



General Assembly

Seventy-ninth session

Official Records

69th plenary meeting
 Wednesday, 7 May 2025, 3 p.m.
 New York

President: Mr. Yang (Cameroon)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Chaivaivid (Thailand), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 13 (continued)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft decision A/79/L.82

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/79/L.82.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft decision, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft decision A/79/L.82: Botswana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Uzbekistan.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/79/L.82, entitled "Opening statements at the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/79/L.82?

Draft decision A/79/L.82 was adopted (decision 79/561).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



Agenda items 13 and 75 (continued)**Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields****Oceans and the law of the sea****(a) Oceans and the law of the sea****Draft decision A/79/L.85**

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/79/L.85, entitled “Accreditation and participation of intergovernmental organizations in the 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt decision A/79/L.85?

Draft decision A/79/L.85 was adopted (decision 79/558 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 13 and sub-item (a) of agenda item 75.

Agenda item 7 (continued)**Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: reports of the General Committee**

The Acting President: I now invite the attention of the Assembly to consider draft resolution A/79/L.81, and draft amendment A/79/L.84, circulated under agenda item 27, entitled “Advancement of women”.

Members will recall that the Assembly concluded its consideration of agenda item 27 at its 53rd plenary meeting, on 17 December 2024. In order for the Assembly to take action on the documents, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 27.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to reopen consideration of agenda item 27?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 13 September 2024, the Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 27 to the Third Committee. To enable the Assembly to take action expeditiously on the documents, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider agenda item 27 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided (decision 79/505 B).

Agenda item 27 (continued)**Advancement of women****Draft resolution (A/79/L.81)****Draft amendment (A/79/L.84)**

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft amendment A/79/L.84.

Ms. Zabolotskaya (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the draft resolution proposed by the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Yang,

A/79/L.81, on the scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Russian Federation is committed to implementing the provisions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which were adopted as the outcome of that Conference. Our hope is that the forthcoming event will be an important reminder of the unique and relevant nature of this document when it comes to developing measures for the advancement of the status of women.

We wish to separately thank the delegations of Jordan and Monaco, as the coordinators of the negotiations process, for their constructive and balanced approach.

Unfortunately, yet again we are bearing witness to the intention by a number of countries to politicize the discussion through others, specifically by bringing in biased civil society representatives. Paragraph six of the operative part of the draft resolution contains a provision on having the list of non-governmental participants submitted to a vote in the General Assembly. That is in circumvention of the established criteria and rules of consensus of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. In this way, conditions are being established for the participation in the event of non-constructive non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for whom gender equality and the expansion of the rights and opportunities of women are merely a pretext for broadcasting politicized rhetoric. Moreover, the word “attend”, which is standard, is replaced with the word “participate”, which calls into question the status of these NGOs and grants them an opportunity to advance their politicized approaches. Ultimately, the list, which is not agreed upon, will nevertheless be dragged to the General Assembly for a vote, and the meeting will become a platform for political score-settling.

In that regard, the Russian Federation is suggesting, through draft amendment A/79/L.84, consensus-based language from five years ago, specifically the non-objection procedure on the list of NGOs without subsequent approval by the General Assembly and the presence of civil society during the meeting as observers. We trust that our draft amendment will be supported by the majority of delegations.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/79/L.81 and draft amendment A/79/L.84.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to list the additional co-sponsors for the draft amendment. Since the submission of the draft amendment and, in addition to the delegations listed in the document, Belarus has become a sponsor of draft amendment A/79/L.84.

The Acting President: Delegations wishing to make a statement in explanation of vote before the vote on any proposal under this item are invited to do so now in one intervention.

After action on all of them there will be an opportunity for explanations of vote after the vote on any or all of them. Before giving the floor for explanations of vote before the vote, may I remind the delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Kurek (Poland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Monaco, along with their dedicated teams, for their diligence work on the draft resolution on the modalities of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/79/L.81). We believe that the text reflects the collective vision of the large majority of Member States. The co-facilitators led an inclusive and transparent negotiation process that

enabled constructive compromises and resulted in a balanced and forward-looking document. We regret that the language on civil society participation in a United Nations conference has once again been brought into question.

The draft amendment presented by the Russian Federation (A/79/L.84), which seeks to remove the requirement that the list of civil society organizations is brought back to the General Assembly for final decision, is yet again an attempt to allow States to veto stakeholders' participation and to block organizations from other countries without any transparency or having to provide any justification. It is important that this part of the paragraph is maintained in the draft resolution, as it allows Member States to hear the rationale for objections to the participation of NGOs. This transparency is essential to guarantee that the Conference benefits from a diverse range of expert voices and underscores our commitment to uphold the principles of open and inclusive deliberation within the United Nations framework.

The European Union remains steadfast in its commitment to full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We look forward to engaging constructively in the upcoming high-level meeting, aiming to highlight achievements, share best practices, identify gaps and other ongoing challenges in realizing gender equality, a fundamental value and central priority in both our internal and our external policies. This cannot be achieved without meaningful engagement of civil society. Therefore, the EU member States will vote no on the draft amendment and call all other Member States to do the same.

Ms. Reyes (United Kingdom): On behalf of the United Kingdom, we would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Monaco and Jordan and their teams for their diligent work on this modalities draft resolution (A/79/L.81) and stewardship of this process.

We support the high-level meeting to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and support efforts to advance gender equality and empower all women and girls, which is a key priority for the United Kingdom. We were glad to see that language on civil society participation was included in the draft resolution, which allows for meaningful civil society participation in that important high-level meeting. These modalities allow us to see the rationale for objections to non-governmental organization (NGO) participation. This transparency is essential to ensure that the conference will include voices from a range of experts on this topic, including NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs), academic institutions and the private sector. We are grateful that the language has given the decision-making power back to the Assembly rather than any single Member State.

However, we are concerned that despite strong precedence, this language is once again being brought into question. This is the fifth time this year that we are having to vote on long-established language that was agreed by consensus as recently as 2024 and is present in 17 modalities resolutions to date. We regret that a small number of Member States continue to use the non-objection basis to attempt to block organizations from other countries on vague or politicized bases or even without providing a rationale, amounting to a veto to stakeholder participation.

We would also highlight that the criteria and principles in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 was established for accrediting NGOs through the Economic and Social Council's Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for long-term consultative status with Council. This is a particular process and distinct from accreditation to General Assembly high-level meetings.

We further note that organizations applying are already obligated to go through a review process with the secretariat of the Conference and provide proof of legal status, the purpose of the organization and programmes and activities relevant to the Conference.

We believe it is necessary that organizations doing crucial work on this topic, including grass-roots women-led groups, are granted participation. Their contributions help improve our decision-making and enrich our evidence base, making United Nations action more effective and more substantial. It would be a disservice to not take advantage of all the tools we have. This includes partnerships with civil society.

For that reason, we will be voting against the draft amendment (A/79/L.84) and encourage others to do the same.

Ms. Tudor-Bezies (Canada): Canada would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Monaco and Jordan for their steadfast facilitation of this modalities draft resolution (A/79/L.81) for a critical milestone, the high-level meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

As with all multilateral negotiations, difficult decisions and concessions had to be made by all partners in order to secure the broadest possible consensus.

Unfortunately, we regret that the draft amendment before us (A/79/L.84) seeks to implement what is essentially a non-objection procedure, which has increasingly been used not as a safeguard but as a tool to exclude non-governmental organizations (NGOs) based on political considerations and further attempts to undermine long-standing agreed language present in more than 15 modalities resolutions. This undermines the principles of transparency, inclusivity and broad stakeholder engagement that the United Nations was founded upon and which Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 seeks to uphold.

Preventing NGOs from participating in or attending this high-level meeting without meaningful justification, often without disclosing the nature of the objection, has unfortunately become a pattern contrary to the principle of open multilateralism and the commitment of the United Nations to engaging diverse actors in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We agree with the importance of safeguarding the integrity of the United Nations. However, this cannot come at the expense of excluding legitimate voices from the global conversation on gender equality, all of which are already subject to a review process by the Secretariat.

Operative paragraph 6 of this draft resolution provides the necessary protections whereby the decision is in the hands of the Assembly rather than of one individual Member State. Member States should not be able to unilaterally determine which voices are permitted at the table, especially in a way that shields such decisions from scrutiny. If we are to have meaningful transparency, then objections can and should be accompanied by justification that would allow the Assembly to take an informed decision rather than leave it to a political decision.

With that, Canada will be voting against this draft amendment, and we strongly encourage others to do the same.

Ms. Márdero Jiménez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to express its position on draft amendment A/79/L.84 to draft resolution A/79/L.81 on the modalities for the high-level meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

In that connection, we express our grave concern at the fact that an exclusively technical draft resolution is being used as a political vehicle to call into question the rights of women, young people and girls in all their diversity, on this occasion by restricting the participation of civil society in this event. For decades, feminist movements and civil society organizations have been a key component for advancing the human rights of women, young women and girls, and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action were no exception in that regard. Today, more than ever, Mexico supports the work of civil society organizations and calls for not

eliminating language that strengthens their participation in the commemoration to be held in September on this topic.

Consequently, in the light of the substantive benefits of the broad and diverse participation of non-governmental organizations, as well as that of other stakeholders in the United Nations system, and in an effort to ensure the legitimacy of our multilateral processes, we will vote against the draft amendment. The participation of these organizations undoubtedly enriches our debates with specialized knowledge and direct ties to realities on the ground, enabling us to build more effective and comprehensive responses. Any attempt to restrict that openness would run counter to practices established by the General Assembly and would represent a setback in our collective commitment to more representative and effective multilateralism.

The non-objection principle is valid, and my country respects it, but we do not condone its use for purposes that do not serve to enrich an open dialogue. The principle should never be instrumentalized as a form of veto by any country that unilaterally believes that an organization politicizes or goes against their own policies. A diversity of opinions enriches dialogue. For Mexico, our opposition to the views of any organization of a Member State of the Assembly does not give us the unilateral right to object to their participation.

The democratic and multilateral decision-making power granted by operative paragraph 6, as presented by the co-facilitators, allows all Member States to decide on the participation of any organization put forward as a part of a list vetted by the President of the General Assembly. Similarly, Mexico believes that it is vital that selection and participation criteria actively promote gender parity and equitable geographical representation. We therefore express our deep gratitude to Jordan and Monaco for their facilitation on this text and for reflecting the balance that protects those fundamental principles.

We appeal to members to vote against this draft amendment and to support these efforts, as well as to strengthen the scope, impact and substance of future discussions as part of this high-level meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Ms. Zabolotskaya (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We wish to respond to some of the views that were voiced in the Hall regarding our draft amendment (A/79/L.84).

First and foremost, we wish to note that we do not at all object to explanations being provided for objections to non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This question could have been discussed with those delegations that spoke today. This was indeed the procedure that was used in the past.

Let us recall that the wording we have today before us in draft resolution A/79/L.81 emerged following a series of votes, so it was imposed through votes at the General Assembly. We therefore do not object to the participation of NGOs. Here we are talking simply about the procedure for granting them access. We have this procedure on the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. It is consensus-based, and we should like to see the same be the case here. For many years this procedure was successfully used, and we are unaware of any incidents of abuse of this procedure. As far as we are aware, the objections were always single when it came to those organizations.

We therefore propose that the delegations that stated today that there is an attempt to block participation of NGOs to enter into consultations with us to find an option that will be acceptable to all. We believe that this is the appropriate way forward, instead of imposing one's will and going against consensus.

We will now provide an interpretative statement regarding the text of the draft resolution.

First, we object to the contentious term “gender parity”, which we intend to interpret exclusively in the context of creating conditions for equal participation for men and women, on an equal footing, in meetings.

In addition, Russia does not support the artificial division of civil society. As a result, we view the term “non-governmental organization” as a synonym for “civil society organization”.

Lastly, the singling out of young people in the context of events on the issue of women is gratuitous, in our view. In that connection, we call on organizers, when compiling lists of guests for events, not to separate youth representatives into a stand-alone category, but rather to focus on inviting those young people who are directly involved in measures to advance the status of women and to announce them as civil society representatives.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

Before we proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/79/L.81, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on draft amendment A/79/L.84.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft amendment A/79/L.84.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Belarus, Cameroon, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Sudan, Türkiye, Viet Nam

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Yemen

Draft amendment A/79/L.84 was rejected by 15 votes to 73, with 46 abstentions.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/79/L.81. A separate recorded vote has been requested on operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution.

I now put to the vote operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Against:

Argentina, Belarus, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Sudan, Türkiye

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Viet Nam, Yemen

Operative paragraph 6 was retained by 94 votes to 10, with 31 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Myanmar informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of the United Arab Emirates informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/79/L.81 as a whole, entitled "Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/79/L.81 as a whole?

Draft resolution A/79/L.81 was adopted (resolution 79/288).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor for explanations of vote or position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Brest (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine Republic welcomes the consensus reached to adopt resolution 79/288. However, we wish to issue the following explanation of position.

Regarding the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs and operative paragraph 7, Argentina reaffirms its commitment to the protection of individual rights of

all human beings without distinction, in accordance with obligations expressly delineated in the international treaties to which we are party. We recall that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which it committed to in good faith, comprises non-binding aspirations that every State, in exercise of its sovereignty, has the right to interpret and pursue freely. Moreover, Argentina recalls that it disassociated itself from the Pact for the Future (resolution 79/1) in 2024 during the Summit of the Future.

As regards the reference to gender parity in operative paragraph 6, Argentina expresses that we are committed to genuine equality of opportunities for women, in accordance with the obligations assumed under the international treaties to which we are party, and in accordance with our own national Constitution, which explicitly recognizes that equality, associating it with measures entailing positive action.

However, gender parity is only one such positive measure, and Argentina did not see it as necessarily fostering the structural changes required to achieve genuine equality of opportunities for women because, among other reasons, it does not prioritize their value and contribution to social life, but instead promotes a superficial and artificial solution. Far from combating structural discrimination, it perpetuates stereotypes and symbolic discrimination against women.

As for references to gender equality throughout the text, we understand gender equality as set out in article 75, paragraph 22, of our national Constitution, where it incorporates the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women into domestic law. Reference should be made to the preamble of the Convention, which indicates the equal rights of men and women; article 10, which states “in order to ensure to them equal rights with men”, and article 11, which states “in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights”.

We should also point out that Argentina understands the term “gender” as agreed upon in article 7, paragraph 3, of the Rome Statute:

“For the purpose of this Statute, it is understood that the term ‘gender’ refers to the two sexes, male and female, within the context of society. The term ‘gender’ does not indicate any meaning different from the above.”

As such, Argentina recognizes in its national Constitution that the genuine equality of opportunities between men and women in terms of access to elected and party positions shall be guaranteed through positive action taken in the regulation of political parties and in the electoral system, as well as through positive action that guarantees genuine equality of opportunities and treatment and for children, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

This same article mandates a special and comprehensive social security regime to protect all distressed or abandoned children from pregnancy until the end of basic education and to protect women from pregnancy until the end of breastfeeding.

Moreover, the third paragraph of article XII of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man states that,

“[t]he right to an education includes the right to equality of opportunity in every case, in accordance with natural talents, merit, and the desire to utilize the resources that the state or the community is in a position to provide”.

Mr. Tur de la Concepción (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We wish to refer to the issue related to the participation of civil society organizations in upcoming high-level meetings.

We note that the question of the participation of civil society organizations has, unfortunately, become controversial in recent resolutions on modalities. We believe that, as we move towards the future, we should reassert and reimplement the

non-objection principle that, for decades, guided the participation of civil society organizations, with no discord whatsoever. We believe that this practice, established by Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, resulted in no discord whatsoever at the time of its adoption.

Our delegation firmly believes that the contribution made by civil society organizations to high-level meetings is critical, particularly in the case of resolution 79/288, which we are discussing today, on the commemorative meeting to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In the specific context related to the advancement of women, civil society organizations in Cuba have made significant annual contributions to the various United Nations forums in this matter. An example of this is the Commission on the Status of Women. However, we nevertheless believe that in order to avoid politicization and controversy with regard to the participation, broadly, of civil society organizations, we should have implemented the non-objection principle, which — as we just mentioned — for decades proved to be an effective mechanism for organizing said participation.

Mr. Tanriöven (Türkiye): Türkiye is committed to supporting the active participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector in the work of the United Nations, as this is essential for achieving our common goals.

A large number of NGOs, as well as other stakeholders from Türkiye, have already been contributing to all spheres of work of the United Nations and working together with the United Nations all over the globe, in particular in the most vulnerable countries.

We strongly support the participation of NGOs and other stakeholders in the work of the United Nations as long as their objectives and activities are in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Türkiye supports those NGOs and other stakeholders whose activities will contribute to the high-level meeting on the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Yet we cannot underestimate the fact that some NGOs may engage in activities that run counter to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and engage in politically motivated acts against some Member States.

As a long-standing member of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, we have encountered numerous cases where the consultative status and participation of the Economic and Social Council in various United Nations meetings was abused by certain organizations. That leads to the unnecessary politicization of discussions, which makes it difficult to achieve constructive dialogue and consensus. We believe that the criteria and principles formulated in resolution 1996/31 of the Economic and Social Council should apply to all non-governmental organizations that seek to participate in conferences and meetings of the United Nations.

Not all Member States can have detailed information on the objectives, activities and financing of those NGOs that are objected to by certain Member States. We believe that participation of NGOs in the United Nations process should be handled in good faith between concerned Member States that may have full information about the activities of NGOs in question. As a matter of fact, for the purposes of transparency and informed decision-making, it is very important for Member States to know in detail how those NGOs and stakeholders plan to contribute to the high-level meeting.

It is in that context that Türkiye voted in favour of draft amendment A/79/L.84, presented today.

As resolution 79/288 was not amended today, Türkiye disassociates itself from its operative paragraph 6.

Mr. Rashednikau (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus supported the adoption of resolution 79/288.

We note the efforts undertaken by the facilitators through the process to seek consensus and take into account the positions of all countries. At the same time, we are concerned about certain delegations setting out polarizing viewpoints on the same issue. We view this as an inconsistent and selective approach.

In this Hall, we increasingly hear calls for transparency and effective cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Behind those calls there is an increasingly clear dangerous trend to place the role of Member States and NGOs on an equal footing during intergovernmental negotiations. That gives rise to grave concerns because it undermines the fundamental principle of States bearing the main responsibility for drafting the international agenda.

In that connection, we fail to understand and are surprised at the negative reaction of certain delegations to a reasonable and necessary demand: compliance with established procedure when it comes to access for NGOs to participate in high-level meetings. That procedure is not a formality, but rather a core element for accountability and equitable and fair conditions for participation.

Turning to operative paragraph 6, we support the draft oral amendment A/79/L.84, geared towards eliminating the provision on the General Assembly taking a final decision on the question of participation in high-level meetings. We are concerned about the ongoing attempts to impose non-consensual language in the resolution regarding the participation of NGOs that contradicts the established practice. Such actions are becoming systematic, which contradicts the principles of multilateralism. In that connection, we disassociate ourselves from operative paragraph 6 of the resolution.

Mr. Heartney (United States): We thank Jordan and Monaco for facilitating resolution 79/288, on the high-level meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The United States disassociates itself from operative paragraph 6 due to the reference to gender parity. The United States strongly supports protecting women and girls, defending their human rights and promoting their empowerment. However, the United States opposes the use of special measures to achieve parity for women and girls. Rather, the aim should be the meaningful participation of women and girls while discussing the advancement of equality.

Where this resolution refers to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, the United States interprets that to mean the advancing of equality of women and men vis-à-vis men and boys.

The United States also disassociates itself from the reference to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals advance a programme of soft global governance that is inconsistent with the sovereignty of the United States and adverse to the interests and rights of Americans. The United States will no longer reaffirm them as a matter of course.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker on explanation of vote or position after the voting.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Daifallah Hmoud, Permanent Representative of Jordan, and Her Excellency Ms. Isabelle Picco, Permanent Representative of Monaco, who ably and patiently conducted the

discussions and complex negotiations in the informal consultations on resolution 79/288.

I am sure that the members of the Assembly join me in extending to them our sincere appreciation.

The Assembly has just concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 27.

Agenda item 135 (*continued*)

Eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War

The Acting President: The Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda item 135, entitled “Eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War” to continue this special solemn meeting in commemoration of all victims of the Second World War in accordance with resolution 79/272 of 4 March 2025.

Mr. Silk (Marshall Islands): Today’s special solemn meeting of the General Assembly in commemoration of all victims of the Second World War is a vital opportunity for deep reflection.

The Marshall Islands and the wider Oceania still bear the scars of the Second World War in our waters, upon our land and in our very identity. We still host graves and generational memories of thousands of soldiers who sacrificed all upon our shores.

For many in the islands, there are daily reminders of the legacy of the horrible conflict: airplanes still submerged below the sea, settlements overgrown by vegetation and unexploded ordnance still lurking beneath our feet. Nine years ago, in the Mili Atoll in the Marshall Islands, an elderly woman was killed by a 76-millimetre munition from the Second World War buried under a tree stump where she was cooking dinner outside. This is just one of an estimated hundreds of thousands of pieces of unexploded ordnance in our island region.

Last month, the Marshall Islands finally completed ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, and we welcome ongoing work with the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation and the United States Department of State to further identify unexploded ordnance in our nation.

The Second World War subjected us to starvation, as our gardens were bombed by napalm, and what little local food was available was rationed by the military. We were also invaluable scouts, translators and forced labourers. As our innocent communities were swept into conflict, the scale and violent shock of military force and explosive conflict was beyond anything imaginable to our remote island communities, and its painful impacts have been with us for generations.

Today we join other nations of the General Assembly to commemorate all victims of the war across oceans and continents. This was not a conflict of our doing, nor was it one with neutral morality. In remote atolls in the Pacific, we were profoundly affected by aggression and expansion in Europe, as their war quickly expanded to the Pacific and became ours. Indeed, there was no ambiguity between right and wrong. The lessons of the Second World War had profound impacts upon the founding of the United Nations. Those are lessons that, after eight decades, we all seem to be at risk of forgetting.

Today, as global tensions rise and spill over into multiple theatres all over, all of us should remember why we have a United Nations and what we are united against with the aspiration never again to repeat such an unimaginable crisis brought about by authoritarian and expansionist regimes based on notions of superiority of race.

Our initial appeasement and a failure to fully recognize and speak out against such regimes led us to the first ever global conflict. No one nation alone could take on such evil. Instead, a coalition of allies was needed. Thus, out of the death of millions and the destruction we visited upon ourselves, the United Nations was created, to ensure effective cooperation and to speak up as one.

Eighty years later, we all appear at risk of entering another global conflict. This is no time for isolationism. Tensions are only growing, and when they spill over across regions, traditional alliances are strained in their ability to effectively respond. For small and vulnerable nations, especially the small island developing States, the United Nations remains our primary, if not only, political avenue for action. We do not have unlimited leverage against larger Powers, so the inherent power of the United Nations must be maintained and strengthened.

The most important thing we can do today on this anniversary is to not only remember the sacrifices and horrors of war, but also actively learn from past mistakes, recall the profound foundations of these United Nations and remind ourselves of the Charter of the United Nations and the words embedded in the first two paragraphs of its preamble, which reads as follows:

“We the people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person,”

“And for these ends, to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples”.

On this day, let us renew our commitment to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and let us remember the sacrifices of those who have come before us and honour their legacy by striving to preserve the peace and to bequeath to the next generation a better tomorrow.

Mr. Soberón Guzmán (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today we commemorate the end of the Second World War, a conflict that taught us the horror of dehumanization but also the power of collective resistance. With deep respect, we pay solemn tribute to the memory of the millions of men, women and children who perished in that devastating conflict. Their wounds continue to reverberate in the conscience of our peoples. We remember with particular gratitude the sacrifice of the Soviet people, whose resistance was decisive in defeating Nazism.

It is also right and proper to recognize the role of the Allied forces and that of the resistance movements in each occupied country in containing and destroying the fascist war machine. From the heroic deed at the Brest Fortress to the epic battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, from the relentless advance toward Berlin without sufficient weaponry and outnumbered, they resisted heroically. Their courage, born of the conviction that humankind and socialism needed defending, proved that not even the most lethal military Power could defeat a united people, a people determined to keep their dignity and morale high and ready to win or die.

Cuba, although far from the battle fronts, wrote its own chapter in the global struggle against fascism. “Everything to defeat fascism” was the slogan that mobilized the far-reaching solidarity of the Cuban people with those who were fighting in the occupied countries and on the front lines against the Nazi invasion of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. From the volunteers who crossed the oceans

to fight against fascism in Spain to the merchant sailors who fell in Atlantic waters during the Second World War, the Cuban people proved time and time again the antifascist convictions of its finest sons. Through the National Anti-Fascist Front, we guaranteed the delivery of money, clothes, medicine, milk, soap, leather and other basic necessities to the Soviet Union and to other peoples fighting against fascism. Hundreds of our compatriots formed part of the international brigades that fought fascism in Spain — the largest Latin American contingent in that war.

Eight decades after the end of the Second World War, as the Member States of the United Nations, we must resolutely reaffirm our commitment to peace, sovereignty of the peoples and to multilateralism. This is undoubtedly the best possible way to honour the memory of the victims of that War and to free future generations from this terrible scourge.

We cannot forget that the genesis of the Second World War sprung from factors such as expansionism, xenophobia and disregard for national sovereignty. Today, when we see the resurgence of extremist ideologies, the use of military power to advance geopolitical interests and the proliferation of unilateral and illegitimate coercive measures, in violation of international law, it is our duty as an international community to speak out and staunchly defend international peace and security at all costs.

Against that backdrop, we cannot fail to mention the urgent and inescapable question of Palestine. The genocide perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people with the complicity and financial, political, military and logistical support of the United States Government is clear evidence of a new and repulsive form of fascism. We reiterate the urgent need for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the creation of two States, that would allow the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to an independent and sovereign State within pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and that would also guarantee the right of return of refugees.

As we stand on the threshold of the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, humankind is experiencing a global multidimensional crisis that is testing the Organization's capacity to respond. Today, as never before, we must remember the purposes for which the Organization was created and defend the principles it upholds, as well as multilateralism, in the face of hegemonism, domination, unilateralism, coercion and interventionist discourse aimed at interference.

It is alarming that global military spending will increase to \$2.7 trillion by 2024, encouraged by the warmongering rhetoric of the United States. Substantial resources that are vital for the sustainable development of our peoples continue to be channelled into the arms race. The danger that humankind will once again witness the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will remain latent for as long as all nuclear weapons continue to exist and are not eliminated in a transparent, complete, irreversible and verifiable manner. The atomic bombing of both cities just days after the German surrender reminds us that true peace can be sustained only on the basis of respect for human life and dignity. In this regard, we underscore the pertinence of the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace, whereby our region identified nuclear disarmament as a priority.

Attempts to distort the history of the Second World War and to minimize the decisive contribution made by the Soviet people to the defeat of fascism, as well as the attempt made by western power circles to hijack the truth, are accompanied by the development of neo-fascist practices in several countries, all of which are a latent danger and a threat to world peace. Historical memory should not be the heritage of a few. It should not divide us but rather unite us behind a common purpose, that of building a world in which the horrors of the past will never again be repeated.

Cuba, which is deeply acquainted with the cost of colonialism, interference and war, will continue to work for a culture of peace and a more just, democratic and equitable international order, in which today's threats to the very existence of the human species will disappear once and for all. Let us globalize unity, solidarity and international cooperation in the face of selfishness, wars and blockades.

Mrs. Kasymalieva (Kyrgyzstan): At the outset, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this solemn session to commemorate the victims of the Second World War.

We commend the continued efforts of Member States to honour the memory of all those who suffered and perished during that tragic period in human history. The victory over fascism in the Second World War is a defining chapter in our shared past, one that profoundly influenced the course of humankind. Victory Day, celebrated on 9 May, holds deep historical and emotional significance for the people of Kyrgyzstan and for the fraternal nations that stood side by side in defence of peace, dignity and freedom.

During the war, more than 360,000 citizens of Kyrgyzstan, nearly one in four of our citizens at that time, were mobilized to the front lines. On the home front, the entire nation united in unwavering solidarity. People of all ages, from the elderly to the young, contributed tirelessly to the war effort in agriculture, industry and beyond. More than 30,000 Kyrgyz citizens were sent to work in military production facilities throughout the Soviet Union.

That collective contribution to the defeat of fascism is a lasting source of pride for the Kyrgyz people. The heroism of our soldiers and the resilience of our civilian work were united in an impressive force for freedom and justice.

However, the cost of that victory was immense. The war brought with it unimaginable suffering and loss. Hundreds of thousands of Kyrgyz citizens did not return from the battlefield. Their memory lives on in our hearts and in the soul of our nation.

We will never forget those who sacrificed their lives for peace. We bow our heads in honour of the fallen, those who left behind grieving families and interrupted lives. To them we offer our deepest admiration and eternal gratitude. Their names are engraved in the pages of our national history, and their heroism continues to inspire. More than 150,000 Kyrgyz soldiers and commanders were awarded military honours for their bravery and distinction on the battlefield. Their legacy is one of courage, loyalty and profound love for the motherland.

As the years pass, the number of surviving veterans and wartime workers continues to decline. Those individuals are our national pride, living witnesses to one of the most difficult chapters in the world's history. They deserve our full support, our respect and our enduring commitment to preserve their stories for future generations.

Here at the United Nations, we must continue to honour their sacrifice by promoting multilateralism, peace, unity and mutual understanding. Let us ensure that the memory of their heroism is passed down from generation to generation as a guiding light and solemn lesson for humankind.

In conclusion, the Kyrgyz Republic joins all Member States in commemorating the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. May this anniversary serve not only as a time of remembrance but as a renewed call to safeguard peace and uphold the principles of the United Nations and its Charter.

Mr. Punnoose (India): At the outset, we thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this special solemn ceremony to commemorate all victims of the Second World War, as the world marks the eightieth anniversary of its end.

The Second World War resulted in suffering of immeasurable proportions. The human cost of that war cannot be quantified. Loss, deprivation, dislocation of people, destruction of livelihoods and the worst extent of sheer physical damage are synonymous with the Second World War. Scores and scores of men, women, youth and children across the world lost their lives. Tens of thousands of Indian soldiers were also killed, and many more suffered serious injuries. On this solemn occasion, we pay tribute to all victims, soldiers and civilians, across all regions of the globe, who succumbed in the Second World War.

The world's desire to prevent the recurrence of such human tragedies and to maintain peace and security internationally after the end of the Second World War paved the way for the establishment of this forum, the United Nations. However, conflicts are not a thing of the past. Different parts of the world continue to witness raging conflicts that lead to death, destruction and overall misery. The ability of the United Nations to respond meaningfully to current conflicts is being called to question in that context.

An architecture that was designed eight decades ago has been a real constraining factor. Against that backdrop, we would like to reiterate the need for reformed multilateralism, with a view to achieving the core purpose of the United Nations — the maintenance of international peace and security. The 80 years of the United Nations and since the end of the Second World War present all of us an opportunity to reflect on and redesign the United Nations framework in order to shape a more peaceful tomorrow. Let us all join hands in that endeavour.

Mr. Maniratanga (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Burundi is pleased to join the international community in honouring the memory of all victims, at this solemn meeting marking the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

That global conflict, one of the deadliest in human history, convulsed entire generations. It sowed death and desolation in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Pacific and beyond. No people, no nation, was spared the shockwaves of that tragedy.

On this day of remembrance, we pay tribute to all the lives lost — soldiers, civilians, women, children, survivors, victims of the Shoah and of so much other violence and persecution. Their suffering must never be forgotten.

History shows us that indifference in the face of injustice, complacency in the face of intolerance and silence in the face of human rights violations are the first steps towards dehumanization and mass violence. To commemorate the end of the Second World War, 80 years on, is to reaffirm our collective duty of vigilance. It means recognizing that genocide, wherever it takes place, whoever may be its victims, is the result of a predictable chain of events — first hate speech, then exclusion, then silence.

That is why, at this time of universal remembrance, we also have a duty to remember the genocide perpetrated against the Hutus of Burundi in 1972 — a tragedy that has been ignored for too long, and which calls for recognition, justice and reparation — because remembrance is as much a tool of prevention as it is an act of justice. In 2025, as new challenges threaten humankind, those lessons call for renewed vigilance and concerted action. Remembering them is a constant call for vigilance and humanity. However, out of that darkness came a glimmer of light — that of multilateral cooperation, embodied in the founding of the United Nations, built to preserve peace, prevent conflict, defend human rights and promote human dignity.

Since 1945, our world has made great progress, but international tensions, law violations and discourses of intolerance show that peace is never a given. It must be defended every day with courage and conviction. Commemorating the end of the Second World War means refusing to forget and affirming our collective will to build a world based on justice, truth and mutual respect.

As we commemorate the end of this global conflict, Burundi calls for reflection on the international order that emerged in 1945. Our African continent, largely absent from the negotiating tables of the time, legitimately aspires today to an equitable place in global governance. True universal peace can only be built on the inclusion and equal dignity of all nations.

Burundi pays tribute to the memory of all the victims of the Second World War and reaffirms its commitment to a world of peace, solidarity and respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. On this solemn day, Burundi calls for the strengthening of our multilateral institutions, the revitalization of our commitment to international humanitarian law and greater investment in education for peace and remembrance. In that way, we will truly honour the sacrifice of those who have gone before us.

Mr. Brown (Liberia): Today, as we commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and think about the acts of heroism of ordinary men and women, we must remember one of history's darkest chapters and nevertheless one of its inspirational moments — an era that laid bare the brutality and inhumanity of war but also showed us the power and unending possibility of nations uniting to overcome threats to our collective security and peace and the foundational ideals of human dignity.

Although it was not a military powerhouse and still does not aspire to be one, Liberia stood firmly in its commitment to a rules-based international order and is still proud to do so today. At a time when tyranny threatened peace and security, Liberia played a crucial role in supporting the Allied forces. Those peoples who sacrificed their lives and treasures then to oppose tyranny and instability must not waver in similar opposition when called on to do so today. Many may not recall, but Liberia's strategic position was vital for operations in North Africa and Europe, with our ports, airfields and territorial waters serving as refuelling and logistics hubs for Allied ships and aircraft. Our nation's natural resources — particularly Liberian rubber — were indispensable in sustaining the machinery that eventually turned the tide of the war. And in a definitive statement of principle, Liberia declared war on the Axis Powers, not in search of conquest but to uphold the values of peace, the commonality of our humanity and the power of multilateral cooperation.

The end of the war marked a defining moment for all humankind — one where the world recognized that global security could not rest on isolated national interests but rather on a continued commitment to multilateralism. Liberia has remained steadfast in that belief, supporting forums such as the United Nations as a means of resolving disputes through dialogue rather than violence. It is through collective action, shared responsibility and mutual respect that we will continue to safeguard peace and promote the progress of our shared humanity.

As we reflect on those lessons today, Liberia again joins all nations in reaffirming its unwavering dedication to diplomacy over destruction, collaboration over conflict and a world where differences are settled not on battlefields but at negotiating tables. The legacy of the Second World War must continue to remind all of us that the cost of war is too great and that peace is worth defending, knowing from our own painful experience of war that the only cost that is higher than peace is the cost of war. May this commemoration therefore be a call for action, unity and justice and for building a world where human security is a shared commitment of all nations. May the sacrifices of those who stood for freedom never be forgotten, and may their resolve continue to inspire us to build a world worthy of their sacrifice and legacy.

Mr. Raza (Pakistan): We pay tribute to all victims of the Second World War and indeed all those who have tragically lost their lives in wars and conflicts around the world.

During the Second World War, Pakistan — then part of British India — contributed significantly to efforts against Nazism and fascism. Pakistani soldiers fought alongside Allied forces in various theatres and made huge sacrifices. We salute their contribution to the establishment of a world free of extremist ideologies.

Sadly, entities inspired by, and rooted in, Nazism and fascism are again rearing their heads in several parts of the world, the impact of which is on blatant display today around the world and in our region. Pakistan stands for the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including sovereign equality, the prohibition of the threat or use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. To ensure peace and security in the world, it is critically important to give primacy to the Charter of the United Nations and international law. That important imperative remains the sole criterion for our shared objectives in the United Nations.

As an active Member of the United Nations, Pakistan has immensely contributed to our collective efforts in the areas of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. For decades, Pakistan has participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations for the promotion of regional and international peace and security. We will continue our active contribution to realizing common and shared goals for peace and security and collective well-being.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Mr. Espiritu (Sovereign Order of Malta): We gather today on this solemn occasion to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, whose devastating consequences profoundly shaped the foundations of the international system that we uphold today. As we honour the countless lives lost and acknowledge the immense suffering endured, we must also reflect on the developments seen since 1945: the gradual overcoming of that tragic legacy, the pursuit of reconciliation and the substantial efforts to consolidate peace, human rights and international cooperation.

In reflecting upon the vital lessons of history, the Sovereign Order of Malta draws renewed inspiration from its long-standing dedication to humanitarian service, particularly during the darkest chapters of the twentieth century. Amid the unimaginable suffering and widespread devastation of the Second World War, the Order remained steadfast in its mission to relieve human suffering without distinction or discrimination. In 1940, at the height of the global conflict, the Order established numerous field hospitals and operated various hospital trains that, over the course of the war, made 79 journeys, transporting more than 23,000 wounded soldiers to safety and care. In addition, one hospital train operated with extraordinary difficulty on the Eastern Front, successfully repatriating more than 2,500 wounded Italian soldiers home under perilous conditions.

Following the armistice of 1943, the Order swiftly adapted to the new humanitarian needs by establishing three hospitals in Rome, one in Turin and another in Milan. In Rome alone, more than 38 centres were founded, employing hundreds of soldiers enlisted in the military corps, thereby not only providing critical medical assistance but also saving those soldiers from deportation to prison camps.

In the turbulent and uncertain days of late February 1947, when hope was fragile and the future uncertain, the Sovereign Order of Malta once again stepped forward to meet the humanitarian need. As confusion and concern grew within the Italian General Staff, the Italian Armed Forces, showing remarkable foresight, turned to the Grand Magistry of the Order for help in finding a solution for military aircraft that were set to be destroyed. Fra' Ludovico Chigi Albani della Rovere, Grand Master at the time, fully aware of the country's ongoing hardship and the urgent need to

rebuild peace, responded with great generosity and vision. To protect the Order's neutral and humanitarian mission, he agreed to take responsibility for several SM-82 transport aircraft from the 36th Squadron, under the strict condition that they would be used solely for humanitarian purposes. And so, bearing the insignia of the Order of Malta, those aircraft were officially dedicated to transporting the wounded and the sick, turning machines once built for war and destruction into instruments of healing and hope, serving those caught in the devastating crossfire of war.

Those historic acts of service and ingenuity are testament to the immutable spirit of the Sovereign Order of Malta, a spirit that persists today as we confront new and profound humanitarian challenges across the globe. They serve as a poignant reminder that, even amid destruction and despair, acts of compassion and solidarity can pave the way for recovery and reconciliation. In carrying forward that legacy, the Sovereign Order of Malta remains unwavering in its commitment to serving humankind, to restoring dignity where it has been stripped away and to being a beacon of hope in times of darkness.

In conclusion, as we look to the future, may the spirit of compassion and service to the most vulnerable, which guided us through the tragedies of the past, continue to illuminate our shared path towards peace, reconciliation and human dignity for all.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker for the special solemn meeting in commemoration of all victims of the Second World War.

The exercise of the right of reply has been requested. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Assadi Nazari (Islamic Republic of Iran): I take the floor to exercise the right of reply of my delegation in response to the irrelevant statement made by the representative of the Israeli regime during today's special solemn meeting in commemoration of all victims of the Second World War. That statement once again reflects a shameful pattern of disinformation and distortion. The Israeli representative again misused this platform to level unfounded allegations against the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a desperate attempt to divert international attention from the atrocities and war crimes committed by the occupying regime in Gaza. That regime has routinely attempted to exploit the sufferings of the Jewish people in the past as cover for the crimes that it has perpetrated over the past eight decades against nations in the region, including all its neighbouring countries without exception.

While the world bears witness to the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people, the Israeli regime seeks to deflect global outrage by scapegoating others. That regime, with a long and bloody record of aggression and State terrorism, has no credibility to present itself as a victim or to speak of peace, stability or counter-terrorism. More than 52,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have been killed and slaughtered in Gaza in recent months by relentless Israeli bombardment, deliberate starvation as a weapon and the obstruction of humanitarian aid — clear acts of genocide under international law. To date, it has committed all four core international crimes, and on certain occasions, it has committed all of them together simultaneously.

Instead of fabricating lies against others, the Israeli regime must be held accountable for its grave violation of humanitarian law and its crimes against humanity. No amount of distraction or disinformation can erase the truth that is unfolding daily before the eyes of the world. Let me be clear: during the Second World War, my country hosted many refugees from certain European countries. My Government has continuously condemned genocide, including on racial, ethnic or religious grounds, as a crime against humanity. In our view, there is no justification

for genocide of any kind, or can there be any justification for any policy or practice, such as those of the Israeli regime, of exploiting past crimes as a pretext for committing or justifying new genocides or crimes.

Iran's regional policy is rooted in international law, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and support for the legitimate rights of peoples under occupation. It is Israel that is the last apartheid regime and the only one in the world that openly practices and has legalized racism, destabilizing the region through its brutal occupation, expansionist policies and systematic targeting of civilians. There is no way for that rogue terrorist regime to evade the legal responsibilities and consequences of the violence that their occupying and discriminatory policies have incited in the region. That entity should take responsibility for its actions, instead of misrepresenting itself as the oppressed party.

Mrs. Mimran Rosenberg (Israel): Today we commemorate the memory of all the victims of the Second World War. We remember all those who were led to the gas chambers, work camps and death camps; those who sought refuge — not from war, in general, but from an intentional and methodical death; and those who fought for fundamental freedom, equality and human rights.

Unfortunately, the manner of intent that we saw during the Holocaust has risen again. Though in a different form, disguised by empty catch phrases used to spread disinformation and hate speech from dark times in the past, the intention remains the same.

As there have been some critical remarks wrongfully directed against my country, I am obliged to react to those baseless accusations.

We categorically reject the accusations relating to the war in Gaza, which disregard the responsibility of the Hamas terror group and play into the weaponizing of false narratives to spread misinformation and disinformation about my country.

Israel has a profound moral and national obligation to bring all the hostages home. They are being held under inhumane and cruel conditions, facing starvation, physical abuse and psychological torment, with blatant violations of international law.

Hamas violated international humanitarian law — not only by committing atrocities against Israel on 7 October 2023 and against the hostages, but also by abusing civilian infrastructure in Gaza and putting Palestinian lives at risk. Palestinians are being used as human shields while rockets are being fired indiscriminately at Israel and Hamas commanders are hiding in underground tunnels.

We call on the international community to unequivocally condemn these atrocities, and we call for the immediate release of our hostages. Israel remains committed to international humanitarian law and continues to act with restraint and responsibility under immensely challenging circumstances.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 135?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.