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High-level segment

### Summary record of the 32nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 15 July 2024, at 3 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Šimonović (Vice-President) . . . . . (Croatia)

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*In the absence of Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Chile), Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

**Agenda item 5: High-level segment on reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions** (*continued*) (E/2024/52)

**(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council** (*continued*) (A/79/79-E/2024/54)

*General debate (continued)*

1. **Mr. Uherbelau** (Palau), Minister of Health and Human Services, said that certain challenges were beyond the capacity of individual countries and required collective action by the international community. For example, when Palau had developed an initiative to boost local food production with a view to decreasing its reliance on imported foods, its efforts had been severely affected by climate change, as crops had been damaged and fishing affected by rising sea levels, shifting weather patterns and hotter weather. In response, his Government had relocated farms, experimented with drought-resistant crops, promoted sustainable fishing and built supportive infrastructure. Nevertheless, progress had been hindered by high energy costs, which were being addressed through a large-scale solar power project made possible by partnerships. Given the non-linear nature of progress and the imperative of continuously adapting to changing needs, partnerships were vital to the ability of small island nations, such as Palau, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Since the Goals were global, the international community needed to ensure that all partners, including the Republic of China (Taiwan), were included in related multilateral forums such as the World Health Organization.

2. **Mr. Doens** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer), Director General for International Partnerships, said that progress towards sustainable development had been held back by an international context of profound uncertainty and geopolitical tensions. The triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss had been compounded by the destabilization of the global landscape, and the impacts were felt by all, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable.

3. Without peace, it would not be possible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The full

implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a shared responsibility that required strong leadership and a whole-of-society approach. The European Union and its member States attached great importance to cross-cutting issues, in particular gender equality and a human rights-based approach, and to voluntary national reviews. They continued to support partner countries in achieving the Goals and remained the largest provider of official development assistance. Nevertheless, such assistance would not be enough to reach the level of investment needed globally for achievement of the Goals. For that reason, the European Union was also offering innovative and mutually beneficial partnerships through its Global Gateway initiative, in order to support strategic autonomy and accelerate digital and green transitions through the leveraging of public and private investments for transformative projects in direct support of the Goals.

4. **Mr. Macêdo** (Brazil), Minister of the General Secretariat of the Presidency, said that, regrettably, only one fifth of the Sustainable Development Goal targets were on track to be achieved. Nothing was as absurd and unacceptable as the persistence of hunger and poverty in the twenty-first century, when the world had so many scientific and technological resources at its disposal. After six years of setbacks, Brazil was once again doing its part to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, launching new programmes and reinstating previously existing ones in such areas as social protection, infrastructure and environmental conservation. The country was once again an active voice in the fight against racism, as reflected in its proposal for an eighteenth Goal focused on achieving racial equality. The Goals could not be achieved, however, without adequate means of implementation; more ambitious initiatives were required. The international community needed to amplify the voices of developing countries in international decision-making structures and ensure that the wealthiest individuals paid taxes. There was also a need to establish an effective global alliance against hunger and poverty.

5. **Mr. Murillo Urrutia** (Colombia), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that his country had taken ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals, which featured as cross-cutting objectives in its national development plan. His Government was also fostering a new model for development that was not based on extractivism, and was promoting the allocation of public and private resources to environmental stewardship, sustainable use of natural resources, education, clean energy and connectivity. The international community needed to move beyond purely descriptive reports and take tangible action. In its fourth voluntary national

report, Colombia had identified recommendations and structural changes that were necessary for the achievement of the Goals and that other countries might find useful for their own efforts. Development and peace were inextricably linked; one could not exist without the other. The international community needed to build peace not only between nations, but also between humanity and the environment.

6. **Mr. Al Saqri** (Oman), Minister of Economy, said that there was a risk that a decade of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals would be lost amid geopolitical conflicts and economic crises. The war on Gaza was causing immense suffering for the Palestinian people and had repercussions for the entire region. The war must be ended, sustainable peace must be established in all conflict areas and support must be provided to those affected. Lasting peace was a requirement for sustainable development. Oman played a key role in promoting peace and stability at the regional and international levels by facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties. At the national level, his Government was working to improve quality of life through investments in education, health and infrastructure and the implementation of social protection programmes.

7. **Mr. Soares** (Cabo Verde), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that his country had made remarkable advances towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goals 1, 2, 3, 16 and 17. His Government aimed to eliminate extreme poverty by 2026, promote equitable work for women and introduce renewable energies to remote communities. It had established protected areas and was implementing a climate adaptation plan. Participants at the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States had adopted an ambitious action plan, which the international community should implement without delay. He looked forward to the adoption of a General Assembly resolution on the multidimensional vulnerability index, whose use would benefit all countries.

8. **Mr. Habet** (Belize), Minister of Sustainable Development and Climate Change, said that his country had achieved significant progress in areas such as poverty alleviation, unemployment reduction, climate resilience and access to high-quality health and education services, as documented in its second voluntary national report. His Government continued to make strategic investments in key areas, including social protection, food security, gender equality and equipping young people to become the leaders of the future. The reporting process had also brought to light various challenges that required coordinated action and

support. Belize needed to enhance its economic resilience by, inter alia, diversifying its economy and enhancing workforce skills. It also needed to enhance its climate resilience, as the impacts of extreme weather events could set back years of progress. Substantial technical and financial support was therefore required so that Belize could make investments to that end. Greater cooperation was also needed to enable the country to develop robust data collection, sharing and management systems for tracking and reporting progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

9. **Mr. Alibrahim** (Saudi Arabia), Minister of Economy and Planning, said that the mobilization of capital was critical to addressing the unique set of complex challenges that each country faced. Budgets, however, were finite, and thus the international community must develop a prioritization mechanism that could help countries to focus on the most efficient policies and smartest solutions that could unlock the greatest impact for the largest number of people within the shortest period of time. Saudi Arabia understood that sustainable progress depended on creating and capturing opportunities to enhance quality of life. The country was implementing a whole-of-economy and human-centric approach to unlock its potential, localizing sustainable action, investing in human capital and upgrading institutional capabilities and infrastructure. Saudi Arabia was also becoming a leader of environmental action, investing over \$180 billion to grow the green economy and consolidate its position as a renewable energy leader.

10. **Mr. Nyembo Mbwizya** (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Deputy Prime Minister, said that, despite his Government's efforts, including a recently adopted five year programme, his country would achieve only Sustainable Development Goals 12 and 13 by 2030. Programmes aimed at providing free education, promoting access to high-quality health-care services, closing socioeconomic gaps and empowering women had been weakened by the security situation in the country and the exposure of its economy to the fluctuations of global markets. Since 2022, Rwanda had perpetrated a war of aggression against the Democratic Republic of the Congo, resulting in higher poverty rates and greater food insecurity, but the international community was seemingly unmoved by the situation. The international community should reaffirm its commitment to the peaceful coexistence of nations, and to economic and social development, by creating better conditions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and by considering ways to improve cooperation between States.

11. **Ms. Barlay** (Sierra Leone), Minister of Planning and Economic Development, said that her country was pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals under its national development strategies. Nevertheless, as in many other countries, there was a risk that a number of targets would not be met unless urgent collective action was taken. Food insecurity and poverty levels were rising amid multiple global crises, which were exacerbated by the existential threat of climate change. Funding gaps at both the national and global levels had undermined achievement of the Goals. She called upon the United Nations system and the international community to provide an urgent socioeconomic response to those challenges, including debt treatments for the least developed countries.

12. **Mr. Thor** (Cambodia), Minister of Water Resources, said that, while his country had significantly reduced poverty over the past two decades, the reversal of certain gains amid recent global challenges indicated a need for sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions. Cambodia was committed to expanding its support for vulnerable populations. To achieve food security, the Government was promoting sustainable practices, diversifying crops and investing in infrastructure and technology to support farmers. As a country vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, Cambodia was committed to transitioning to renewable energy, enhancing climate resilience and promoting sustainable land and water management. Reforms had also been undertaken to strengthen the rule of law, transparency and human rights. Cambodia called upon the international community to bolster international cooperation aimed at addressing financial, technological and capacity-building gaps, because such cooperation was essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. **Ms. Moya** (Ecuador), National Secretary of Planning, said that her Government emphasized public investment as a strategy for eradicating poverty and hunger. With a view to tackling those two interrelated challenges, Ecuador had stepped up programmes for socioeconomic inclusion, including cash transfers for the poor, persons with disabilities and vulnerable mothers. Through such efforts, it had reduced the rate of extreme income poverty from 10.3 per cent in 2021 to 8.8 per cent in 2023. Eradicating poverty and hunger also required a sustained, structured process to foster climate change adaptation and mitigation. Ecuador was engaging leaders from more than 10 ministries in the updating of its nationally determined contribution, and, at the domestic level, local governments were implementing disaster risk management policies. Multilevel governance and civic engagement were also

crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In that connection, Ecuador was providing training to local authorities on incorporating the Goals into planning, and was engaging local governments, academia and civil society in participatory processes aimed at improving the monitoring of the Goals.

14. **Mr. Madera Sued** (Dominican Republic), Vice-Minister of Economy, said that, in countries such as his, climate shocks were both the greatest threat to food security and the largest obstacle to eliminating extreme poverty. The international community must work together to find a solution to climate threats, which were caused primarily by the actions of certain countries, while other countries bore the brunt of the impact. It was unfair for the Dominican Republic, a minimal contributor of greenhouse gas emissions, to have to cut its expenditure on health care or education in order to direct funds towards climate change adaptation measures. The international community needed to reform the international financial architecture so that resources could be directed from the countries that had reached a high level of development at the planet's expense towards those countries suffering from the effects of those developed countries' actions. To move from mere words to true action on climate issues, the international community should start by having those countries that had caused the most harm to the planet increase the financing they provided to the countries that had suffered most under their development models.

15. **Ms. Rasata** (Madagascar), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that her country's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in areas such as health care, education and sustainable economic development had been reversed due to the combined impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, economic recession and extreme weather events. For Madagascar, climate change, sustainable development, governance and migration would be priorities at the Summit of the Future, which it viewed as an important opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The country was also committed to implementing the reforms needed to restore trust in the multilateral system, strengthen international cooperation and enhance the international financial system. Madagascar was determined to transform commitments into tangible action, including in areas such as the development of human capital and access to decent work. In its pursuit of development, Madagascar prioritized investing in renewable energies, promoting sustainable agriculture and protecting biodiversity. Her Government had also launched a campaign aimed at ensuring that young people were involved in decision-making processes and

that their views were reflected in the country's development policies.

16. **Mr. Nabe** (Guinea), Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, said that, in preparing its voluntary national report, his country had been able to take stock of the progress it had made towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including reductions in poverty rates and hunger, the adoption of national strategies on climate risk reduction, stronger democratic institutions and classification as a lower-middle-income country rather than a low-income country. Nevertheless, Guinea continued to face certain structural challenges and vulnerabilities. It reiterated its commitment to the international community's collective efforts to step up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, Guinea welcomed the proposal to establish an international institute for the development of South-South and triangular cooperation and called upon the international community to provide tangible support for the initiative.

17. **Mr. Reina García** (Honduras), Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said that a series of external shocks, including the conflict in Ukraine, the crisis in Israel and Palestine, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, had had a severe impact on all nations, and his country was no exception. Honduras had also suffered the effects of a domestic political crisis stemming from a coup d'état in 2009. When the current Administration had taken office, poverty rates had been high and the elevated debt burden had hindered the country's ability to make the investments needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Nevertheless, in less than three years, his Government had achieved tangible results in many areas; income had recovered to pre-pandemic levels for over 250,000 households, maternal and infant mortality rates had decreased, full literacy had been achieved in 100 municipalities and over 300,000 jobs had been created. In addition, 93 per cent of public institutions had linked their annual workplans to the Goals to ensure consistency between national development planning and the aspirations of the international community.

18. **Mr. Artjoki** (Finland), State Secretary to the Prime Minister, said that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals was still possible but would require global cooperation and a firm commitment to a rules-based multilateral system with the United Nations at its core. Finland promoted sustainable development with a whole-of-society approach and placed particular emphasis on engaging young people in decision-making. A properly functioning democracy, and respect for the rule of law and human rights, were essential to sustainable

development. Efforts to promote gender equality and equal, inclusive access to education had been key to the transition of Finland from poverty to prosperity. School meal programmes were an effective way to increase food security, improve access to education, reduce poverty and promote gender equality. The private sector must be engaged and private funds must be used to maximize development outcomes. Given that peace was a cornerstone of sustainable development, Finland strongly condemned the illegal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

19. **Mr. Epalanga** (Angola), Secretary of State for Planning, said that his country was firmly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with nearly three quarters of the priorities in its national development plan having a direct impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The progress made by his Government included direct transfers of cash to more than 1 million families living in extreme poverty, investments in agricultural infrastructure and the provision of training to farmers in sustainable agricultural practices. Steps were also being taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change and promote the use of renewable energies. Angola was committed to strengthening the rule of law and promoting transparency and good governance, as demonstrated by the recent approval of a new strategy for preventing corruption. The country would submit its second voluntary national report at the high-level political forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in 2025.

20. **Ms. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America), Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations and Member of the Cabinet of the President of the United States, said that her country welcomed the high-level political forum as an opportunity for countries to share their experience of, inter alia, promoting sustainable economic growth that improved the lives of all members of society, especially women and girls; building more sustainable and resilient food systems; taking urgent action to combat climate change; and promoting respect for human rights. The United States had committed tens of billions of dollars to supporting initiatives in support of food security, climate justice, democratic governance and economic resilience. Her country would continue to reflect on how to best achieve progress, including through a reform of multilateral development banks. The challenges facing the international community were inextricably linked and thus required intersectional solutions. The United States would continue to use its convening power and

role in multilateral institutions to bring together diverse partners to advance inclusive international development.

21. **Ms. Alkhulaif** (Bahrain), Minister of Sustainable Development, said that her country, under its national action plan for achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, had launched a national energy strategy that provided a clear, credible and responsible pathway to decarbonize the economy while ensuring that access to the energy needed to accelerate growth would remain reliable and affordable. On the economic front, the Central Bank of Bahrain had adopted guidelines on environmental, social and governance reporting with a view to enhancing transparency and promoting sustainable financing. With respect to social issues, Bahrain had continued to enhance its social welfare programmes and had launched initiatives to preserve its cultural heritage. The country maintained a focus on human capital and education at the national and global levels, including through its support for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)-King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education. Young people had a pivotal role to play in the achievement of the Goals, and Bahrain had implemented several national programmes to equip its young people with the necessary skills to contribute actively to sustainable development.

22. **Mr. Elzidani** (Libya), Minister of Planning, said that his country had made significant progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in relation to poverty reduction, the eradication of hunger and climate change adaptation. It had also taken steps to strengthen national institutions and increase transparency. Given that partnerships were key to the pursuit of development, Libya had concluded a number of agreements with international and local partners in various fields and had adopted a United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period 2023–2025. His Government had also focused on regional priorities such as digitalization, infrastructure and support for young people. It upheld social justice for all, without discrimination on the basis of gender or race. In addition, it had achieved national reconciliation and had stabilized the security situation, thereby contributing to the reopening of many foreign embassies in the country. In order for Libya to fulfil its obligations, international and regional cooperation must be enhanced. Parliamentary and presidential elections must be held in order to provide an alternative to transitional Governments, which did not meet the aspirations of the Libyan people.

23. **Ms. Sandkjær** (Norway), State Secretary, said that the multilateral system required trust in order to

function, and the growing number of resolutions on which consensus was not being reached, even on seemingly uncontroversial development issues, was a worrisome indication of a deterioration of that trust. The international community needed to build bridges across divides, reduce unnecessary tensions and promote cooperation. To prevent further erosion of trust, the international community needed to make sure that the outcomes of its deliberations did not disproportionately benefit a small number of nations, but instead offered benefits to all. The Summit of the Future would be an opportunity to reinvigorate, redefine and strengthen multilateral cooperation, while the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development would be an opportunity for the international community to translate its commitments into action and adopt a financing framework that addressed the most pressing challenges facing the world.

24. **Mr. Bery** (India), Vice-Chairman of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), said that his country had been an important contributor to global progress towards Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17. According to its multidimensional poverty index, India was on track to achieve target 1.2 well before the 2030 deadline; some 135 million people in the country had been lifted out of multidimensional poverty between 2015 and 2021 thanks to the integration of social safety nets, infrastructure development and financial inclusion programmes. Progress had also been made in terms of health coverage; 500 million people had benefited from health insurance programmes, and out-of-pocket health expenditure had decreased from 63 per cent in 2014 to 39 per cent in 2024. With respect to climate action, India had invested heavily in renewable energy and the decarbonization of the economy, even though the country's per capita emissions were among the lowest in the world. India considered Goal 17 to be one of the most critical Goals and attached great importance to strengthening partnerships to facilitate access to adequate financing, technology and capacity-building for the global South.

25. **Ms. Orelope-Adefulire** (Nigeria), Senior Special Assistant to the President of the Republic on the Sustainable Development Goals, said that the main reasons why most developing countries were significantly behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals were unsustainable external debt burdens and a lack of financing. The international community needed to express its collective resolve to address the challenge of sustainable financing for the Goals. There was an urgent need for a reform of the international financial architecture to promote a rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, fair, inclusive,

accountable and transparent multilateral trading system. Such a reform should also include debt swaps and other innovative measures. Furthermore, States must fulfil all the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, including those pertaining to the provision of financing. There was also a need to strengthen international collaboration aimed at stopping financial leakage in developing countries, including by consolidating measures aimed at promoting the timely repatriation of financial resources and assets.

26. **Mr. Omarbekov** (Kazakhstan), Vice-Minister of National Economy, said that the Sustainable Development Goals had become an integral part of national policy in his country and served as the foundation for the development of new reforms. His Government was working to incorporate Goal targets and indicators into national development strategies and programmes to support ongoing priority reforms, and national bodies had been established to accelerate the achievement of the Goals and strengthen the related monitoring. Given that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda required united efforts and regional cooperation, Kazakhstan sought to establish a United Nations centre for sustainable development for Central Asia and Afghanistan, and had already held two regional summits on the Goals in support of the initiative. According to the Sustainable Development Goals index, Kazakhstan had achieved the necessary results in relation to poverty eradication and was on track to achieve the Goals related to health, clean water, sanitation, decent work, economic growth, industrialization and combating climate change.

27. **Ms. Lind** (Estonia), Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that development goals, including the eradication of hunger and poverty, could not be achieved without peace. Food, however, had become a weapon and a propaganda tool in the hands of some. The increase in global food insecurity had been directly caused by the war of aggression launched by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, rather than by subsequent European Union policies.

28. Estonia was committed to ambitious climate policies, aiming for 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2030, a 71 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 and climate neutrality by 2050. Nevertheless, climate change mitigation was a global effort, and climate finance needed to be mobilized through collective action and partnerships between Governments, civil society and the private sector. Estonia contributed approximately €1.5 million annually to climate finance through the Green Climate Fund and the loss and damage fund.

29. In preparation for the Summit of the Future, the international community needed to address the structural shortcomings of the current multilateral order and enhance its ability to respond to the challenges of the present. A permanent member of the Security Council was attacking its neighbour and exploiting its veto power to evade accountability. The international community must advance reforms aimed at making the Council more representative and accountable.

30. **Mr. Keita** (Gambia), Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, said that unsustainable debt burdens, the rising cost of living and a lack of access to affordable financing were key challenges for many developing countries. The international community needed to address those challenges by reforming the international financial architecture, making it more responsive to the needs of the least developed countries and providing greater access to global finance for the Sustainable Development Goals. The poverty rate had risen in the Gambia, driven largely by the COVID-19 pandemic. A significant portion of the country's population faced food insecurity amid the global food crisis. Comprehensive food production strategies were needed to enable the country to improve food security, including efforts to enhance storage, diversify crops, invest in resilient infrastructure and boost agricultural productivity. The monitoring of progress towards the Goals was hindered by a lack of data, which were available for only one third of all indicators. The Gambia also faced considerable challenges in achieving Goals 1, 2 and 17 owing to the impact of climate change.

31. **Mr. Al-Yahya** (Kuwait), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that the cross-border challenges facing the international community required more concerted regional and international efforts. The United Nations should pay particular attention to the fact that many of those who continued to live in poverty and suffer from hunger and malnutrition resided in the least developed countries. Developed countries should share their expertise with developing countries to build the capacity to address such challenges. To support the least developed countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development, Kuwait had created the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, through which it had provided financing for development projects in more than 100 States. The Summit of the Future would be an opportunity for the international community to renew its commitment to joint action through an outcome document that reflected the aspirations of Member States and the concerns of developing countries.

32. **Ms. Hackman** (Ghana) said that there was an urgent need for robust international cooperation,

enhanced financing mechanisms and effective technological transfer. Developed nations and international financial institutions must fulfil their commitments with respect to the provision of climate finance. The international community must ensure that the multilateral system was inclusive so that actions could be aligned with the principles of justice and sustainable development. Ghana was committed to building resilience within its economy to respond to global economic challenges. A key part of its strategy was the expansion of its financing toolkit to include innovative financial approaches that could support sustainable development. The country had adopted a bottom-up approach to financing for development, under which the first step was working with local governments to identify, consolidate and optimize possible revenue streams. Ghana was also developing a green taxonomy and conservation framework to establish a structured, standardized approach to resource mobilization and thereby promote sustainable and environmentally friendly economic activities.

33. **Mr. Reubi** (Switzerland), State Secretary and Delegate of the Federal Council for the 2030 Agenda, said that effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda would require a transformative, holistic and inclusive approach that simultaneously addressed environmental, social and economic considerations; an efficient and transparent international financial architecture; peace, justice and strong institutions grounded in human rights and the rule of law; and reliable, comparable data that could be used to develop effective policies to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. With respect to the international financial architecture, the international community needed to enhance the efficiency of existing funds and instruments and avoid the fragmentation of sustainable development financing, while also tapping the potential of the private sector by developing innovative solutions and improving framework conditions for a sustainable economy. Switzerland supported a reform of the multilateral development banks.

34. **Mr. Moyo** (Zimbabwe), Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, said that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda had faced significant setbacks as a result of the confluence of global crises. Despite those challenges, Zimbabwe remained committed to the Sustainable Development Goals and had aligned its national development strategy with them. The international community must ensure that the multilateral system effectively supported government and stakeholder commitments. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the Second World Summit for Social Development

in 2025 would be opportunities to galvanize the mobilization of resources for the achievement of the Goals. Zimbabwe was ready to contribute to global environmental efforts and committed to combating climate change; the country looked forward to hosting the upcoming Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Zimbabwe called for the immediate and unconditional lifting of the sanctions that had been imposed upon it by certain Western countries and that hindered its capacity to achieve the Goals.

35. **Ms. Gofhamodimo** (Botswana), Assistant Minister for State President, said that her country had implemented several support programmes for the poor, and its social protection system covered 59 per cent of the population nationwide and 68.3 per cent of the population in rural areas. To allocate resources more efficiently, the country had adopted a Multidimensional Poverty Index.

36. Food insecurity continued to be a challenge, but the Government remained committed to improving agricultural productivity and food distribution. With respect to climate action, Botswana had established comprehensive policy frameworks, updated its nationally determined contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and continued to implement community-based capacity-building initiatives to empower local communities to adapt to changing environmental conditions. Quality data was essential for the effective monitoring and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Botswana had made significant progress in improving its statistical capacity for monitoring progress towards the Goals, as its statistical capacity indicator had increased from 34.8 per cent in 2018 to 63.4 per cent in 2023. Unemployment, particularly among young people, was another challenge, which the Government was addressing through upskilling initiatives. Strong partnerships were needed at all levels to amplify the country's efforts.

37. **Mr. Ambrazevich** (Belarus), Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that effective governance, efficient use of resources and broad engagement in international cooperation were the keys to social and economic progress. Belarus stood ready to cooperate with any country that could benefit from its experience in such areas as State-building and the development of health-care and education systems. Governments should play a major role in development. Broad international dialogue was needed to strengthen security and cooperation. If the international community could end war, it would find sufficient resources to tackle all other problems. The world needed strong leaders who could mobilize their people to engage in the systemic work necessary to



foster development. International partners should come together to resist the attempts made by the political elites of certain Western countries to unfairly exploit their historical advantages and implement illegal unilateral sanctions. If the international community could unite on the basis of national interests while respecting the legitimate interests and differences of each State, the world would have a true opportunity to achieve sustainable development.

38. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine), State Minister and Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, said that, like all other States, the State of Palestine had been striving to honour the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals despite the challenges it faced, first and foremost those imposed by the Israeli occupation. Despite those efforts, everyone was being left behind in Palestine and in Gaza. Children were dying of hunger, schools had been reduced to rubble, hospitals had been turned into cemeteries and infrastructure was in ruins. It was time for the international community to confront the systematic failures that allowed such injustice to persist. At the Summit of the Future in September 2024, world leaders should strengthen solidarity, pursue justice without double standards and reaffirm their commitment to ensuring that no country was left behind and that no country was above the law. Through collective action and unwavering commitment to the values of sustainable development, justice and accountability, the international community would move forward into a future in which the Goals were achievable for all, including the Palestinian people.

39. **Ms. Hoffmann** (Germany), Parliamentary State Secretary, said that her country was developing a new national sustainability strategy, through which it would implement the recommendations of the Global Sustainable Development Report. Concerted efforts for peace and climate action were needed to achieve the goal of eradicating poverty and hunger for all. Global partnerships, a rules-based multilateral system and strong multilateral institutions were essential. The Pact for the Future would help to make the United Nations fit for the future, and Germany was working with Namibia to ensure that the Pact would be ambitious and action-oriented. As the Sustainable Development Goals were integrated and indivisible, they must be tackled using a holistic approach that addressed all angles of the triple planetary crisis. To ensure that no one was left behind, particular attention should be paid to gender equality and the social dimensions of development.

40. **Mr. Banciu** (Romania), Vice-Minister of Environment, Waters and Forests, said that the Summit of the Future would be an opportunity to accelerate

progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The international community must take the opportunity provided by the Summit to reset the multilateral system so that it could address the challenges of the present while also developing future-oriented institutions. Young people were the main agents of change and progress in society, and Governments therefore needed to identify tangible ways to better engage them in global decision-making processes.

41. Romania had mainstreamed the 2030 Agenda in its national policies and strategies. The climate crisis exacerbated all other crises, and therefore overcoming the climate emergency would ensure that all other global targets could be achieved. For that reason, Romania had officially committed itself to achieving climate neutrality by 2050. Universal challenges required global solutions grounded in international cooperation. Romania supported the development of a more efficient global governance structure that would protect the rights of present and future generations.

42. **Ms. Mlangeni** (Eswatini), Principal Secretary, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, said that her Government had made progress towards ending poverty in all its forms since 2015; the extreme poverty rate had declined from 28.8 per cent to 20.1 per cent, while the national poverty rate had declined from 63.0 per cent to 58.9 per cent. To accelerate progress in poverty reduction, her Government had increased investment in social protection programmes and undertaken preparatory work to establish an unemployment fund and improve access to health services, among other initiatives. Eswatini continued to monitor poverty among children using nine measures of income, including a multidimensional poverty analysis. Eswatini was not on track to meet the targets on ending hunger by 2030, mainly owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, but her Government remained committed to pursuing that Goal.

43. **Ms. Rebuelta-Teh** (Philippines), Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said that her country was focusing its resources on key areas such as poverty reduction, quality education, climate action, environmental protection, health and the empowerment of women. The country had a robust framework for poverty alleviation, including cash transfer programmes that served as safety nets for vulnerable groups.

44. With respect to the climate crisis, the Philippines hoped that the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in October 2024 would be an opportunity to galvanize cooperation for the Sustainable

Development Goals, particularly Goal 13. The Philippines continued to demand adequate climate finance and technology transfer for developing countries and would remain a voice for those most affected by climate change. The country called for a United Nations development system that was more responsive to the challenges faced by developing countries, including middle-income countries, and that encouraged greater South-South cooperation.

45. **Mr. García Monterrosa** (Guatemala), Secretary of Planning and Programming of the Presidency, said that his country was updating its multidimensional poverty index, which would serve as a guide for public policy. His Government had launched an initiative aimed at achieving a multidimensional impact on poverty and malnutrition in the country, which included measures to improve infrastructure and sanitation, increase school attendance, improve health-care services, particularly primary care, and expand access to microloans. There was an urgent need for a reform of the international financial architecture so that Guatemala could obtain the resources it needed to respond to climate change, which adversely affected food production and the quality of life in the country. Efforts to improve the social, economic and environmental situation needed to be accompanied by measures to strengthen democracy. There was a need to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutional frameworks to root out corruption, which limited development.

*The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.*