclusive globalization. At the same time, cooperation on science, technology and innovation should be strengthened so that developing countries could acquire new technologies, in particular artificial technology. In addition, it was necessary to increase resource inputs and build a broader global partnership for development.

49. Developed countries should fulfil their obligations with respect to official development assistance and climate finance, and effectively deliver on their commitments to developing countries in such areas as technology transfer and capacity-building. For their part, developing countries should strengthen coordination among themselves, including through South-South cooperation. China had undertaken a number of effective initiatives in that regard.

50. He asked what more could be done to focus on poverty and inequality reduction efforts. He also wondered what could be done, in the current difficult international context, to strengthen cooperation and narrow differences in order to turn consensus into action.

51. **Mr. Rae** (Canada) said that he agreed with the representative of China on the need for urgent and coordinated action. The main question was what additional action was required by all relevant institutions, including the United Nations. He also wished to point out that transnational organized crime was a significant cause of disruption and instability that impacted global development efforts. More attention should therefore be paid to that issue. Forceful displacement was also causing significant disruption to the poorest countries. Lastly, the barriers must be broken down between discussing peace and security, on the one hand, and development, on the other.

52. **Ms. Mamesah** (Observer for Indonesia), recalling some of the key takeaways from the previous session of the Council's coordination segment, said that it was important to refocus international efforts on implementing the 2030 Agenda. To that end, the Council had a crucial role to play in ensuring that its subsidiary bodies and the United Nations development system worked in synergy. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review should also ensure that the system was supported by sustainable, predictable and adequate funding. Scaling up the means of implementation would be crucial, including through inclusive partnerships to mobilize public and private sector efforts. In that context, the Council's coordination segment should connect meaningfully with the partnership forum. Voluntary national reviews must also meaningfully connect Member States with concrete support and partnerships.

53. Lastly, the Summit of the Future provided a golden opportunity to ensure that the multilateral system was more fit for purpose. There was a need for more effective synergies and policy coordination between the Council and the Bretton Woods institutions.

54. **Mr. Vidal** (Chile) said that while the eradication of poverty must guide the Council's actions, it should be recalled that poverty and hunger were intrinsically linked. Millions of people around the world died every year because of poverty and malnutrition. Addressing poverty was not only a moral imperative, but also a strategic necessity for building sustainable and equitable societies. It was therefore essential to mobilize resources, implement inclusive policies and promote international cooperation to create an enabling environment for effective poverty eradication.

55. Public policies could play a crucial role in reducing poverty. A recent survey in Chile had shown that income poverty in the country had reached an all-time low of 6.5 per cent, while multidimensional poverty had fallen from 20.3 per cent to 16.9 per cent. That reduction had been mainly because of public policies, especially resource transfer policies, which had had an even greater impact than that of economic growth.

56. While coordinated action at the national and international levels was essential to reverse the current trend and move towards poverty eradication, the international community must focus on strategies that not only addressed the immediate consequences of poverty, but also its structural roots. That implied policies that promoted equal opportunities, access to education and health care and the creation of decent employment. Overcoming poverty meant challenging and transforming the systems and structures that perpetuated inequality, and working together to build

more just and equitable societies. The political will and the commitment of all actors would be essential to implement sustainable and effective measures.

57. **Mr. Hult** (Observer for the Universal Esperanto Association) said that multilingualism was a core value of the United Nations, but it was rarely addressed in relation to the targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. Recent milestones had drawn attention to the relevance of multilingualism to Goals 1 and 16, in particular.

58. As Indigenous Peoples and minorities suffered disproportionately from poverty, language could not be ignored as a factor in leaving no one behind. Equal access to justice for all would remain elusive as long as linguistic discrimination continued. Inclusive, participative and representative decision-making would also be impossible unless all voices could be heard. The review of Goal 16 was an opportunity for a renewed conversation about implementing language rights and innovative multilingual solutions to poverty.

59. **The President** asked how Member States could effectively prioritize the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in their national policies and plans to address inequality and poverty amidst multiple crises. He also asked how Member States could foster partnerships with the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to leverage diverse resources and expertise in tackling inequality and poverty.

60. **Mr. Montalvo** (Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) said that the matters under discussion, such as climate change, hunger, organized crime and displacement, were all intimately linked and had an impact on Indigenous Peoples. The Council could help in providing solutions, moving forward. To that end, coordination must be enhanced among the various bodies working on those separate issues, in order to come up with a more comprehensive vision. Moreover, it was important to ensure that the international commitments undertaken by States to address such challenges were upheld.

61. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that there was often an incomplete understanding of local realities. Indigenous Peoples, for example, had a great deal of ancestral knowledge and an intimate understanding of the natural resources and biodiversity on their lands, which could be useful to all of humanity. The economic vision adopted must therefore encompass more than just market forces. The participation of Indigenous Peoples, women and children in related discussions should also be increased. The human capacity for collective cooperation must not be overlooked.

62. **Mr. Lopez-Calva** (Global Director for Poverty and Equity, World Bank Group) said that the World Bank had adopted a new corporate scorecard, which focused on ending poverty on a liveable planet. That broad concept included issues related to fragility and conflict, pandemics and climate. The indicators in the corporate scorecard reflected a broader vision, for example, by providing a multidimensional perspective that included specific commitments related to food security and access to energy and water. The World Bank also considered it important to acknowledge inequality as a constraint on development and to take into account the recent liquidity constraints faced by developing countries. Lastly, the World Bank was working to become more effective in helping countries to face multiple challenges and, to that end, was committed to simplifying its processes.

63. **Ms. Keita** (Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) said that data were essential to find those left the furthest behind. In that regard, she wished to stress the important link between socioeconomic development and governance accountability. International partnerships and South-South cooperation were also vital for development. Lastly, the youth, peace and security agenda was central to development efforts aimed at building resilience.

64. **Ms. Albrito** (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction) said that there was a clear understanding of the current state of affairs and a collective wish to move forward in a sustainable manner. A number of systemic challenges and risks were being faced, but what still remained to be done was to connect them meaningfully in order to address them effectively. From the disaster risk reduction perspective, the first important action was to break down silos and comprehensively assess what was happening at the national and local levels. The second relevant point was stakeholder engagement, which was necessary in order to scale up actions. Increased funding in prevention and resilience was also needed for more effective and lasting disaster risk reduction. Lastly, it would not be possible to move forward with disaster risk reduction without expanding private sector partnerships.

Panel discussion: “Resilient and sustainable food systems: the path to advance Sustainable Development Goal 2 and beyond”

65. **The President** asked how current population trends were linked to food systems that were becoming increasingly vulnerable, owing to the impacts of climate change. He wondered what needed to be done at the policy level to mitigate associated risks, ensure safe access to food and promote sustainable production and

consumption. He also requested a short preview of the status of implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and its contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

66. **Ms. Espinoza Madrid** (Chair of the Commission on Population and Development), panellist, said that demographic trends were intimately linked to food systems. In 2021, the Commission on Population and Development had focused on food security, nutrition and sustainable development to identify measures based on a human rights approach to food. Given that most countries were experiencing a demographic transition towards an ageing society, measures must be taken to take the most vulnerable into account. While enough food was produced globally to feed the entire world, the problem of waste persisted and food systems themselves were part of the inequality challenges faced. Many people did not have access to decent nutrition options. The paradox was that the most vulnerable people were those living in countries which produced more food than the world needed, but those who were vulnerable had difficulty accessing sufficient and adequate food and they also worked in exploitative conditions. Continued population growth would substantially increase the demand for food, which would in turn be impacted by changes in consumption patterns.

67. Multilateralism was the only option when addressing such challenges, particularly among regional integration systems. One example was the plan of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, whose objective was to strengthen solidarity among countries in order to eliminate hunger and reduce malnutrition by 2030.

68. There was also a need to implement policies that allowed the transition to more responsible consumption patterns and decent production systems, which contributed to alleviating the pressure on ecosystems and reducing greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate climate change.

69. In addition, it was important to uphold human rights, in particular gender equality and especially in rural contexts, in order to close gaps in access to inheritance, property rights, land and natural resources. In short, food security for all was the basis for the sustainability of humanity.

70. Thirty years after the adoption of the ICPD Programme of Action, the world was at a turning point because the ambition was nothing less than to leave no one behind. The Programme of Action was the heart of the 2030 Agenda as it provided clear, comprehensive and holistic solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure a future where human rights were guaranteed, gender equality and women’s

empowerment were a reality and food was not a privilege.

71. **The President** asked what insights and strategies needed to be adopted to build resilient, sustainable food systems and how those were advanced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation (FAO).

72. **Mr. Torero** (Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), panellist, said that there had been a lively discussion on Sustainable Development Goal 2 at the Council's partnership forum, with representatives of youth, academia, civil society and family farmers showcasing how partnerships could advance the goals of ending hunger and malnutrition. The three key takeaways were: (a) the urgent need for synergistic multi-stakeholder collaboration to achieve Goal 2; (b) the importance of a global consensus to move towards more sustainable, equitable and resilient agrifood systems, of which inclusive engagement was an important part; and (c) the need for transformational partnerships that evolved and were flexible enough to meet complex challenges in changing circumstances. FAO was committed to continue to support those efforts.

73. The solution for building resilient and sustainable food systems lay in transforming agrifood systems to make them more inclusive, sustainable and resilient while ensuring affordable and healthy diets. Conflicts, climate extremes and economic swings were a reality that would not disappear but would increasingly continue to occur. The critical question was therefore what needed to be done to increase resilience. Climate was the major source of shock that would not disappear, but future damage could be mitigated by lowering emissions, adapting to ongoing changes and implementing climate risk monitoring and early warning systems. It would also be important, *inter alia*: to address the challenges of water scarcity and water governance; to integrate humanitarian, development and peacebuilding policies in conflict areas; to strengthen the resilience of those most vulnerable to economic adversity; to intervene along supply chains to lower the cost of nutritious foods; and to realign policies and public spendings. All those measures also needed to be gender sensitive.

74. FAO had developed a road map for achieving Goal 2 without exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius. The road map involved an extensive process that had spanned three years and it provided a global vision to address the current challenges in agrifood systems. It had 10 domains, 120 actions and 20 milestones.

75. **The President** said that, in 2022, 148 million children had stunted growth and 45 million children

under the age of 5 had been affected by wasting. He wondered how those immense challenges could be addressed and food insecurity tackled in order to end all forms of malnutrition, given the rising number of people and children suffering from hunger.

76. **Mr. Abdi** (Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)), panellist, said that the burden of childhood malnutrition was one of the main challenges that the global community continued to face and must address. Child malnutrition could and must be prevented.

77. Experience showed that investments in child nutrition, including efforts to build resilient and sustainable food systems, could protect and sustain many important gains. In the past two decades, the global prevalence of child stunting had declined by one third and the number of stunted children by 55 million. Those great achievement showed that positive changes in nutrition were possible and were happening at scale across countries and regions.

78. Despite the important global decline in child stunting, almost 150 million children under 5 had stunted growth and development because of undernutrition. At the same time, the epidemic of overweight and obese children continued to explode, affecting an estimated 135 million schoolchildren aged 6 to 10 years old, most of whom lived in low and middle-income countries or belonged to poorer households in high-income countries.

79. The burden of malnutrition was largely driven by a double failure of food systems. On one hand, food systems were failing to provide children with sufficient, affordable and nutritious food, contributing to high levels of undernutrition. On the other hand, children were increasingly exposed to aggressive marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages that were very high in sugar, salt, fats and other harmful ingredients, which contributed to high levels of overweight and obese children.

80. Global food systems were focused on increasing the agricultural production of a few crops. They consistently failed to consider the unique nutritional needs of children for a nutritious, diverse and safe diet. Similarly, the global and national food insecurity discourse was most often centred on filling the energy gap of populations, including through food aid, and failed to pay attention to the nutrition security of children.

81. It was important to address the double failure of food systems with a two-pronged approach aimed at preventing all forms of child malnutrition. For UNICEF,

the food systems transformation agenda called for by the Secretary-General was a child rights agenda in which it was necessary to simultaneously improve access to nutritious, safe, affordable and sustainable food while halting the aggressive marketing of nutrient-poor, unhealthy and ultra-processed foods.

82. In its strategy to transform food systems for children, UNICEF had identified three key action areas, with a high potential for impact. The first was improving children's food through actions in public policy, guidelines and standards, and food supply chains, including fortified foods, food supplements and therapeutic foods for children. Second was improving children's food environments, including the places where children lived, learned, ate and met, through actions in public sector policies and programmes and in private sector practices and products. Third was improving children's food practices through policies, strategies and programmes that promoted positive individual behaviour, caregiver practices and social norms.

83. UNICEF urged Governments and private sector food producers and suppliers to place children at the centre of plans to transform global and local food systems. Governments had the primary responsibility for upholding the right to food and nutrition for children, and they must establish public policies that were aligned with children's best interests. Key public policies with proven effectiveness to transform food environments positively included: (a) implementing fiscal policies that provided increased incentives for the production of healthy foods and taxed unhealthy foods and beverages; (b) placing nutrition warning labels on packaged foods that were understandable to children and caregivers and clearly indicated the presence of harmful ingredients; (c) regulating the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages directed at children; and (d) improving school environments to ensure that healthy foods and meals were promoted and unhealthy foods were banned inside and outside of schools.

84. Producers and suppliers needed to ensure that food systems delivered nutritious, safe, affordable and sustainable food options for children, and that their actions – including food production, transformation, distribution, labelling, marketing and retailing – were aligned with national policies and in the best interests of children's right to nutrition and a sustainable planet.

85. The aforementioned actions, if implemented systematically by Governments and private sector actors, had a strong potential to transform food systems and contribute to the achievement of the nutrition targets

for children and societies under Sustainable Development Goal 2.

86. **The President** invited the Council to engage in an interactive discussion.

87. **Mr. Vidal** (Chile) said that, over the past few years, the coordination segment had become an important forum for exchanging experiences and best practices and discussing lessons learned and common challenges, with a view to achieving the 2030 Agenda. In that context, multilateralism was the best way to make progress in addressing global challenges to leave no one behind. The multiple contemporary crises required urgent action and improving food systems was an ethical and practical priority that could not be postponed. While poor nutrition could increase the likelihood of developing diseases, good nutrition translated into a better quality of life. Healthy children learned better, healthy families could spend more time together and healthy seniors could enjoy a more active and self-reliant old age.

88. Chile was committed to overcoming poverty and inequality and ensuring gender equality, decent work, the sustainability of life and democratic coexistence, which were all elements of the Sustainable Development Goals and related in some way to food systems. Chile was also committed to modifying food systems through a decentralized approach, where the priority was to generate guarantees for the development of individuals, families and communities, and thus guide production to enhance human well-being.

89. The main challenge was to promote structural measures that created healthy food environments, addressed the social determinants of health and strengthened intersectoral alliances, encouraging citizen participation in decision-making. The international support ecosystem could support Governments by facilitating regional coordination dialogues that provided guidance on how to make evidence-based policy decisions and by mobilizing resources to make such initiatives possible.

90. **Ms. Espinoza Madrid** (Chair of Commission on Population and Development) said that holistic and integrated approaches were needed to meet current challenges and build the potential to address food security in the coming years. She called on Member States to reaffirm their commitment to sustainable development. The time had come for action.

91. **Mr. Torero** (Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that while reducing poverty was a complex process, the Sustainable Development Goals could not be

achieved without reducing inequality and ensuring food security. Lastly, in the context of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the impact of climate change, fundamental transformations would be needed not only in food systems but also in energy systems.

The meeting rose at noon.