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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 24th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 28 October 2009, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Vice-Chairperson) . . . . . (Guinea)  
*later:* Mr. Mičić (Vice-Chairperson) . . . . . (Serbia)

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(c) Human resources development

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*In the absence of Mr. Park In-Kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Guinea), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 51: Macroeconomic policy questions**  
(continued)

**(d) Commodities** (continued) (A/C.2/64/L.5)

*Draft resolution on commodities*

1. **Ms. Osman** (Sudan) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.5 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Agenda item 56: Groups of countries in special situations** (continued)

**(a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries** (continued) (A/C.2/64/L.7)

*Draft resolution on the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries*

2. **Ms. de Laurentis** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the words “Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean” in paragraph 12 of the draft resolution should be replaced by the words “Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific”.

3. **Ms. Osman** (Sudan) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.7 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as orally corrected.

**Agenda item 55: Globalization and interdependence**  
(continued)

**(a) Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence** (continued) (A/64/253 and A/64/310)

4. **Mr. Tater** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that globalization and interdependence could make a powerful contribution towards economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development. However, the benefits of globalization had been distributed among only a few countries, leading the least developed countries to question globalization itself.

5. While many least developed countries had followed the structural adjustment programmes of the

Bretton Woods institutions and the principles of economic liberalization espoused by the Washington Consensus, the promised prosperity from globalization had not materialized. Instead, the poorest and most vulnerable populations of least developed countries had been only further impoverished and marginalized.

6. Nevertheless, the least developed countries had not rejected globalization, which must, however, be better managed to ensure that its benefits were enjoyed more equitably by all. To that end, there was an urgent need to implement the 2007 Istanbul Declaration on the Least Developed Countries: Time for Action, which called on development partners to fulfil their relevant commitments so that least developed countries could achieve socio-economic development and beneficially integrate into the global economy.

7. The United Nations could play a vital role in devising effective global rules and regulations to ensure inclusive multilateralism and equitable globalization. In that regard, the agreement reached by the United Nations system on a joint initiative in nine key areas (A/64/310, para. 4) was welcome.

8. The least developed countries required a greater level of participation in the decision-making processes of non-discriminatory economic, financial and trading systems to enable them to achieve sustainable development and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Furthermore, they urged developed countries to provide duty-free and quota-free market access to their products; called for an early conclusion to the Doha Development Round; and expected their special needs to be taken into account at the World Summit on Food Security, to be held in Rome in November 2009, and at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009.

9. **Mr. Jiménez Sauma** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that there were serious imbalances in the distribution of the benefits of globalization. The current financial and economic crisis had exacerbated those inequities and jeopardized development gains. The current international financial and economic system must therefore become more equitable and sustainable, particularly through reform of the international financial institutions to ensure

more inclusive multilateralism. The United Nations should play a central and proactive role in that respect.

10. In responding to the current crisis, the international community should, inter alia: strengthen its political commitment towards the timely achievement of the MDGs; reach a global consensus on the need to resist protectionism and renew trade; renew its commitment to the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round; achieve a successful outcome to the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December 2009; and enhance cooperation at all levels to tackle issues surrounding food security, climate change and energy (see A/64/310, para. 62).

11. It was essential for development actors to consider the particular needs of middle-income countries in order to promote the United Nations agenda of development for all, including the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals and, in particular, the MDGs. While many middle-income countries had made notable economic and social progress over the past two decades, much remained to be done. Greater efforts were therefore needed, including increasing the mobilization of resources for the development needs of middle-income countries and strengthening South-South cooperation.

12. Lastly, the Group agreed that the legitimacy and relevancy of using the World Bank ad hoc definition of middle-income countries should be questioned. A much broader measurement of development was needed, which took into account other economic and social indicators.

13. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which aligned itself with the statement made by the Group of 77 and China, said that the report of the Secretary-General on development cooperation with middle-income countries (A/64/253) bolstered the case for enhanced, targeted and effective support for that category of countries. Middle-income countries continued to struggle with a diverse range of development challenges that were often underestimated or overlooked, such as income and gender inequality, social exclusion, weak institutional frameworks and environmental degradation. The United Nations system therefore needed to adopt flexible strategies and approaches in its cooperation with middle-income

countries as well as a well-defined agenda consistent with their needs and priorities.

14. The impact of the current global economic crisis on CARICOM countries had been particularly severe and their graduation from concessionary financing had only served to further exacerbate their financial situation. The criteria for determining access to such financing should be re-examined with a view to including a broader set of economic and social indicators than per capita GDP.

15. CARICOM attached great importance to the development work of the United Nations and was deeply concerned by the gradual reduction in the resources available for the Organization's operational activities for development in the region. It therefore called for a significant increase in those resources with a view to boosting the field presence of United Nations entities in the CARICOM region.

16. While CARICOM countries ranked among the most highly indebted in the Latin American and Caribbean region, they were not entitled to benefit from existing debt relief initiatives. CARICOM therefore urged the international community to review its approach to debt sustainability in highly indebted middle-income countries.

17. CARICOM supported the recommendation in the Secretary-General's report that international financial institutions should provide sufficient liquidity to compensate for the sharp reversal in international private financial inflows and to ensure debt sustainability. In that context, it also emphasized the need for the region's banks to be adequately resourced.

18. However, while access to more loans was welcome, in the longer term the region would need a significant injection of new and additional resources. CARICOM countries therefore urged developed partners to maintain or increase their development assistance.

19. CARICOM continued to advocate comprehensive reform of the international financial institutions and underscored the need for the increased participation of developing countries, including middle-income countries, in the international financial system.

20. **Mr. Wang Qun** (China) said that globalization could provide opportunities for the promotion of economic development and the attainment of the MDGs, among other benefits. However, its adverse

impacts, particularly on the least developed countries, must not be overlooked. The continuing challenge for the international community was therefore to realize the potential benefits of globalization while minimizing its negative consequences, particularly in the wake of the ongoing financial crisis.

21. In that context, the international community must continue to strengthen cooperation and coordination; pay close attention to the sustainability of financial and monetary policies; develop more proactive, flexible and forward-looking macroeconomic policies; adopt timely and effective measures to address hidden risks; resume normal trade and investment; and guide the world economy as a whole on the path towards recovery.

22. To promote a balanced development of the world economy, globalization should place national development at its centre and seek to reduce the North-South development gap. On the one hand, developed countries should increase financial and technical assistance to developing countries, promote their capacity-building efforts and help them to integrate into the global economy. On the other hand, developing countries should accelerate industrial restructuring, promote scientific and technological innovation, and foster the sustainable growth of their national economies.

23. Developing countries had a comparative disadvantage in the globalization process because they had long been unable to take part effectively in the formulation of major international economic decisions and relevant rules and regulations. To ensure that their legitimate concerns and interests were addressed, the representation and voice of developing countries in international financial institutions, in particular, must be increased in a meaningful way.

24. Multilateralism was the most effective way to respond to the challenge of globalization. As the most representative multilateral institution, the United Nations could play a major role in transforming globalization into a win-win situation for all.

25. **Mr. Ansari** (India) said that the rapid spread of the financial crisis over the past year had once again confirmed how globalized the world had become. While the crisis had demonstrated the adverse consequences of globalization, its enormous benefits in terms of enhanced flows of goods, services, capital and people must not be overlooked. The international

community should therefore focus on harnessing the benefits of globalization for all while minimizing its negative impacts, particularly on the most vulnerable. It was important that globalization should be fair and inclusive.

26. Increased assistance to those countries unable to cope with the adverse impact of globalization was critical, particularly with a view to the implementation of counter-cyclical policies. The need for targeted Government interventions to ensure inclusive growth had also been clearly established. In that respect, his Government had been actively pursuing a strategy of faster and inclusive growth as part of its overall development efforts.

27. In a broader context, globalization should not mean “one-size-fits-all” policies. The policy space in the economies of developing countries therefore needed to be enlarged so that those countries could select appropriate policies in the light of their specific development challenges.

28. Climate change was a matter of serious concern for all countries. The outcome of the forthcoming Copenhagen Climate Change Conference needed to be ambitious and equitable while respecting the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

29. In that connection, he recalled that advanced technologies to combat climate change remained unaffordable for developing countries. His delegation would therefore welcome a more balanced intellectual property regime for technology transfer. He also urged developed countries to remove trade barriers and agricultural subsidies that stood in the way of equitable international trade regimes.

30. A major key deficiency of globalization was the lack of effective global governance. In that respect, genuine and comprehensive reform of international governance structures would be required, including reform of the Bretton Woods institutions and expansion of the Security Council.

31. **Mr. Aluteni** (Namibia) said that the negative consequences of globalization often appeared to outweigh its advantages. Only multilateralism could reverse that trend and the critical role of the United Nations in that regard could not be overestimated.

32. The continuing challenge facing the international financial and economic order was to realize the benefits of globalization while minimizing its risks. The current economic and financial crisis called for a multilateral response to assist the countries most adversely affected, whose achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGS, had been called into question.

33. Namibia, like most middle-income countries, had been disproportionately affected by the global economic crisis because of falling demand for its commodities and manufactured goods, as well as the inaccessibility of concessional financing for development. Middle-income countries were thus faced with genuine challenges that they could not address on their own. In that regard, he stressed their need for increased and better targeted international support to enable them to fulfil their true potential.

34. **Ms. Gervasi** (Peru) said that the severe economic and financial crisis had undoubtedly weakened global growth, confirming that the world had become increasingly interdependent. In view of its universal legitimacy and composition, the United Nations was uniquely qualified to play a key role in reforming the international financial architecture, which was one of the main components of globalization.

35. Given the complementary mandates of the United Nations and the international financial institutions, increased coordination, cooperation and coherence between them was essential. It was also imperative to give developing countries a greater voice in decisions taken at the global level that directly affected their national policies. To that end, the United Nations could help to provide the framework for reforms that would enhance the credibility, legitimacy, effectiveness and governance of the international financial institutions.

36. Since trade was also a fundamental part of the international economic system, the United Nations should monitor the financial reform process in that area with a view to reaffirming the multilateral trading system, eliminating all forms of protectionism and achieving an ambitious, balanced and development-oriented conclusion to the Doha Round. At the same time, middle-income countries such as Peru were in great need of increased international technical and financial cooperation to strengthen their national capacities.

37. In response to the economic crisis, the United Nations should strengthen its system for development and the international community must reaffirm the commitments undertaken to achieve the MDGs. In addition, the crisis must not be allowed to delay necessary global action to combat climate change or food insecurity.

38. The current economic situation should be seen as an opportunity for the United Nations to redouble its efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its development programmes and to strengthen system-wide coherence of the Organization.

39. **Mr. Hyeo-Kyeong Lee** (Republic of Korea) said that the countless benefits brought by globalization had often been overshadowed by its adverse impacts. The financial, food, fuel and climate crises had highlighted the need for collective efforts to manage globalization in a more sustained way.

40. The economic and financial crisis would hamper the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS), which would help to monitor the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable. It also stressed the need to establish improved international financial regulatory systems and a social protection floor; to increase access to food, fuel and finance for the poor; and to address the challenge of climate change.

41. In an increasingly interdependent world, any effective solution to global problems required a fair and inclusive system in which the benefits of globalization were shared broadly and equitably. Such renewed multilateralism must place the United Nations at the centre of international cooperation. In that context, it was essential to take full advantage of existing and potential expertise within the United Nations system. To that end, his delegation fully supported efforts aimed at achieving system-wide coherence and encouraged the United Nations to work with other multilateral, bilateral and civil society organizations, particularly the Group of Twenty (G-20).

42. **Mr. Hiew** (Malaysia) said that while globalization had undeniably increased living standards for some, it was also responsible for marginalizing others, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable. Moreover, the multiple crises facing the world had

clearly arisen as a result of unfettered globalization that failed to place the interest of the greater good at its heart. It was therefore important that due attention should be paid to the two key deficiencies of globalization: the inequitable distribution of its benefits and the lack of effective global governance. That objective could be accomplished through greater multilateralism and cooperation among all countries.

43. In order to improve the management of globalization, more proactive analysis was required to stave off and better address potential crises in the future. The coherence of the international financial system should also be enhanced and relevant regulations, norms and standards implemented to ensure that the system was driven not only by profit motives but also by broader societal objectives.

44. It was disheartening that expertise in the financial sector had not been used to improve the lives of the greatest number of people worldwide. For example, infrastructure development, a key component for achieving the MDGs, had not benefited from the increased sophistication of financial instruments. In that context, serious consideration should be given to the establishment of a dedicated pool of international financing for the development of infrastructure and agriculture in developing countries.

45. His country was continuously making adjustments and reforms to develop more resilient and efficient financial systems at the national level. A concerted effort would be required by all nations to get the global economy back on the right track. The United Nations must play a key facilitating role in that regard.

46. **Mr. Hayashi** (Japan) said that his delegation agreed with the analysis of globalization set out in the Secretary-General's report; globalization had generated enormous benefits for those who had been able to seize the opportunities but was also the cause of serious internal and transnational issues. First and foremost, as the Secretary-General's report pointed out, the benefits of globalization had accrued to the few rather than to the many. Inequities and disparities within societies had been exacerbated even in countries where macroeconomic indicators showed healthy trends.

47. Secondly, as a result of the free flow of goods, services and individuals, countries were constantly faced with new types of threats that crossed national borders so easily that States were not always able to respond in a timely and effective manner. Such cross-

border threats included the H1N1 pandemic, the food crisis and the financial crisis as well as sea level rise and other adverse impacts of climate change. In order to tackle global issues, global responses by the international community as a whole were needed.

48. Likewise, to respond effectively to the diverse and interconnected challenges to the most vulnerable people, each country needed to take people-centred measures that were comprehensive and multisectoral. Such measures should focus not only on protecting individuals and communities but also on empowering them to deal with the threats themselves. The human security approach emphasized prevention as well as partnership and collaboration among various stakeholders on the ground including national and local governments, international agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations.

49. A group of Member States had formed the Friends of Human Security in October 2006 and held six-monthly follow-up meetings to discuss ways to mainstream a human security component into United Nations activities. His Government had suggested that a report by the Secretary-General on that issue would facilitate constructive deliberations based on the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

50. **Mr. Meñez** (Philippines) observed that the process and effects of globalization would proceed regardless of efforts by the United Nations or any international body to regulate or control them. Progress and innovation in information and communications technology — a major driver of globalization — far outpaced whatever multilateral regulatory framework one might try to set in place. International trade and transport were largely driven by the private sector whose main consideration was profit, although corporate social responsibility was an idea that was trying to take hold. Legal and illegal migration continued to increase as opportunities and expectations were raised across national borders.

51. Understanding the complex interrelationships created by globalization required accurate information on trends and impacts on people, systems and events which the United Nations system was uniquely positioned to provide. The Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) was a useful tool for understanding, reacting to or preventing situations that might develop. However, once the Organization had provided objective information and assessments,

the responsibility for actually taking direct action still lay with individual Member States, which at times succumbed to the inaction caused by competing interests at the national and international levels.

52. While the term “middle-income countries” was relatively new, the problems those countries faced were not new or specific to them. None of them, however, had access to the support they needed to address the social and developmental problems they shared with the least developed countries.

53. Noting that the majority of the world’s poor actually resided in middle-income countries (A/64/253, summary), he said that a new approach to debt sustainability was of particular importance to middle-income countries. The Philippines, whose debt to GDP ratio was around 56 per cent, was particularly concerned that debt servicing hampered its ability to respond to the global financial and economic crisis, and to deal with its food and energy problems and vulnerability to extreme weather events.

54. The problems of middle-income countries that deserved attention and assistance should be apportioned equitably among Member States. The Philippines realized that priority must be given to the least developed countries and other vulnerable groups. Real poverty, however, was not perfectly measured by per capita income; a more accurate measure might perhaps be based on the level of human development.

55. **Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) observed that the worldwide economic and financial crisis had spread rapidly as a result of globalization, and that the interdependence of countries’ economies had amplified its effects. While it was true that globalization had brought many advantages, those advantages were not equitably distributed among all peoples and countries. Africa was a glaring example of that discrepancy; its share in exports and foreign direct investment (FDI) flows had remained significantly lower than the world average and had not kept pace with the boost given by globalization to trade and capital flows.

56. In order to achieve a more equitable sharing of the benefits of globalization, the developing countries, and, in particular, the least developed countries, must be integrated into the world economy. To that end, national capacity to generate income and create jobs — key factors in eliminating poverty and combating exclusion — must be strengthened, and the

international community must fulfil its commitments to provide technical, financial and political assistance.

57. The conclusion of the Doha Round would be of crucial importance in strengthening the multilateral trading system so as to allow harmonious progress and development of the world economy and stay the damage from crisis-generated protectionism. Steady financial flows from the developed countries to the developing countries, in the form of direct investments and development assistance, would be crucial, and the developed countries must encourage emigrant remittances, so that developing countries would have the budgetary capacity to achieve their development goals.

58. A sharing of the economic risks and advantages of globalization through responsible and solidarity-based management of interdependence would require greater participation by developing countries in the process of reshaping international economic relations. Morocco thus welcomed the initiatives and commitments that strengthened the multilateral dimension of the management of international economic relations, such as the reaffirmation, at the end of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, of the role of the Organization in that area and the need to enhance its cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions.

59. In keeping with its commitment to South-South cooperation and its belief that regional integration should bring about development and a sharing of the fruits of globalization, Morocco had signed a number of commercial and free trade agreements with several countries of the South and had exempted the least developed countries of Africa from payment of customs duties.

60. To cushion the impact of the world economic crisis and prevent it from compromising the attainment of the objectives of its national human resources development strategy, Morocco had taken a series of measures to come to the aid of the most affected population groups and economic sectors.

61. Globalization was also affecting the environment, as the growth of world trade was based upon intensive exploitation of natural resources and on polluting methods of production and transportation. An environmental dimension must be integrated into the world economic and financial system within the

framework of broad cooperation among all countries based on their common but differentiated responsibilities, their respective capacities and their economic and social conditions. In keeping with its commitment to sustainable economic development, Morocco was currently finalizing a national charter on the environment, the fruit of ten years of effort, and was ready to share its experience with other countries.

62. **Mr. Zdovorov** (Belarus) said that it was important to strengthen the economic potential and political role of middle-income countries, which could be major drivers of stable economic and political development, and that assisting those countries with their specific socio-economic problems would play an important role in ensuring sustainable global development. The ultimate goal of such assistance was to strengthen the global economy, which would create a win-win situation for all.

63. His delegation supported the recommendations contained in both reports of the Secretary-General under consideration, particularly the proposal for the development of new credit and other mechanisms to provide effective assistance to middle-income and developing countries. Particular attention should be paid to enhancing cooperation between the United Nations system and middle-income countries through targeted assistance.

64. *Mr. Mičić (Serbia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

#### **Agenda item 57: Eradication of poverty and other development issues** (*continued*)

##### **(c) Human resources development** (A/64/329)

65. **Mr. Seth** (Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on human resources development (A/64/329), recalled that the General Assembly had repeatedly emphasized the critical role of human resources development in achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development, and in its resolution 62/207 had requested the Secretary-General to take stock of progress made and lessons learned in pursuing human resources development, for its consideration at the sixty-fourth session.

66. Empirical evidence had increasingly shown a mutually reinforcing relationship between human

resources development and sustained economic growth. Countries that had invested in human resources development were more likely to enter a virtuous cycle where healthier and increasingly skilled human resources promoted innovation and economic growth, which in turn improved the conditions of human resources. On the other hand, economies that had not invested in human resources development were more likely to experience limited economic growth, lacking the critical skills and competence necessary to promote innovation and entrepreneurship.

67. Countries, however, still faced formidable challenges in developing a sufficient pool of human resources capable of responding to their development needs. Unstable macroeconomic conditions, income inequalities, unemployment, poverty, the spread of infectious diseases, brain drain and conflict were some of the main obstacles that hindered and sometimes reversed efforts to promote human resources development. The current economic and financial crisis was further diminishing the ability of many countries, especially the most vulnerable ones, to address those difficulties.

68. The Secretary-General's review of existing human resources development strategies had identified some important aspects of current experiences and lessons learned. The most successful approaches had been those where human resources development strategies had been fully integrated into the national development strategy and had constantly adjusted to national development needs and objectives. That had ensured a strong link between education, training and employment and thus contributed to maintaining a productive and competitive workforce.

69. Less successful approaches had relied more strongly on the market to determine the allocation of resources and investment in human resources development. That had led to a more decentralized, market-oriented approach to education and training, with participation by a broader range of actors, including the private sector, to respond to the growing demand for skilled professionals.

70. Without a comprehensive national human resources development strategy, however, those approaches had often resulted in the clustering of economic and social development around specific regions where research and education institutions had flourished. Those fast-growing centres, which usually



contributed to the highest national percentages of export and growth, had often been counterbalanced by widespread underdevelopment in the rest of the country.

71. In many developing countries, especially in the least developed ones, high spending on human resources development had not yet translated into economic growth. The implementation of a comprehensive human resources development strategy that strove to match the needs of the economy to develop business and entrepreneurial skills in the workforce remained a critical challenge, with the links between training, education and labour market remaining weak. Lack of resources and capacities often constituted major obstacles to the formalization and implementation of human resources development strategies and policies in those countries.

72. Lessons learned from that analysis, that should be taken into account in the formulation and implementation of human resources development strategies, included the finding that comprehensive national human resources development frameworks regulating national training and education systems were essential for ensuring equality of access to educational opportunities.

73. The private sector could significantly strengthen national education and training systems by promoting a culture of productivity and performance. It was thus essential to ensure that the private sector's efforts were consistent with national human resources development objectives. Governments should continue to play a critical role in supporting human resources development and ensuring partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders.

74. Finally, international assistance remained critical to support national efforts to promote human resources development as a basis for sustained economic growth and development. Such support was even more critical when it was needed to help mitigate the effects of a crisis on the most vulnerable countries.

75. **Ms. Osman** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, observed that the sub-item on human resources development might profitably have been discussed with the other two sub-items under the item on the eradication of poverty, to which it was very closely linked.

76. **Mr. Seth** (Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) replied that that was a very perceptive observation. Human resources development, through its effect of strengthening the economy, was indeed very important to poverty eradication, but unfortunately, owing to the large number of consultations required, the report had not been finalized in time for it to be discussed any earlier. The matter had been referred to the Bureau of the Second Committee, which had agreed to the report's being presented separately from the other two sub-items.

77. **The Chairperson** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the sub-item.

78. **Ms. Osman** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group had continuously affirmed the indispensability of human resources development to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, and in particular the Millennium Development Goals. In that regard, the Group had taken note of the "growing consensus about the mutually reinforcing relationship between human resources development and sustained economic growth" to which the Secretary-General's report alluded.

79. The global economic and financial crisis in combination with other external shocks such as the energy and food crisis and climate change could seriously jeopardize current development achievements, provoking a severe human development crisis in developing countries. It was therefore even more urgent now for countries to integrate human resource development strategies into overall national development plans, both to respond to the crisis and to address the various aspects of implementing human resources development policies, with regard to health, education, the brain drain, gender empowerment, bridging the digital divide and enhancing coordination.

80. International support was critical in helping to mitigate the impacts of the crisis, mobilizing capacity and resources and assisting the efforts of developing countries to create a pool of productive and competitive human resources capable of leading their long-term recovery and sustainable development efforts.

81. **Mr. Mac-Donald** (Suriname), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that CARICOM aligned itself with the statement just made

by the delegation of Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Eradication of poverty and hunger had become one of the greatest global challenges facing the world today. And there was more to those challenges than met the eye, for example, the lack of intangible assets and social goods, such as legal identity, good health, physical integrity, freedom from fear and violence, organizational capacity, the ability to exert political influence, and the freedom to claim rights and live in dignity.

82. Given the adverse impacts of the current global crises in the areas of finance and economy, food security, energy and climate change, the global community needed to make a dramatic shift from “business as usual” in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Failure to realize the goal of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty and hunger must not be an option. While the establishment of a third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty after 2017, and perhaps other Decades thereafter, would highlight the importance of the issue, it would also expose the historic fact that the global community was able but not willing to make the necessary effort to come to the aid of the disadvantaged and to end extreme poverty.

83. CARICOM was concerned at the overall decline in official development assistance (ODA) and called on the developed countries to fulfil all their ODA-related commitments, including that to provide 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) for ODA by 2015 and to provide 0.15 to 0.20 of their GNP in ODA to the least developed countries.

84. CARICOM also stressed the urgent need for the international community, particularly the developed countries, to take effective measures to allocate new and additional resources to assist developing countries to respond efficiently to both the imminent and the long-term challenges of food security. South-South cooperation in providing food emergency responses was also vital.

85. The agricultural sector and rural areas, where a significant share of the poor in most of the developing world continued to live and work, required increased attention. In that regard, CARICOM welcomed the convening of the World Summit on Food Security by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in November 2009 and hoped that it would

foster the necessary political will and commitment to address that important issue.

86. Accepting primary responsibility for their own development, many CARICOM members had established national policies and strategies to realize economic growth with a view to being integrated into the world economy. That process, however, had been thwarted by the current economic and financial crises, and many of the CARICOM members were now in an economic downturn. The result was a decrease in Government and the private-sector resources for investment in productive employment as a principal route out of poverty. The economic downturn in the Caribbean region was also limiting critical investments in education and skills training needed to make people employable, thereby promoting social inclusion and greater equity in society.

87. He expressed concern at the graduation of all but one CARICOM country to middle-income status on the basis of certain limited and arbitrary macroeconomic criteria, such as per capita income. That “graduation” limited the CARICOM members’ access to development assistance.

88. Legal empowerment of the poor should be a development strategy as well as a development objective. The poor should benefit from a human rights-based approach to development by which they were protected and enabled to use the law to advance their rights and their interests as citizens and economic actors. Access to government institutions and services that protected and promoted human rights should be open to all, especially women and children, thereby enabling the poor adequately to voice their needs, seek redress against injustice, participate in public life, and influence policies that would ultimately shape their lives.

89. Legal empowerment of the poor should also focus on removing unnecessary barriers to formal markets and institutions, increasing opportunities for business linkages and market access, creating pro-poor property rights systems and ensuring equitable and sustainable access to land and other natural resources.

90. **Mr. Dabiré** (Burkina Faso) said that, like other least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, Burkina Faso was passing through a difficult economic period, marked by a steady drop in its volume of trade and capital inflows. Nevertheless, by adopting a strategic framework for poverty reduction

the country had succeeded in consolidating its macroeconomic stability and mitigating the negative effects of the financial, food and energy crises. The resulting improvement in macroeconomic indicators such as gross domestic product, the human development index and the level of inflation, however, while encouraging, had not been substantial enough to bring about a significant increase in income or reduction in poverty.

91. The economy of Burkina Faso was still prey to extraneous shocks and unpredictable climatic events. The destructive floods of September 2009 had been a further setback to the Government's development efforts. He thanked the donors for the assistance provided at that time and expressed the hope that all Burkina Faso's partners would continue to support its development efforts.

92. The legal empowerment of the poor, as both a development strategy and a development objective, created a better socio-economic atmosphere and gave a boost to development. Recognition of people's fundamental rights must evolve into explicit legal provisions making it possible to attack the root causes of discrimination and exclusion.

93. As the international community prepared for a high-level meeting in 2010 to evaluate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, it was clear that that progress was no more than modest, particularly for the least developed countries. Burkina Faso called on the international community and all partners to focus their development efforts on helping vulnerable groups, in particular rural women and children, and on improving health, education and infrastructure.

94. **Mr. Resnick** (Israel) said that as stated in the draft resolution on the item, a coherent, multi-faceted approach was necessary in order to eradicate poverty. Legal empowerment of the poor, in particular with regard to property and labour rights, coupled with promotion of employment and gender equality, should be approached as interrelated challenges requiring a coordinated response. The work of the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor was important: equipping people with awareness of their rights to accumulate property through gainful employment was an essential component of any successful transition from poverty to self-sufficiency.

95. Emphasis on the key role of women's empowerment in combating poverty had long been a cornerstone of Israel's approach to sustainable development. On the one hand, it had focused on directly training women from developing countries in, inter alia, the achievement of entrepreneurial success, microenterprise development, rural tourism, the creation of additional sources of income, smallholder agricultural techniques, and media strategies for social change.

96. In addition, Israel had emphasized the development of empowerment strategies to heighten policymakers' awareness of issues relating to women's economic and social welfare and to foster capacity-building for women's organizations. In that connection, it looked forward to hosting some 60 women leaders from over 50 countries, as well as the United Nations Special Adviser on Gender Issues, at a forthcoming international conference to examine the effects of the global financial crisis on women.

97. The twin goals of promoting gender equality and fostering employment opportunities could both be advanced by development of innovative agricultural technologies. Israel had designed sustainable agricultural models tailored to the specific needs and capabilities of smallholder farming communities, which had been used with success in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.

98. **Mr. Prasittirat** (Thailand) warned that the vicious cycle of poverty, if left unaddressed, could continue for generations. Furthermore, where poverty was the result of inequitable distribution of wealth and opportunity, it carried the seeds of social conflict, often with transboundary effects.

99. Since 1992, poverty alleviation had been a key strategic target area of Thailand's National Economic and Social Development Plan. Steady progress had been made: poverty incidence had declined from 33.69 per cent in 1990 to 8.48 per cent in 2007, while the proportion of people suffering from hunger had decreased by three quarters in the same period. Those two statistics showed that Thailand had comfortably achieved Goal 1 of the MDGs ahead of schedule. Despite the impact of the world economic crisis, Thailand was determined to stay on course to reduce poverty incidence to 4 per cent in 2009.

100. People were a country's most valuable asset. In line with that belief, the Royal Thai Government had

placed people at the heart of its development policies. Priority was given to the poor and the most vulnerable. The Government's First Stimulus Package in response to the world economic crisis had contained immediate measures which could have a long-term impact, especially the guarantee of free 15-year basic education for all to help ensure a reasonable future for children from poor families. Also included in the Package was a skills-training programme for the unemployed and recent graduates, designed to equip them for an increasingly competitive labour market.

101. As the rural population tended to suffer more from poverty and development disparities, a focus on community was essential in pro-poor growth and human development policies. The Government had carried out programmes to enhance sustainable agriculture, business competitiveness and bargaining power of rural people and facilitate market access for their local products. Those programmes had also supported communities in developing their own long-term self-help schemes, such as the establishment of saving groups, networks of cooperatives and farm producers, revolving credit lines and local safety nets.

102. Finally, Thailand attached importance to international cooperation on human resources development. In regional and subregional frameworks, Thailand had been providing support for human resources development projects such as the establishment of skill development centres, the reinforcement of vocational training, and training programmes in transportation, banking, public management and other areas.

*The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.*