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Chairperson: Ms. Lintonen (Finland)

Contents

Agenda item 56: Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)

- (a) Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)
- (b) Science and technology for development (*continued*)
- (c) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (*continued*)

Agenda item 57: Groups of countries in special situations (*continued*)

- (a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (*continued*)

Agenda item 58: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (*continued*)
- (b) Women in development (*continued*)
- (c) Human resources development (*continued*)

Agenda item 61: Towards global partnerships

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 56: Globalization and interdependence
(*continued*)

(a) Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)
(A/C.2/62/L.25)

Draft resolution on role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence

(b) Science and technology for development
(*continued*) (A/C.2/62/L.26)

Draft resolution on science and technology for development

(c) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption
(*continued*) (A/C.2/62/L.27)

Draft resolution on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption

Agenda item 57: Groups of countries in special situations (*continued*)

(a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (*continued*) (A/C.2/62/L.24)

Draft resolution on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

1. **Mr. Ayub** (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.24 to L.27.

Agenda item 58: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*) (A/62/155, A/62/371, A/62/372, A/62/486 and A/62/488)

(a) Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (*continued*) (A/62/211, A/62/267 and A/62/483-E/2007/90)

(b) Women in development (*continued*) (A/62/187)

(c) Human resources development (*continued*)
(A/62/308)

2. **Mr. Seyoum** (Eritrea) said that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals had a direct bearing on the eradication of poverty. If current trends continued for the seven and a half years remaining until 2015, many of the poorest countries, notably those in sub-Saharan Africa, would miss many of the Goals by a wide margin. That was unacceptable. With renewed commitment and partnership, the Goals could still be achieved by 2015, and they should remain a priority for the United Nations system.

3. Eritrea was doing its best to achieve the Goals. It had invested hundreds of millions of dollars, especially on infrastructure for food security, to make hunger history. It was on track to achieve the Goals relating to gender equality in primary education, child health, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases, and access to safe water. Eritrea also looked forward to graduating from the group of least developed countries in the coming few years. The achievement of the Goals would bring security to the troubled world order. The Millennium Development Goals were human rights which must be achieved. He urged all Member States to renew the commitments they had undertaken in connection with the Goals.

4. **Ms. Ochir** (Mongolia) said that Mongolia stood strongly committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In 2005, the Parliament had adopted a resolution endorsing a national plan for implementing the Millennium Development Goals, which was tailored to addressing the country's specific needs, including the handicaps arising from its landlocked status, increased internal migration, and environmental protection issues. The Parliament's resolution entrusted the relevant state entities with implementation and monitoring of the Goals and provided for the allocation of necessary resources in the annual state budgets. The results achieved to date were mixed, and difficult challenges remained, such as reducing and ultimately eradicating poverty. A draft comprehensive development strategy had recently been submitted to the Parliament. In addition, the Millennium Development Goals and targets had been mainstreamed into the country's development policy documents.

5. Her Government had undertaken a host of quick-impact initiatives on poverty reduction and income

generation, including raising salaries in the public sector, providing a monthly allowance to every child in the country and one-time monetary support to newly married couples and newborn children, and increasing the monthly allowances and pensions of the elderly. It had introduced a programme to provide for wider medical coverage and a master plan for improving the access, quality and competitiveness of the national education system with a view to advancing the level of human development. It would increase employment by building a human resource pool commensurate with the national economic structure and labour market demands. It had also undertaken a number of initiatives to promote microcredit schemes and small and medium-sized enterprises. Projects such as Enterprise Mongolia and urban poverty pilot programmes were designed to improve outreach to marginalized groups by facilitating policy dialogue between local authorities and citizens and building the capacity of local communities. Under amendments to the tax legislation, the overall tax burden had been eased in order to create a favourable business environment, improve economic growth and generate new jobs.

6. Mongolia was serious about achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including the goal on poverty reduction; however, without international support, national efforts would not be sufficient. Her delegation strongly endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation that the organizations of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions and donors should continue assisting developing countries in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goal of poverty eradication (A/62/267, para. 76 (c)).

7. **Mr. de Looz Karageorgiades** (Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) said that service to the poor and the sick was the primary mission of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The Order had no political bias, and its 12,500 members and over 80,000 volunteers provided medical and humanitarian assistance in 120 countries. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations had pointed out on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, none were more committed to ending poverty than the poor themselves. Often, all they lacked was the guidance, the tools and the opportunities to win the fight. A true partnership for development was needed to enable the poor to take control of their lives. From

its inception, the Order had put into practice the concept of partnership, and all those who currently worked for the Order, no matter what duties they performed, were considered partners in service to the poor and the sick. At the international level, the Order worked through Malteser International to carry out pilot projects in the fields of education, health and microcredit in Africa, South America and Asia.

8. **Mr. Dall'Oglio** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration) said that further discussion was needed on the poverty-alleviation effects of remittances and the need to mainstream migration into national poverty reduction strategies. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) had been operationally engaged in giving concrete application to those key issues by following up with a number of Member States in developing pilot projects to reflect international migration issues in their national development strategies. The Global Forum on Migration and Development held in July 2007 in Brussels had represented a vehicle for the exchange of know-how and experiences regarding migration programmes and approaches. With other members of the inter-agency Global Migration Group, IOM had provided technical and institutional expertise to the Belgian Government.

9. IOM was following up on research done by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Inter-American Development Bank with in-depth country studies, including research on different aspects of migration, poverty and livelihoods in China, Serbia and Tajikistan. The research indicated that remittances had an important impact on the financial well-being of many families and offered development possibilities for entire communities. Poverty reduction strategies and programmes could significantly promote or restrict mobility, which in turn could and would have an impact on the eventual outcome of such policies and programmes. The purpose of including migration in poverty reduction strategies was not to interfere with the consideration of various aspects of migration, such as its desirability or its impact on developing countries, but rather to acknowledge that while migration often took place in response to poverty situations, it could also have the impact of reducing poverty, particularly at a household level.

10. IOM, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank

and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), was currently working on a handbook on integrating migration into national development plans to look at the problem holistically. In preparation for the Global Forum on Migration and Development, to be held in Manila in 2008, IOM, UNDP, the World Bank and UNICEF would publish the handbook to assist in the development of a migration and development strategy in a consultative manner with all key stakeholders. More specifically, the exercise was meant to help increase awareness of the nexus between migration and development; assist Governments in identifying the interrelationship between migration and poverty; assist in coordinating government, international organization and donor activities on the issue at the national and regional levels; and provide a methodology for the design, implementation and monitoring of a plan of action on migration and development consistent with national and regional poverty reduction and development strategies.

11. **Mr. Lacdanne** (Cameroon) said that the discussion on poverty eradication and other development issues highlighted that human individuals — real flesh-and-blood people who were suffering every day from the devastating effects of poverty — were the central concern of United Nations policies and action. Poverty was a serious threat to peace, because it gave rise to conflicts and instability. Combating poverty therefore amounted to peacebuilding.

12. For 60 years, the General Assembly had been trying to set specific development goals for the world, and yet one important goal — for countries to allocate 0.7 per cent of their GNP to ODA — had still not been reached. Over the years, a series of international initiatives on poverty had raised people's hopes very high, but those hopes had been dashed: most developing countries would not attain the Millennium Development Goals. Poverty continued to increase, particularly in rural areas, and ODA was not keeping pace with the Herculean efforts being made by the developing countries.

13. The situation in Africa was especially dire and called for an integrated approach. The year 2015 was fast approaching: the international community must fulfil its commitment to eliminate poverty, which was an insult to human dignity.

14. Women should be full participants in the fight against poverty, but were hampered by discrimination, inequality, sexual violence and abuse. Above all, poverty itself made women vulnerable and prevented them from applying their abilities to development activities. How could women contribute to development when they lost their lives in giving life because there were not enough hospitals? Or when there were no roads along which to transport the products from their fields? Or when they did not have access to credit, or an education? Given the centrality of education and women's rights to development, his Government had made them two of its main priorities.

Agenda item 61: Towards global partnerships
(A/62/341)

15. **Mr. Kell** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and its partners, in particular the private sector (A/62/341), said that it provided illustrative examples of partnerships in the areas of advocacy, developing norms and standards, sharing and coordinating resources and expertise, and harnessing markets for development. Expertise from the private sector was essential in helping to attain the goals of the United Nations, including the Millennium Development Goals.

16. The Global Compact Office, the largest undertaking of its kind in the world, had made good progress in training, capacity-building, establishing local ownership of projects and carrying out impact assessments. More could and should be done, however. Partnerships between the United Nations and private-sector entities could help achieve goals using means that did not compete with Government activities, but were instead complementary to them. By strengthening the mandate of the Office, further progress could be achieved on training, planning, mechanisms for sharing lessons learned, selection of suitable partners, and accountability measures.

17. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that effective partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector could indeed enhance the effectiveness of development activities carried out by organizations within the United Nations system and support national development strategies and programmes. Such partnerships were in fact a part of the larger picture of

a global partnership between developed and developing countries in pursuit of development goals.

18. Recognition of national leadership and ownership of development strategies must be a guiding principle of United Nations activities. The Organization's partnerships with the private sector must therefore complement rather than supersede national development endeavours. Moreover, they should provide additional financial and technical resources to build United Nations capacities. The Group of 77 and China hoped that transnational corporations, which had enormous influence in the global economy, would join the efforts to realize development goals.

19. Sharing best practices across the United Nations system was a laudable exercise that would also bring much-needed transparency to partnership activities. That was a necessary prerequisite to developing guidelines for engagement with the private sector. It was important to guard against abuse of the process for personal or corporate gains, which could undermine the reputation and integrity of the United Nations.

20. It was disappointing that little attention had been given to the important issue of promoting impact assessment mechanisms, as had been requested in resolution 60/265. He urged the Secretary-General to provide more in-depth analysis in future reports. In that case as in others, it was important to set measurable targets in order to monitor the implementation of internationally agreed development goals.

21. New initiatives in general, and partnerships in particular, must not weaken the regulatory or policymaking roles of State and intergovernmental bodies. Above all, they should be governed by the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

22. **Ms. Gomes** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine, said that internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, would be achieved only with the active participation of all stakeholders, official, private-sector and non-governmental alike.

23. Global partnerships should focus on strategic priorities such as poverty eradication, and best practices and lessons learned should continue to be shared across the United Nations system so that successful partnerships could be expanded and replicated. Such partnerships were already an important part of international efforts in the areas of financing for development and sustainable development.

24. At the national level, Governments played an important role in promoting responsible business practices and good corporate citizenship. At the international level, it was equally important to have codes of conduct for businesses operating in developing countries. The European Union took the view that the guidelines of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) were highly significant as the only comprehensive, Government-backed instrument in the field of corporate social responsibility, and welcomed efforts to raise public awareness on how those guidelines could be used by Governments, companies and stakeholders.

25. Since its creation in 2000, the Global Compact had gained widespread support throughout the international business community and had made significant progress in instilling its ten principles (covering human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption) in the areas of procurement practices, pension fund policies, facilities management and human resource management. The success of the recent Global Compact Leaders Summit attested to the increasing relevance of the initiative.

26. **Mr. Gass** (Switzerland) expressed support for the general thrust of the Secretary-General's report (A/62/341), in particular the assessment that the voluntary nature of the United Nations-business cooperation ensured that related activities were not in competition with Government actions, but rather were a complementary way of advancing United Nations goals (para. 72); the view that it would be beneficial to tailor training to needs and rely on more diverse sources for training; strengthen private sector focal points and extend recognition for partnership development; increase dissemination and uptake of mechanisms for sharing lessons; and create and disseminate tools for impact assessment (chap. IV); and the statement that, in order to realize the full potential of cooperation with the private sector, the United Nations must continue to take appropriate steps

at all levels (para. 73). In that regard, a coherent strategy for the engagement of the United Nations as a whole with the private sector would reduce unnecessary duplication and competition between United Nations programmes and funds.

27. His delegation also shared the Secretary-General's assessment that the Global Compact Office needed a stronger mandate (para. 76). The Global Compact should indeed occupy centre stage in the further development of the partnership approach. Switzerland was proud to have hosted the second Global Compact Leaders Summit, the largest ever high-level event on corporate responsibility. The Geneva Declaration issued at the Summit set forth actions for the private sector and Governments alike. In particular, Global Compact participants had made a commitment to engage in responsible advocacy on global challenges and urged Governments to implement relevant conventions and declarations. A number of far-sighted initiatives had also been launched, demonstrating not only the commitment of Global Compact participants and the unique opportunities offered by the Compact, but also the fact that, to remain relevant to the private sector, the United Nations needed to adopt a somewhat unconventional approach. His Government heeded the call by Summit participants for Member States and the Secretary-General to continue to support the initiative and uphold its position within the Organization.

28. While the Summit had been a success overall, the Global Compact and its Office still lacked sufficient and regular funding. Without adequate financial and human resources, such events stretched the Office to the limit. At the same time, however, secured funding might erode the Global Compact's flexible and voluntary nature, thereby confronting it with the challenge of simultaneously keeping donors happy, remaining independent while being centred around both the United Nations and the private sector, and retaining its identity. For that reason as well, his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal to adopt measures to strengthen the Global Compact's mandate and structure.

29. **Ms. Bai Yongjie** (China) said that the private sector could play a significant complementary role in global affairs, particularly in the area of development. There had been a huge increase in partnerships with the private sector in recent years. By exploring cooperation mechanisms to expand partnerships, the international

community had contributed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

30. The international community must adhere to its main objective of achieving internationally agreed development goals. The private sector must be engaged in advancing those goals and encouraged to make greater contributions through diversified voluntary initiatives.

31. Partnerships should be well managed and flexible, to reflect varying approaches across different bodies and agencies. The fact that partnerships with the private sector were only supplements to intergovernmental activities should also be borne in mind. With regard to private sector participation in United Nations activities and meetings, she stressed the importance of communication with Member States and observance of United Nations rules and regulations. She hoped that the views of Member States would be taken into account during the revision of the Guidelines on cooperation between the United Nations and the business community, so as to ensure that United Nations-private sector partnerships conformed to norms and standards. Her Government was in favour of expanding effective partnerships through the promotion of training and strategic planning.

32. Her delegation agreed with the report's assessment that the United Nations needed to increase the effectiveness and accountability of United Nations-business engagement and ensure the Organization's integrity and brand surrounding those relationships (A/62/341, para. 8). In view of the diversity and varying levels of efficiency of those relationships, the Organization must study them further; provide proper guidance, evaluation and monitoring; and play a greater role in overall coordination. Sharing experience and best practices would enable it to take stock of its practice, learn from its successes and failures, and improve its work.

33. The Global Compact was a useful way of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations, on the one hand, and the business community and NGOs, on the other. Since its inception, its ideas had enjoyed popular support. She welcomed its achievements. China hoped that, following the positive outcome of the Global Compact Leaders Summit, held in Geneva in July, all parties would take stock of their experience, expand their cooperation, encourage more enterprises to participate on a voluntary basis, and

assume their corporate social responsibilities. Her delegation supported the Global Compact Office's efforts to enhance its engagement and cooperation with the relevant United Nations departments, while maintaining its unique status and working methods and improving relationships among the United Nations entities involved in partnerships with the private sector.

34. At the national level, her Government was mobilizing all sectors of society, including the business sector, to promote sustainable development. At the international level, it was developing multilateral and bilateral cooperation with other Governments, international organizations, the private sector and NGOs. Such partnerships boosted China's efforts to achieve harmonious and sustainable development. It would continue to cooperate closely with all sides with a view to attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

35. **Mr. Al-Ahbab** (Qatar) said that his country continued to believe that the Millennium Development Goals could only be achieved through global partnerships among Governments, the private sector and civil society. All were united in their desire to see the Millennium Development Goals achieved and all States should support the United Nations in its efforts to achieve sustainable development. He stressed the vital need for an integrated and open international commercial and financial system that provided unconditional assistance and debt relief to poor countries and addressed the effects of climate change, desertification and drought on countries with agricultural economies. Disparities in achievement of the Millennium Development Goals needed to be addressed in order to create a world that future generations would be proud of.

36. **Mr. Prasartkul** (Thailand) said that the momentum surrounding triangular and South-South cooperation was building. Thai ODA had increased tenfold between the 1970s and 1990s, reaching \$6.5 million — or 0.12 per cent of GDP — in 2005. While South-South cooperation had increased in recent years, triangular — cooperation, which created dialogue and constructive relationships between the North and South — was also critical. Today, ODA and technical assistance were being provided by developing countries too, particularly in such areas as capacity-building and human resources development. South-South cooperation should complement, not replace, North-South cooperation.

37. Regional, subregional and interregional groupings provided avenues for cooperation and led to more effective and cost-efficient development practices. They also eliminated unnecessary costs, simplified rules and regulations, and highlighted priorities and needs. At least six regional and subregional groupings were currently in operation in South-East Asia.

38. Partnerships with the private sector and civil society were an important addition to traditional forms of cooperation between Governments and international organizations. The public and private sectors had different visions but ultimately shared many objectives. The private sector had the power to influence people directly. If that power could be harnessed through cooperation, it would create a win-win situation.

39. Corporate social responsibility, while not enforceable, could be encouraged. Governments could create a business environment that rewarded ethical companies that promoted social values, economic advancement and environmental well-being. Practices eventually evolved into policies and national laws and regulations. Committed public-private partnerships could be achieved through effective and tactful communication. Communication created trust and ensured that commitments were honoured, which in turn benefited international development.

40. Lastly, country ownership, good governance and the integration of social issues must not be forgotten in development practices. Transparency, untied aid, competitive procurement regimes, corruption-free practices and country-led initiatives would define the success of development cooperation. Global partnerships — the ultimate goal of multilateralism — provided a practical answer to development questions and loopholes, and were essential for the development of present and future generations.

41. **Mr. Sermoneta** (Israel) said that his Government supported any partnerships with the private sector that would help the United Nations operate more efficiently and engage more effectively. The United Nations system needed to learn the private sector's language. The principle of proper personnel and fiscal management was not always implemented as vigorously as it should be. Foremost among the challenges to incorporating such language into the United Nations system was the lack of know-how and training. Given that individual United Nations

agencies, funds and programmes had specific training needs (A/62/341, para. 32), a blanket approach would be ineffective in meeting training demands. It was regrettable that only a small minority of United Nations entities included training relating to business planning, financial management or legal issues (*ibid.*), as they were precisely the areas where United Nations-private sector partnerships could be most rewarding. When it came to minimizing corruption, training and education of personnel were just as important as oversight and appropriate management.

42. His Government was pleased to note the prominence of the Global Compact. Business, trade and investment were essential pillars for development and peace. However, all too often businesses faced serious dilemmas. Responsible business practices could build trust and social capital, thereby contributing to development and sustainable markets. He commended those businesses that had entered the Global Compact and encouraged additional private sector partnerships. It was also important for partnerships to reflect all the Millennium Development Goals, not just a select few.

43. Specialized agencies and organizations could offer specific expertise and experience. As such, NGOs could facilitate partnerships and engagement with a broad, yet specific, spectrum of stakeholders. Local ownership should be considered as a possible approach to broadening the coalition of non-Government stakeholders that were engaged with the United Nations system. Similarly, when considering new partnerships, emphasis should be placed on long-term solutions and opportunities that were cost-effective and offered a wide enough trajectory to meet the challenges encountered by time and resource limitations. He commended the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Development Programme for their contributions to improving partnership selection and management.

44. Lastly, Israel had recently hosted, in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the first regional meeting of experts on public-private partnerships. The meeting, attended by over 300 participants from 30 countries in the UNECE region as well as the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), had focused on capacity-building in public-

private partnerships as an engine for development in developed and developing economies.

45. **Mr. Lorenzo** (Dominican Republic) said that Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals implicitly recognized that, to address challenges effectively, there was a need for interaction in all countries and among all sides — Government, business, NGOs, academia, community groups, individuals and United Nations entities. Public-private partnerships and multi-stakeholder alliances were a key part of that. The private sector's potential contribution to attaining those Goals was huge. The role of Governments in public-private partnerships was to provide financing for infrastructure and subsidies to ensure universal access. The private sector, meanwhile, brought advantages in terms of efficiency, cost-effectiveness and delivery. As emphasized by the International Labour Organization, the main route out of poverty was decent work.

46. The Dominican Republic was currently emphasizing the role of business in driving development and the importance of public-private partnerships and cooperation by all stakeholders. It also recognized the importance of promoting adherence to the Global Compact's ten principles. A number of Dominican companies and organizations had already joined the Global Compact. Furthermore, the Dominican Republic, along with Madagascar, was a pilot country under the United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development and the Public-Private Alliance Foundation.

47. The coming months would provide an opportunity for participants in the Global Compact, signatories of the Principles for Responsible Investment and others to participate in preparations for the Millennium Development Goals Awards to be held in June 2008. It was hoped that the Awards festival would draw public attention to the Millennium Development Goals and to notable efforts to achieve them.

The meeting rose at noon.