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**General Assembly
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3rd meeting****Summary record of the joint meeting of the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council on
“Fostering sustainable and resilient societies in uncertain times”**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 15 October 2024, at 10 a.m.

Co-Chair: Mr. Muhith (Chair, Second Committee) (Bangladesh)
Co-Chair: Mr. Rae (President, Economic and Social Council) (Canada)
later: Mr. Thapa (Vice-President, Economic and Social Council) (Nepal)

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

Opening statements

1. **Mr. Muhith** (Co-Chair) said that over the past years, the world had been rocked by repeated shocks and multiple, overlapping crises – from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic to the current food, fuel and financial crises. Armed conflict was a deadly reality for billions of people, while climate-related disasters continued to increase in frequency and severity. The shocks had overlapped with and intensified underlying structural crises in jobs and livelihoods, care and the environment.
2. The current joint meeting would provide an opportunity to discuss what resilience and growth meant in the context of the modern world. The first panel discussions would examine the role of social protection in supporting women to withstand shocks, access sustainable pathways out of poverty and address structural drivers of inequality. The second panel would provide a deep-dive into the important role of financing for social protection systems, disaster risk reduction, adaptation and resilience for inclusive and sustainable growth.
3. **Mr. Rae** (Co-Chair) said that in a world of sky-rocketing risks and vulnerabilities, the need for universal, gender-responsive social protection systems had never been greater. At the midpoint in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such systems could play an important role in putting the Sustainable Development Goals back on track and withstanding further reversals.
4. International cooperation in financing had never been more important. Investing in social protection systems had many synergies with investing in efforts to address the climate crisis. Properly designed, implemented and financed social protection systems could maximize their contribution to gender equality, poverty eradication, crisis resilience and broader processes of economic and social transformation.
5. **Ms. Ortiz** (Director of Global Social Justice), delivering the keynote address via video link, said that she wished to speak about the role of universal social protection systems in fostering prosperity, equity, resilience and growth in an uncertain world. Traditionally, Governments had fought crises with strong public policies and programmes. The austerity or fiscal consolidation measures currently being adopted by many Governments had negative social impacts and should be eschewed. Governments had many better alternatives to support structural long-term solutions for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including feasible options to achieve universal social protection and provide public services for all.
6. Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated that everyone, as a member of society, had the right to social security. Universal social protection contributed to growth by reducing inequality, increasing the productivity of workers and enhancing consumption. It also had strong human development and equity impacts, particularly for women and children, and could help to build political stability.
7. It was important to make a distinction between universal social protection or social security systems that were based on rights and international standards, on the one hand, and mere “safety nets” that were only temporary, fragmented and needs-based, on the other. Countries achieved universal coverage by a mixture of public social insurance, financed from contributions, and a floor of social assistance, financed from the general budget. Social protection or social security included public systems, while social insurance was redistributive and its architecture could accommodate disruptions to women’s work from life events such as maternity and care giving.
8. When formulating and implementing universal social protection systems, States should: (a) start with a collective agreement to achieve target 1.3 of the Sustainable

Development Goals as part of the national development strategy; (b) identify gaps in social protection; (c) determine appropriate social protection schemes, whether contributory or non-contributory, or both; (d) identify potential sources of finance; (e) discuss financial and human resources with the Ministry of Finance; and (f) agree on a national social protection strategy.

9. Targeted safety nets for a fraction of the poor excluded the majority of the population and punished women in particular. Instead of reducing their budgets, Governments should therefore look for options to increase their fiscal space, which could include taking any the following specific actions: (a) increasing progressive tax revenues; (b) ensuring that employers paid adequate social security contributions and gave decent contracts to workers in the informal economy; (c) combating illicit financial flows; (d) restructuring or eliminating debt; (e) reallocating public expenditure to replace programmes with high-costs and low social impacts; (f) tapping into fiscal and foreign exchange reserves; (g) adopting a more accommodative macroeconomic framework; (h) increasing aid and transfers; and (i) creating a fairer mechanism for the distribution of special drawing rights.

Panel discussion 1: “Harnessing social protection for gender equality, resilience and transformation”

10. **Ms. Hendriks** (Director of the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)), panellist, said that the good news from the 2024 edition of the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* was that over the past decades social protection coverage had continuously increased around the world. Women and girls now had more access to at least a minimum of income security when faced with normal life course events. Social protection enabled women to avoid negative coping strategies, such as selling off assets, taking children, particularly girls, out of school, and being fed last or going hungry.

11. Nevertheless, 2 billion women and girls were still entirely unprotected by social protection mechanisms. While the situation was particularly dire in low-income countries, where there had been no significant increase in coverage since 2015, the problem was not restricted to those countries. Women’s social protection coverage lagged behind that of men almost everywhere around the world. Moreover, gender gaps in social protection coverage had widened in the least developed regions, suggesting that more recent gains had benefited men more than women.

12. The need for social protection had never been greater. Social protection played an important role in protecting women and girls against poverty, especially during crises. While the cost-of-living crisis had left women and lower-income households reeling from both food and fuel prices, few policy measures were explicitly aimed at increasing women’s economic security by providing either cash or in-kind transfers to them. Extending social protection to the world’s 770 million women still in informal employment would be a key priority for closing the gender gap in such coverage.

13. Fortunately, social protection policies were being designed with the rights and needs of women and girls in mind. For example, Mexico and Tunisia were among the countries that had recently adapted their social protection laws to be much more inclusive of domestic workers. Furthermore, Mongolia had made great strides towards universalizing the entitlement of maternity benefits independent of employment status or nationality. In addition, Cameroon, Malawi and South Sudan had combined cash transfers with access to climate resilient agricultural jobs and training, which helped women to earn a living while adapting to a warming climate.

14. In general terms, the promise of social protection for gender equality would ultimately depend on adequate financing, including through reform of the international financial architecture. More specifically, social spending should not be crowded out by spiralling debt interest payments, social protection should not be decimated by tax evasion or avoidance and more official development assistance should be channelled to gender-responsive social protection.

15. The dignity, empowerment, agency of women and girls should be central to the policy design, programme delivery and financing of social protection. In practice, that meant removing obstacles to social protection for women and girls. Social protection was a human right for all and there was a need to gradually transition towards universal and unconditional social protection.

16. As women and girls were often juggling multiple responsibilities, they must be empowered to access social protection programmes designed for their benefit. Adequate working conditions, inclusive digital solutions and participatory process were part of the ingredients of successful social protection delivery systems.

17. Social protection measures must be effectively linked to other policies that mattered to the lives of women and girls, such as employment and gender-based violence policies. Cash transfers could be adapted to address policy concerns. For example, the Dominican Republic had recently added access to childcare services and support for survivors of gender-based violence to its cash transfer programmes.

18. **Ms. Diwakar** (Deputy Director of the Chronic Poverty Advisory Network), panellist, said that she had analysed the gender dynamics of poverty in the context of a background study for the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* and the first key message of her study was that women suffered more severe impacts from crises such as inflation, climate-related disasters and insecurity. For example, data from Peru, the United Republic of Tanzania and Bangladesh showed that a much higher share of poor households headed by women had reported extremely severe consequences of shocks, compared to poor households headed by men. In general, the impact of those shocks was not only worse for women but their recovery from them was slower because, when crises hit, women often had fewer options or coping mechanisms than men due to adverse social or gender norms.

19. The second key insight from her study was that a large share of the population in all three countries, known as the transient poor population, was highly vulnerable to poverty. The study therefore examined the role of social protection in those countries and the varying degrees to which women were able to draw on social protection coverage to reduce their vulnerability to poverty. Unfortunately, the extent to which women and their households could rely on social protection to buffer against shocks was rather limited. Where social assistance was received, it was commonly used to meet subsistence food needs and was often inadequate in meeting more productive needs. That led to a much higher reliance on family or friends as forms of support compared to government assistance. Narrowly targeted programmes were mostly unable to make a real dent in tackling chronic poverty or preventing a descent into poverty in the face of shocks. Hence the need for more gender- and shock-responsive social protection systems.

20. To that end, it was important to promote risk-informed social protection systems, which included increasing payment values, working with associations for women's rights and the rights of informal workers to reach those in need, streamlining monitoring across systems and strengthening coordination on data collection. The coverage provided by those systems should be expanded to include not only those in chronic poverty, but also those at risk of falling into poverty. There was also a pressing need for stronger integration, appropriateness and coherence to improve the effectiveness of social protection.

21. **Ms. Barrett** (Vice-President of the International Domestic Workers' Federation), panellist, said that she had become a domestic worker at 14 years of age in Jamaica. Although she had been working for over 40 years as a domestic worker, including as a home care worker in the United States for the past 22 years, she could not even contemplate retiring because there would be insufficient social security. Unfortunately, that situation was commonplace for domestic workers. One of her domestic worker friends risked becoming homeless if she retired.

22. The membership of the International Domestic Workers' Federation was made up of nannies, house cleaners and home care workers throughout the United States. Care workers in the United States earned very low wages that were barely enough to support their families. The work was physically demanding and many childcare workers had no access to health insurance or paid sick leave. In 2023, President Biden had issued an executive order to all government agencies to find a solution to address that crisis. Vice-President Harris had also recently announced a proposal to extend Medicare to cover homecare workers, which would make care accessible to millions of older adults while also raising wages and improving working conditions.

23. In the 1930s, domestic workers in the United States had been among those excluded from the labour laws. Since then, domestic workers had therefore been forced to keep organizing and advocating for their rights. While in theory some domestic workers in the United States benefited from bills of rights, in practice those rights were not implemented. Similarly, the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) concerning decent work for domestic workers had been adopted in 37 countries, but only in theory.

24. The Governments of the world must ensure that domestic workers enjoyed the same benefits and rights as other workers, including access to social protection. They deserved to have their work recognized as decent work.

25. **Ms. Einola** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer) said that social justice and protection, equality and the eradication of poverty were fundamental aims enshrined in the Treaty on European Union. They were also reflected in the Global Gateway investment portfolio, which was open to actions in social sectors such as education, training, health and social protection.

26. Despite the unprecedented worldwide expansion of mainly short-term social protection interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost a half of the world's population remained entirely unprotected. The European Union was committed to advancing social justice under the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan, both internally and externally. It continued to support partner countries in ensuring comprehensive, sustainable, gender-responsive and shock-responsive social protection systems.

27. Support through European Union cooperation had constantly increased in recent years, including to existing global initiatives such as the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The European Union also fostered quality and future-proof job creation, including by promoting the social and green economy, providing support for skills and training, enhancing young persons' labour market prospects, strengthening the participation of women, and fostering the participation of persons with disabilities and underrepresented discriminated groups in the open labour market.

28. The Second World Summit for Social Development, to be held in 2025, would provide an unparalleled opportunity to renew the social contract anchored in human rights and the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The European Union was committed to actively participate in that Summit.

29. The European Union was proud of its partnerships with development finance institutions and the work achieved on promoting gender equality and human rights targets in financing operations under the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus. It remained committed to working with a wide range of development finance partners to ensure that support and investments were available to advance gender equality in an intersectional approach that promoted social protection and sustainable development worldwide.

30. **Mr. Bell** (United States of America) said that climate change and climate related crises disproportionately harmed women and girls. They faced increased risks of encountering conflict and instability, experiencing gender-based violence and food insecurity, and losing educational and livelihood opportunities. By 2050 climate change could push as many as 158 million more women and girls into extreme poverty.

31. In August 2023, his Government had released the first ever United States strategy to respond to the effects of climate change on women, which formalized its approach to efforts related to the nexus of gender equality and climate change. Women's knowledge of their immediate environment, their resourcefulness in coping with economic and ecological stresses and their leadership roles in their communities made them crucial actors in the adaptation process, including in the development of early warning systems and climate smart agriculture.

32. All countries needed to align their investments towards zero emission and climate resilient economic development, and mobilize private capital and philanthropic funds. The United States was engaging the private sector, through platforms such as the Energy Transition Accelerator, the First Movers Coalition and the Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate initiative, to mobilize investment demand in markets where greenhouse gas abatement was hard, such as agriculture, heavy industry and transportation sectors. However, more would be needed to speed up the clean energy transition and build resilience during the current decisive decade.

33. The United States was deploying an all-of-government effort to reduce emissions, consistent with the 1.5 degrees Celsius pathway, and was investing in climate resilient economic development around the world. Under President Biden's leadership, the United States had attracted more than \$240 billion for clean energy manufacturing. It was also working to increase the volume of climate finance and ensure that multilateral development banks invested their resources for maximum impact.

34. Sustainable development and economic prosperity would not be successfully advanced unless the fundamental rights and inherent dignity of every person was respected, particularly women and girls, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous communities and other marginalized groups.

35. **Ms. Wood** (United Kingdom) said that helping countries to build shock-responsive social protection systems that could meet the needs of the most vulnerable was key to creating a liveable planet for all. Her delegation welcomed the publication of the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*, which provided a sobering analysis of the persistent gaps and challenges in making social protection systems work for women and girls. It also demonstrated that social protection could be transformative for advancing gender equality and building the resilience of nations.

36. Fostering sustainable societies required scaled up social protection coverage, better coordination by humanitarian and social protection partners, and increased investment in evidence-based programmes that could meet the needs of women and girls, persons with disabilities and displaced populations. It was also vital to scale up finance for people-focused, nationally owned and multi-hazard early warning systems. Anticipatory and early actions were central to climate adaptation and disaster risk management.

37. **Ms. Mendoza Elguea** (Mexico) said that one of the first actions of the first female President of Mexico had been to announce a new social protection programme for women, which also aimed to address historic inequalities. One way to transition towards a gender-responsive social protection system was to recognize the care economy from a broad-based human rights perspective and to invest in care systems as a public good.

38. **Mr. Kupferman** (Observer for the Gray Panthers), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group on ageing, said that despite the multiple reports, recommendations, plans of actions, declarations and outcome documents containing an abundance of proposals for government action, the concerns of some 600 million older women around the world were consistently sidelined. The time had come for Governments to take action on the recommendations and promises already made, particularly those related to older persons.

39. The lack of attention being given to older persons, particularly older women, was shameful. More often than not, older women were considered a burden on society and of no value. They were not seen as equal contributors to their families or communities or to the economy. Gender equality advocates often forgot about older women, who were overlooked in discussions on such issues as violence and abuse, sexual and reproductive health and rights, food security and the loss of property rights. Cumulative disadvantages often left older women without adequate social protection or affordable healthcare.

40. However, the future belonged to everyone, not just the young or the unborn. Older persons also had a stake in their future, irrespective of their social and economic situation, and whether that future comprised only days, years or decades. Government legislation, policies and programmes had an impact on everyone's lives from birth until death. Governments did not need more proposals, they needed to take action.

41. **Ms. Sofia** (Indonesia) said that social protection systems that focused on gender equality and the empowerment of women were critical to achieving inclusive growth. Financing social protection systems that addressed the unique needs of women could not only protect them from immediate risks, but also unlock their potential to contribute to sustainable economic growth. Her Government was therefore working to ensure that women benefited from social protection and became agents of change, particularly in times of crisis.

42. As developing countries still faced a significant financial gap in achieving resilient and sustainable development, including in financing universal social protection, the international community should increase access to concessional finance and mobilize increased public and private resource. In that context, she asked the panellists how public-private partnerships could help to address the financing gap.

43. **Ms. O'Leary** (Ireland) said that her Government was committed to strengthening the links between sustainable and accountable social protection systems in the areas of food security, nutrition, education, health, gender equality, climate action and disability inclusion. Ireland worked with partner countries, including Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia, on those issues and through partnerships with the United Nations and the European Union.

44. Programmes designed to account for the daily realities and needs of women and girls could narrow gender gaps in poverty rates and help to change discriminatory norms and power structures. Evidence also showed that it was critical to carry out in-depth analysis and take a life-cycle approach. Social protection systems should be accessible over the course of women's working lives into old age, including for those in informal, low paid and precarious work.

45. She would be interested to hear more from the panellists about how real progress could be made towards more transformative social protection that addressed underlying structural and societal issues.

46. **Ms. Almony** (Observer for UNANIMA International) said that it was crucial to implement gender-responsive social protection systems to bring about transformative change. Gender barriers continued to be seen in the unequal access of women and girls to education, employment and healthcare. Protection systems must therefore go beyond simply responding to gender specific risks. They required the transformation of the structural constraints and discriminatory social norms that drove inequalities at every level. Examining and addressing entrenched inequalities provided a way for national and global policy makers to look beyond the constraints of conventional normative frameworks.

47. Social protection floors build resilience by providing safety nets that reduced vulnerabilities to shocks. But when social protection systems were gender responsive, they addressed the needs of those often excluded from safety nets. In the context of climate change, for example, tailored support could ensure that vulnerable communities had the necessary resources to deal with the impacts of transitioning away from fossil fuels in a fair and equitable way.

48. A social protection policy framework that recognized informal work and empowered more women to find employment in the formal sector could provide a holistic model of support for women to build their own resilience.

49. *Mr. Thapa (Nepal), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

50. **Mr. Manogaran** (Malaysia) said that his country had built a robust and inclusive social protection system, which underscored its unwavering commitment to safeguarding every Malaysian from the cradle to the grave. The Government had seen the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to reform and strengthen the social protection framework by shifting towards a more resilient, comprehensive and gender-responsive system. It had also taken decisive steps to enhance social protection, with a special focus on women. For example, the Employment Act of 2022 had extended maternity leave from 60 to 98 days and now shielded pregnant employees from unjust dismissal; a social security scheme for housewives offered them comprehensive coverage, including protection against illness, disability and accidents; and another initiative provided targeted support for marginalized women, particularly those in dire circumstances or from lower income households.

51. **Ms. Raji** (Morocco) said that gender-responsive social protection systems could help to eliminate poverty, reduce inequalities, stimulate economic growth and productivity, and build resilience against recurrent crises. To that end, such social protection was a national priority in Morocco. Gender equality was not only a matter of social justice and human rights, but also a powerful driving force for socioeconomic development. However, financing social protection was vital to ensure its sustainability.

52. **Mr. Ratsimandresy** (Madagascar) asked how Governments could ensure that employers paid adequate social security contributions without placing too heavy a burden on the formal sector, which risked pushing workers into the informal sector.

53. **Ms. Vilmenay** (Haiti) said that the Summit of the Future had created conducive conditions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, particularly in the context of the multiple crises facing the international community. States without the appropriate legal frameworks in place should work to combat illegal activities such as trafficking in persons, which continued to undermine the rights of women and girls.

54. **Mr. Thompson** (Observer for Children and Youth International), speaking on behalf of the children and youth major group, said that while gender-responsive systems and structures were nice words, upholding and advancing the rights of women and girls must be a cornerstone of all efforts to build resilience. There was a need to strengthen social protection system, invest in feminist movements and leadership, and move towards inclusive care policies and systems. Young persons with disabilities, young Indigenous people and young people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities faced multiple layers of vulnerability, which were exacerbated by unpaid work and limited access to education, healthcare and decent work. Member States should take concrete measures to guarantee sexual and reproductive health rights and justice for all. Every young person should have access to comprehensive sexuality education and the full range of sexual and reproductive health rights services, free from stigma and discrimination.

55. The children and youth major group called for a ceasefire to all conflicts globally and remained extremely concerned about the significant number of dead and displaced persons, the majority of whom were vulnerable women, children and youth. Children and youth refused to be mass casualties of the military industrial complex.

56. **Ms. Hendriks** (Director of the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)), responding to the comments raised, said that the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* took a life course approach to social protection, highlighting the need for and the potential of social protection for women and girls of all ages. The report showed the accumulation of disadvantages over the life course that often left women with fewer economic resources, savings and assets in older age. It also highlighted the important role that older women played in caring for families and ageing spouses. Ironically, that also left older women with no one to care for them when they became older. Closing gender pension gaps, including through universal social pensions and care credits in contributory pension schemes, was therefore critical, alongside universal healthcare.

57. For social protection to transform the norms, structures and institutions that perpetuated inequalities, a joined-up approach was needed that linked cash transfers and income protection to assets, livelihoods and public services. Real transformation required sector-wide and society-wide approaches, including large-scale public investments in the care economy and support for unpaid care work.

58. **Ms. Diwakar** (Deputy Director of the Chronic Poverty Advisory Network) said that she agreed that a multisectoral approach was needed to move from gender-responsive to gender-transformative actions that addressed structural issues. That meant promoting policies which enabled people to escape from and remain out of poverty, while also further mitigating the risks of downward mobility through collective risk management.

59. **Ms. Barrett** (Vice-President of the International Domestic Workers' Federation) reiterated that domestic workers had been engaged in a long fight for social security protection. Her organization's advocacy strategy sought to secure increased funding for care systems, which would help to stabilize the workforce and lead to higher standards of care for recipients.

Panel discussion 2: "Financing resilience: an imperative for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"

60. **Mr. Muhith** (Co-Chair) said that the panel would explore sustainable investment strategies to build societies that could withstand and adapt to contemporary multifaceted crises. As the world faced the compounded effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, escalating climate-related disasters and ongoing conflicts, the

urgency for robust financing mechanisms was greater than ever. The current discussion was an opportunity to understand the vital role of resilient investment in fostering not just recovery, but long-term sustainability and equity, especially for the marginalized populations most affected by the crises.

61. The transformative potential of financing resilience lay in its capacity to integrate disaster risk reduction, social protection and climate adaptation within a unified framework. Through strategic, gender-responsive investments, countries could address vulnerabilities while promoting inclusive economic growth.

62. Investments in early warning systems, disaster preparedness and resilient recovery not only saved lives but also offered significant economic returns. For every dollar invested in risk reduction, up to \$15 could be saved in post-disaster recovery costs, showcasing the clear financial benefits of resilience-focused spending.

63. It was essential to explore innovative financing models that leveraged both public and private sector support to meet resilience goals. The panel would delve into strategies for aligning financial resources with resilience-building objectives, such as through social protection systems and multisectoral collaboration. Such approaches could help to foster resilience that was economically sound and socially equitable, laying the groundwork for sustainable development that benefited all.

64. **Mr. Szczerski** (Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations and Chair of the Commission for Social Development), panellist, said that conflicts, crises and disasters were undermining sustainable development and the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and other agreed international frameworks. Building resilience to such disruptions should therefore be a key global priority. Based on Poland's priorities at the United Nations and its recent experiences, he believed that financing resilience should be focused on strengthening public institutions and investing in better preparedness at the local level; investing in social resilience and strengthening the ability of a society to resist and recover quickly from major shocks and crises; and investing in resilient infrastructure as the backbone of every economy.

65. Transparent, accountable, effective and efficient public institutions were crucial for building resilient societies. As part of its development cooperation, Poland was focused on building the capacity of public administration in partner countries to prevent disasters, and on increasing their operational capabilities to respond to disasters effectively. For instance, most recently Poland had partnered with Moldova and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to deliver a project dedicated to strengthening national capacities for risk-informed infrastructure planning in that country. Poland had also supported the Early Warnings for All initiative in developing countries. Resilience would remain high on the agenda of Poland's development cooperation policy during its presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2025.

66. Social resilience was a particularly important topic in his role as Chair of the Commission for Social Development at its sixty-third session. A panel on emerging issues at that session would be dedicated to discussing social resilience and social development.

67. Financing resilience meant investing in resilient infrastructure. Poland's engagement at the United Nations in building resilience and developing resilient infrastructure had taken the form of specific initiatives, such as the resolution on building global resilience and promoting sustainable development through regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity, which had been adopted at Poland's initiative at the Committee's previous session. The resolution called for closing digital divides and recognized that filling the gap in infrastructure financing required public

and private financing accompanied by technical cooperation, including technical support, skill development and capacity-building, especially in developing countries.

68. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development offered an excellent opportunity to address the funding gap and to make concrete commitments towards mobilizing finances to build connectivity and resilience in many sectors. He called for the political will to mainstream resilience-thinking within the financial system.

69. **Ms. Richardson** (Executive Director, Accelerator for Systemic Risk Assessment), panellist, said that her organization's mission was to mainstream systemic risk assessment in policymaking and decision-making, and to advocate for transformative actions that benefited all people, societies, species and ecosystems. Its recently published report, entitled "Facing Global Risks with Honest Hope", set out a bold agenda to strengthen the ability to understand and tackle systemic risks.

70. While there had always been risks, the world was currently facing a unique and critical polycrisis that was truly global in nature. The risks faced were not isolated, but interconnected, which amplified and increased overall vulnerabilities. However, they were not being addressed as such. It served no one to pit ecological problems and solutions against humanitarian problems and solutions. Overlooking critical interdependencies between risks jeopardized the ability to address the holistic nature of problems.

71. Her organization's report emphasized that the dominant approach to risk assessment and response was insufficient. Systemic tools must be implemented that promoted an understanding of the nature of systemic risks and provided guidance towards comprehensive solutions. To turn pacts, commitments, declarations, ambitions and goals into concrete practical steps, systemic risk tools and methodology must be mainstreamed into decision-making. New tools designed to account for interdependencies and complexities would help decision makers to examine feedback loops and systems dynamics and would inform actions that created positive tipping points. Such tools should be implemented wherever decisions about the future of the planet were being made and should be facilitated by Member States appointing systemic risk officers at the national level.

72. The report called for corporations and financial institutions to integrate systemic risk assessments into their investment, lending and procurement practices, making visible the full costs and consequences of their activities on people, nature and the planet. Great strides could be made if funding from public, private and philanthropic sources flowed away from siloed projects and instead towards systemic risk initiatives, such as transdisciplinary research, and if Governments and the private sector realigned funding priorities to treat resilience as a high-return investment. Embracing systemic approaches could help to ensure that systems, societies, communities and organizations were better equipped to mitigate, prepare for, adapt to and even undergo transformations in the face of future crises.

73. **Mr. Muhumuza** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, in such uncertain times, there was a need to foster sustainable and resilient societies. Countries needed to ensure that science, technology and innovation contributed to efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, reduce inequalities and address other important areas such as food security and nutrition, health, education, social protection, water and sanitation, energy, climate and the environment.

74. Resilience investment strategies should help developing countries to catalyse public and private sector investment in sustainable development, including by promoting inclusive and innovative finance mechanisms and partnerships and by creating a more enabling domestic and international regulatory and investment environment.

75. The Group called for the promotion of strategies that integrated disaster risk reduction into policies, programmes and investments at all levels. Acknowledging the linkage between poverty and gender inequality and the need to strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women, the Group also called for significantly increased investments to close the gender gap, including in the care and support economy.

76. **Ms. Kennedy** (Observer for the United States Council for International Business), speaking on behalf of the business and industry major group, said that the major groups and stakeholders should be seen as indispensable actors in all decisions taken to make progress on poverty eradication, economic transformation, women's inclusion and building resilience.

77. No opportunity should be missed to mobilize investments towards sustainable development that would bring resilience benefits not only in the global South but to all nations. Tackling systemic challenges required a holistic, inclusive and systemic approach at the national and international levels.

78. **Ms. Seag** (Observer for the International Science Council), speaking on behalf of the scientific and technological communities major group, said that the impacts of climate change and the consequences of natural and humanmade hazards, as well as socioeconomic and geopolitical crises, all highlighted the urgent need to centre science and engineering in resilience building.

79. Building resilience required a holistic approach that engaged all sectors and stakeholders, and strategies that were evidence-based, efficient, locally relevant and culturally acceptable. Those strategies also needed to address immediate needs, provide buffers to shocks and contribute to long-term sustainability, including through strategic foresight.

80. Multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific and engineering knowledge would be vital in order to better understand the threats and drivers of vulnerability, to develop and assess tools to support implementation, and to redesign resilience governance into a multisectoral model that more effectively served global goals. Resilience was a first and necessary step for transforming the parameters of the notions of development and well-being, but achieving resilience was not enough. The long-term aspiration must not just be to reduce negative impacts, but to enhance the natural protective factors that built resilience so that people could prosper and transform.

81. **Ms. Sofia** (Indonesia) said that countries must focus on fostering resilience, both for the sake of their economies and their peoples. Resilience could not be built without including the most vulnerable groups. Women, children, person with disabilities and older persons must therefore be at the centre of those efforts.

82. In the context of resilience, her delegation wished to stress the importance of investing in early warning systems and disaster risk reduction. Her Government was implementing a national programme to increase the capacity of local communities to adapt to, prepare for and respond to natural disasters. That programme also ensured the full participation of women at all stages of policy planning, implementation and evaluation.

83. In the context of climate change, it was essential to mobilize financing in order to build resilient infrastructure. Her delegation therefore called on the international community to support enhanced access to innovative financing and the increased mobilization of public and private resources.

84. **Mr. Szczerski** (Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations and Chair of the Commission for Social Development), responding to the comments

raised, said that he welcomed the opportunity to increase awareness of the importance of resilience. The financing of resilience depended on partnerships that included the business and scientific communities, national Governments and local governments. At the same time, it was very important to focus on building social resilience in such areas as health, education and gender equality. Building resilience was an investment in the future.

85. **Ms. Richardson** (Executive Director, Accelerator for Systemic Risk Assessment) said that there was a need to review the global financial architecture to make it fit for purpose, which included having the right financial mechanisms in place to build resilience. It was also necessary to have more integrated finance. At the national level, systemic risk officers could help Governments to have more holistic solutions across ministries, including in the area of finance.

86. She agreed that foresight exercises, early warning systems and systemic risk tools were all necessary and should be used creatively. She also agreed with the need for inclusive participatory approaches through various mechanisms that included businesses, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples and many other actors.

87. Lastly, she drew attention to examples which demonstrated that social resilience was as important as ecological resilience.

Closing statements

88. **Mr. Muhith** (Co-Chair) said that the second panel had explored the immense potential of targeted investments in disaster risk reduction, social protection and climate adaptation to strengthen societies and protect the most vulnerable. The discussion had underscored that resilient financing was not merely about responding to immediate crises but was a strategic approach to ensure long-term sustainability, equity and prosperity. By investing in resilience, countries were not only mitigating future risks but also paving the way for inclusive and transformative growth. Looking ahead, it was clear that countries must continue to pursue innovative and collaborative approaches to fund resilience initiatives, drawing on both public and private resources. By aligning their financial systems with sustainable and equitable development goals, they could build societies that were better prepared to face an increasingly uncertain future.

89. **Mr. Thapa** (Co-Chair) said that resilient development relied on meaningful inclusion, with a focus on women and girls, and on means of implementation that took into account the changing nature of risks in the twenty-first century. The world was not the same as when the 2030 Agenda had been adopted: inequality was on the rise, the climate crisis continued to worsen and geopolitical tensions were boiling over. The discussions had provided a wealth of insights on the urgent need to strengthen resilience in the face of unprecedented global challenges.

90. From financing strategies that prioritized social protection and disaster risk reduction to the role of gender-responsive policies in enhancing resilience, both panels had covered ground that underscored the transformative potential of a unified and inclusive approach. Going forward, the task was to turn the discussions into actionable commitments. It was essential to continue to promote multi-stakeholder collaboration and invest in the necessary frameworks that would enable communities, particularly those most vulnerable, to face future challenges with confidence.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.