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Sixty-fifth session

56th plenary meeting

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Official Records

President: Mr. Deiss (Switzerland)

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

Agenda items 117 and 118

Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

The President (*spoke in French*): The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is an important topic that has now been on the agenda for several sessions. In that context, I thank Their Excellencies Ambassadors Sanja Štiglic and Jorge Argüello for their effective work as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly at the sixty-fourth session. Their efforts led to the adoption of the Working Group's report (A/64/903) and of resolution 64/301. Those documents will be useful to our discussion today.

On several occasions since the opening of this session, I have restated my vision of a strong General Assembly that serves as the preeminent forum for global debate. I have noted with satisfaction that that vision is shared by many. The holding of informal debates before and after the Group of Twenty (G-20) Summit, which happened on 16 and 22 November and sought build a bridge between the G-20 and the General Assembly, is one way of reaffirming the central role of our Organization in global governance.

Another element, which is just as important, is that of ensuring that our Organization is equipped to meet the challenges it faces and undertake the

necessary reform. Revitalizing the work of the General Assembly is part of that effort.

Progress has already been made in a number of areas. For example, the practice of electing the President of the General Assembly at least three months before he takes office allows him better to prepare himself for the role. Similarly, the prerogative of the President to organize informal thematic debates is an effective way to involve the General Assembly in matters of global debate and to ensure an effective working relationship with other players in the arena of global governance.

Since assuming my functions as President, I have also had regular interactions with all the successive Presidents of the Security Council for this year and the President of the Economic and Social Council. But, as noted in the draft resolution introduced for discussion today, progress still needs to be made in a great number of areas, from the procedure for the nomination of the Secretary-General to the working methods of the Assembly.

The importance of these issues should not be underestimated. An overloaded agenda risks undermining the quality of the debate. The organization of too many high-level meetings, for example, dilutes the attention given to each individual one. In that context, I followed with great interest the efforts undertaken by the Second Committee to rationalize its agenda. I am convinced that that approach is an example to be followed for the General Assembly.

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This initiative is in the Assembly's hands. I expect today's debate to lead to a clear willingness to move forward on initiatives to be taken to revitalize the Assembly, which will give useful signposts to the new Ad Hoc Working Group on Revitalization of the General Assembly, the Chairs of which, Ambassadors Dalius Čekuolis and Camillo Gonsalves, have agreed to steer the Group's work. I thank them most particularly and assure them of my support in their work.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; countries of the European Free Trade Association and members of the European Economic Area Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, endorse this statement.

Mr. President, the European Union first of all thanks your predecessor, Mr. Ali Treki, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. We also thank Ms. Sanja Štiglic and Mr. Jorge Argüello, the Permanent Representatives of Slovenia and Argentina, respectively, for their work as Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly. The European Union also thanks you, Mr. President, for the prompt appointment of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania, Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, and the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Mr. Camillo Gonsalves, as Co-Chairs of the Working Group.

Mr. President, you devoted your statement opening the general debate of the sixty-fifth session to restoring the central role of the United Nations and the General Assembly in global governance (see A/65/PV.11). In your opening address, you stressed that too often public opinion views the General Assembly as a powerless forum, with no real impact. You voiced the hope that the sixty-fifth session would show that the Assembly is capable of making a difference. The European Union shares your frank assessment of the situation.

Nevertheless, the change that you call for, Sir, cannot be achieved without effort. The General Assembly will prove the skeptics wrong and return to

the heart of global governance only if the Member States affirm their willingness to review their habits and working methods in order to focus fully on the questions that concern public opinion and the international community as a whole.

That exercise will require difficult choices in revising the Assembly's priorities and working methods, particularly in terms of rationalizing and reducing the number of resolutions. Those efforts should nevertheless allow us to devote ourselves more to substantive political debates on emerging issues on which the United Nations — and the General Assembly in particular — are called to take action.

Mr. President, the European Union stands resolutely at your side in your efforts to revitalize the General Assembly and reaffirms its support for effective multilateralism, of which the United Nations is a central actor. The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force one year ago, further stresses that aspect. Bolstering the United Nations therefore remains one of the European Union's principal priorities.

The European Union is convinced that the General Assembly, as one of the main bodies of the United Nations, should demonstrate its relevance by concentrating on issues that are in the interest of the Member States, the international community as a whole and public opinion.

The European Union has always believed that it is vital to develop specific initiatives designed to improve the Assembly's performance. That is why we note with satisfaction the fact that the latest report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, as called for by resolution 64/301, includes an in-depth review of the inventory table of all the relevant proposals on this subject, as well as on the status of their implementation.

The debate on the working methods of the Second Committee, which took place at the opening at the Committee's work during the sixty-fifth session, is another example of concrete progress that the European Union welcomes. That initiative should be extended to the other Committees.

In conclusion, the European Union wants to stress the fundamental role played by the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly and will continue to engage in a pragmatic manner in the work of the Working Group. In that context, the

European Union is pleased to contribute to the crafting of a plan of work.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

ASEAN is consistent in its view that the General Assembly is the primary policymaking and representative body of the United Nations. It recognizes the role of the General Assembly in addressing issues of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Therefore, ASEAN underlines the imperative of revitalizing the work of the Organization with a view to further enhancing the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly. That requires the commitment and political will of all Member States and should be conducted in a comprehensive, inclusive and transparent manner.

In that regard, ASEAN joins the call for the full implementation of resolution 64/301, adopted on 13 September 2010, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. ASEAN appreciates the efforts of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly that resulted in its report contained in document A/64/903, of 8 September 2010.

ASEAN cannot emphasize enough the vital importance of information flow, cooperation and coordination among the principle organs of the United Nations. ASEAN therefore encourages, inter alia, the continued holding of periodic meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as well as of informal meetings of the Security Council President with all Member States before the preparation of Council's annual report, as has been the case in 2008, 2009 and 2010. We support efforts to promote positive, effective and balanced working relationships among the principal organs of the United Nations, especially between the Security Council and the General Assembly, as set out in Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, so as to ensure the effective discharge of their respective mandates, duties and functions.

The strengthening of the Office of the President of the General Assembly remains essential to the

process of revitalization. That includes, among other things, the strengthening of its institutional memory, adequate budgetary allocation in accordance with existing procedures, and the provision of appropriate protocol and security services and office space for the President, within existing resources. In that connection, ASEAN believes it necessary to ensure both the sufficient provision and efficient use of financial and human resources for the Office in order to improve its substantive work.

The selection and appointment of the Secretary-General is yet another issue of great interest and deep concern to the international community. ASEAN's view is that that issue should be addressed in a comprehensive and transparent way that includes all Member States, with due regard to regional rotation and gender equality.

ASEAN urges Member States to strictly observe Article 97 of the Charter, as well as provisions of Assembly resolutions 11(I) of 24 January 1946 and 51/241 of 31 July 1997, concerning the role of the General Assembly, in appointing the Secretary-General upon the recommendation of the Security Council. Furthermore, we encourage the President of the General Assembly to consult with Member States to identify and endorse potential candidates, then forward the results to the Security Council.

The General Assembly should assume a more proactive role in dealing with issues of common concern to the international community, including international peace and security and the economy, as well as issues relating to the new peacebuilding architecture, which has made immense contributions to the purposes and principles of the Charter and the goals of the Organization.

We welcome the General Assembly's initiative in convening timely and relevant meetings in response to the global crisis, such as the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, in June 2009. ASEAN encourages the Assembly to further build on those practices.

In today's world of multi-stakeholder interaction, it is essential that the General Assembly's role and authority be revitalized to contribute to strengthening the United Nations' legitimate and universal representation in global governance. ASEAN is committed to working actively and constructively with all other partners towards that end.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

At the outset, the Non-Aligned Movement congratulates His Excellency Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and His Excellency Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania, upon their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the sixty-fifth session. Allow me also to express the gratitude of the members of the Movement to Her Excellency Ambassador Sanja Štiglic, Permanent Representative of Slovenia, and His Excellency Ambassador Jorge Argüello, Permanent Representative of Argentina, for their excellent work in co-chairing the Ad Hoc Working Group during the sixty-fourth session.

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates the importance of the revitalization of the General Assembly and the validity and relevance of its principled position with regard to that process. The Movement underlines that the revitalization process is of a political nature aimed mainly at strengthening the role of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations and its position in the wider United Nations system. The process should therefore be conducted in an inclusive, transparent and efficient manner.

The Non-Aligned Movement emphasizes the need for Member States to fully respect the functions and powers of each principal organ of the United Nations, in particular the General Assembly, and to maintain a balance among those organs within their respective Charter-based functions and powers. In that regard, the Security Council must fully observe all Charter provisions and all General Assembly resolutions that clarify the Council's relationship with the Assembly and with other principal organs.

Once again, NAM expresses its concern, raised during previous sessions, about the continuous attempt of the Security Council to encroach on powers and prerogatives of the General Assembly. Article 24 of the Charter does not provide the Security Council with the competence to address issues that fall within the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

The General Assembly, as the policymaking organ of the Organization, has the authority and the essential role for drawing the framework, setting the principles and identifying the objectives for the wider United Nations system, in its numerous organs, agencies and programmes.

The General Assembly should maintain its role and mandate in setting the priorities of the United Nations in considering all budgetary and administrative issues and reforms, including its absolute authority to allocate and reallocate financial and human resources and in the appointment of senior officials in the Secretariat, in accordance with the Charter and relevant Assembly resolutions. In that regard, the prerogatives of the Assembly as the chief oversight organ of the Organization, including for the management and procurement of peacekeeping operations, must be respected.

The Non-Aligned Movement, while expressing its readiness to continue to support all ongoing efforts to strengthen the central role and authority of the General Assembly, wishes to state that it will oppose any approach that seeks to undermine or minimize the Assembly's achievements or diminish its current role and functions, or that raises questions about its relevance and credibility.

The Non-Aligned Movement welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/301 in September, by which the General Assembly, *inter alia*, established the Ad Hoc Working Group to discuss, during the current session, issues related to the revitalization of the General Assembly and to assess in particular the status of the implementation of the Assembly's previous resolutions on this matter.

The Movement reiterates the validity and relevance of all its positions and reaffirms its willingness to contribute effectively and constructively to the activities of the Working Group in order to identify ways and means to strengthen the role and authority of the General Assembly. A thorough evaluation of the status of implementation of Assembly resolutions and a clear identification of the underlying causes behind any lack of implementation are of the utmost importance in order to progressively eliminate the constraints that still prevent the process of revitalization of the Assembly from achieving all its potential.

It is obvious that, while the prerogatives of the President of the General Assembly have not changed, his or her role and activities have drastically evolved over the years, both in adapting to the growing activities and initiatives of the Assembly and in performing official and protocol functions and making the Assembly's work more visible. It is the Movement's view that that increase in the workload should be matched with the necessary human and financial resources.

The Movement recalls, in that regard, that resolution 64/301 requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 to review the budget allocation to the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and emphasizes the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of the Office of the President, including through strengthening its institutional memory. While noting with appreciation the progress already achieved in that regard, we are of the view that a particular effort should be devoted to the implementation of the already existing resolutions on this matter as well as to identifying, during the upcoming discussions in the Working Group, ways and means to pursue this objective progressively and with determination.

NAM reaffirms the need for the selection of the Secretary-General to be more transparent and inclusive of all Member States so as to allow the General Assembly to participate effectively and efficiently in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, in conformity with the United Nations Charter.

NAM is of the view that, in full compliance with Article 97 of the Charter, one useful step to strengthen the Assembly's role in the selection process is to encourage it to consult with Member States in order to identify and to endorse candidates. A formal presentation before the Assembly of candidatures for the position of Secretary-General will undoubtedly allow for effective and useful interaction with Member States. The President of the General Assembly could, for that purpose, convene a meeting of the Assembly for an exchange of views and dialogue with all candidates. The outcome of the consultations, including a possible endorsement of candidates, would then be forwarded to the Security Council.

NAM is aware also that that mechanism, when adopted, will require a transitional period and might not be immediately applicable to the next process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms that a reinvigorated General Assembly, fully exerting its role and authority in a more responsive environment, would significantly contribute to strengthening the wider United Nations system and to the improvement of international governance and the enhancement of multilateralism. NAM is ready to cooperate and to engage with other delegations in fruitful and constructive discussion in a comprehensive, thorough and transparent manner on this agenda item.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to express Egypt's appreciation for your decision to include the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly in the main priorities and as an essential element of the Assembly's theme at its sixty-fifth session, "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance".

I take this opportunity to also thank Her Excellency Ambassador Sanja Štiglic, the Permanent Representative of Slovenia, and His Excellency Ambassador Jorge Argüello, the Permanent Representative of Argentina, for their excellent work and dedication in co-chairing the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the sixty-fourth session, and to pledge full support for the newly appointed co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the sixty-fifth session, His Excellency Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, the Permanent Representative of Lithuania, and His Excellency Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in pushing the process of revitalization of the work of the General Assembly forward.

I would like to associate Egypt with the statement made by His Excellency the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and to highlight some additional remarks Egypt deems necessary for the success of the process of revitalizing the General Assembly.

Since 1993, Member States have adopted by consensus more than 16 consecutive resolutions containing specific agreed measures aimed at

improving and enhancing the work of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative principal organ of the United Nations and at strengthening its role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law.

Unfortunately, those agreed measures have not been implemented. Furthermore, we have failed to achieve the main objectives set in the relevant paragraphs of the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). No concrete results have been achieved on this important topic thus far. That is mainly due to the lack of political will to ensure that the General Assembly plays its leading role in strict observance of the delicate balance established by the Charter among all principal organs, in particular as concerns the Security Council.

Therefore, Egypt believes that the first and crucial step to carry forward the process of the revitalization of the General Assembly would be to focus on the honest implementation of all previous resolutions adopted by consensus on this matter and on new proposals adopted during the current session. In that regard, and in accordance with paragraph 3 of resolution 64/301, we expect the Ad Hoc Working Group to conduct a thorough evaluation of the status of implementation of previous resolutions, and the Secretary-General to submit an update on the status of implementation of all those resolutions, as well as specific proposals to ensure their full implementation.

The relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council should centre on the application by both organs of their respective mandates. Unfortunately, the Security Council continues to encroach on the role and functions of the General Assembly in many aspects. On the other hand, the Assembly does not, and sometimes cannot, fully exercise its responsibilities enshrined in the Charter.

The General Assembly should actively undertake its role and respond to emerging situations that endanger international peace and security, as stipulated in Articles 10 to 14 and 35 of the United Nations Charter, and should use the procedures set out in rules 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, which enable swift and urgent action by the Assembly, bearing in mind that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The adoption of resolution 63/301, on the situation in Honduras, and of resolutions 64/10 and 64/254, on the follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, are clear illustrations of the ability of the General Assembly to take the lead in issues related to maintaining international peace and security without encroaching on the competence of the Security Council. This trend on the part of the General Assembly and its President should be encouraged and even developed, particularly when the Security Council fails to address cases involving genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, grave violations of international humanitarian law and the cessation of hostilities between belligerent parties, in fulfilment of its primary responsibility and in accordance with paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

The reform of the Security Council is imperative, at the same time, in order to make it more democratic through enlargement and the total elimination of the veto, starting with cases of major crimes. Achieving that objective will solidify the commitment of the Council's permanent members, including the new permanent members, and of all members of the General Assembly to protect peoples from such heinous crimes.

Egypt stresses that the General Assembly remains the principle organ to conduct reviews of subsidiary bodies, including the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, in accordance with its relevant resolutions. On 29 October the Assembly concluded the process of the review of the Peacebuilding Commission with a consensus (see A/65/PV.41), and Egypt stresses that the result of the review process of the Human Rights Council should also be adopted by consensus.

The General Assembly should also increase its interaction with civil society and non-governmental organizations and the private sector on relevant issues. In that regard, Egypt appreciates the steps taken by the President of the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session in convening thematic debates on topics including water, disarmament and non-proliferation and peacekeeping operations, which also contributed positively to public awareness of the Assembly and to its visibility. We also commend you, Mr. President, for continuing that practice, starting with a thematic debate on disaster risk reduction in February 2011, which will be followed by other debates on strengthening the central

role of the United Nations in global governance and other issues.

Ensuring the effectiveness of the Office of the President of the General Assembly is also essential for improving the role and the authority of the Assembly, including through enhancing the institutional memory of the Office. In that regard, we look forward to the Secretary-General's report to be submitted in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013, to review the budget allocation to the President's Office so that the General Assembly may take a decision ensuring that the financial and human resources allocated to the Office match the expanded workload of the Assembly.

The process of the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General is becoming less transparent and less inclusive over time. Article 97 of the Charter is clear in stating that "the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council". However, the Security Council — in particular the permanent members — has assumed too much power over the years in this matter, which is considered one of the many aspects of its encroachment on the prerogatives of the Assembly.

Moreover, it has been proved that resolution 11 (1) of 1946 has shortcomings in addressing the growing concern of Member States. For that reason, there is an urgent need for a genuine improvement in the current process through the honest implementation of the relevant provisions of Assembly resolutions 51/241 and 60/286. That will allow the Assembly to be more involved at early stages of the selection process when identifying candidates for this key post. The veto should not be used in the selection of the Secretary-General.

On the other hand, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the United Nations system organizations, contained in document JIU/REP/2009/8, should constitute a solid basis for discussion among Member States, within the framework of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, about ways to enhance the Assembly's role in the selection of the Secretary-General.

Our focus should not be directed only towards procedures and working methods but rather towards substantive measures. Therefore, the best way to

enhance and promote multilateralism is to revitalize the General Assembly by identifying and implementing further measures to enhance its role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency, consistently building on previous resolutions and the progress made during past sessions. As the credibility of the United Nations and its capacity to fulfil its responsibilities is increasingly linked to the ability of the General Assembly to exercise its institutional prerogatives, Egypt stresses the urgent need for strong political will in support of international good governance based on equality, transparency and accountability.

Mr. Delgado Sánchez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation fully supports the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. We would like to add a few comments in our national capacity.

First, we welcome the commendable efforts of the co-chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the sixty-fourth session, the report of the Working Group in document A/64/903, and the adoption of resolution 64/301. We also congratulate the Ambassadors of Lithuania and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for assuming the co-chairmanship during the sixty-fifth session, and we assure them of our full cooperation and help.

The revitalization of the General Assembly is a key element for the true reform of the United Nations. Until the Assembly fully exercises its functions and powers, we cannot be satisfied with our work. We cannot speak of an organization that responds to the current state of international relations unless we turn the Assembly into the centre of discussion and multilateral work.

The main problem in revitalizing the work of the General Assembly is the lack of political will on the part of certain States that want to impose their narrow political interests over the majority democratic viewpoint of the international community. That is why the revitalization of the Assembly is not a technical matter, as some would have us believe, but an essentially political matter.

That is the key to raising such important issues as the non-implementation of many General Assembly resolutions, which, although they collectively represent a significant body of standards, remain inert in many cases. That situation also applies to the many

resolutions on the revitalization of the Assembly, which have likewise seen limited implementation.

Special attention should be paid to the implementation of resolutions and recommendations concerning the election of the Secretary-General and to the search for practical measures to ensure their enforcement. As we have said on other occasions, the work of revitalizing the General Assembly cannot be limited to speeches. The Assembly enjoys all the legal prerogatives to take action. We hope that in the course of this year the Ad Hoc Working Group will adopt a broad and flexible working agenda, enabling us to achieve concrete results.

We have to guarantee the appropriate balance among the principle organs of the United Nations, in accordance with its Charter. We are particularly concerned by the frequent attempts by the Security Council to establish legal standards and definitions, overlooking the fact that according to Article 13 of the Charter it is the exclusive responsibility of the Assembly to encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification. Those dangerous trends and attempts to broaden the Security Council's agenda beyond its jurisdiction must be halted immediately, because, among other reasons, they are clear violations of the United Nations Charter.

The General Assembly is the principle deliberative, policymaking and most representative body of the United Nations. It enjoys legitimacy and prestige due to its broad membership and democratic character as the ultimate expression of the sovereign equality of States. The revitalization of its work is an issue of the utmost importance.

Only a body with the characteristics of the General Assembly can face up to today's global problems, which require more than the limited capacities of any one State or even group of States, no matter how strong they may believe themselves to be. Global problems call for global solutions, with the participation of everyone. If we fail in this, the price could be the very existence of humankind. The General Assembly is the only body that can orchestrate such efforts.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): I am honoured to address the General Assembly on behalf of India at today's joint debate. We believe that the issue of the revitalization of the General Assembly has assumed particular significance in recent years. My delegation

was therefore encouraged by the theme chosen by you, Mr. President, for the general debate at the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly in September this year, namely, "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance". Indeed, we would like to place on record our appreciation for that. We also welcome your personal attention to matters of badly needed institutional reform, in particular the reform of the Security Council and the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

The starting point of my delegation's position on the issue of revitalizing the General Assembly is the firm belief that this will be possible only when the Assembly's position as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in both letter and spirit. The General Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues. This was the role intended for the Assembly under Article 10 of the Charter of the United Nations — that it discuss any questions or matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the Charter, that is to say: the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council and the International Court of Justice, as well as the Secretariat.

My delegation participated actively in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly at the sixty-fourth session. We provided a number of inputs at the meetings held during the past session. Those inputs were provided in a spirit of constructive engagement, and we are pleased that they were taken on board in the negotiations leading to the adoption of resolution 64/301.

I am happy to place on record our appreciation for the good work done by the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group last year, Ambassadors Sanja Štiglic, of Slovenia, and Jorge Argüello, of Argentina. Equally, I would like to place on record my delegation's appreciation for the work done by the Algerian delegation as the Non-Aligned Movement chair on this issue, as well as for the other negotiating partners who worked in a spirit of cooperation.

While we are generally happy that resolution 64/301 has been able to highlight some of the

important steps required on our collective journey towards a revitalized General Assembly, we firmly believe that we still have some distance to travel.

Let me place on record my delegation's resolve to continue to actively participate in the deliberations on this issue in the current session. We are enthused by the fact that you, Mr. President, have chosen two outstanding and distinguished colleagues of mine, His Excellency Mr. Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania, to co-chair this year's Ad Hoc Working Group. They can count on the Indian delegation as they go about their important task.

Without prejudging the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Working Group, which should start soon, I would like to place on record the Indian delegation's considered views on some important aspects of the issue of the revitalization of the General Assembly. First of all, it is critical that we establish a proper relationship of respect for the respective mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council, in the spirit of the Charter. Here, it is particularly important that the Council not encroach upon the mandate of the General Assembly by making extremely wide and permissive interpretations of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security, a breach of the peace, an act of aggression or a situation in which it can take action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

As we prepare to rejoin the Security Council after a hiatus of 19 years, it is clear that the Council's agenda is, to say the least, overburdened because it has anointed itself with the responsibility for dealing with issues that, although seemingly important, leave it with less time to deal with the real hotspots that constitute the real threats to international peace and security. The balance between the General Assembly and the Council is only one of the dimensions of what needs to be addressed. We propose to raise these issues in the Ad Hoc Working Group.

The Assembly must have a greater say in the process of selecting the Secretary-General. The continued circumscription of the Assembly's role and responsibilities in the process of the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General needs to change, in the interests of the United Nations system in general

and the Assembly's prerogatives in particular. As it was the General Assembly that limited its own role, it will have to be the Assembly that claws back its rightful place in the process of selecting the Secretary-General.

The Assembly and the other entities that form part of the United Nations system must reflect diplomatic best practices in their day-to-day functioning. They have a lot to learn from Member States in that regard.

In conclusion, let me re-emphasize the need to discuss substantive measures that would strengthen the role of General Assembly as the most representative and chief deliberative, legislative and policymaking body at the disposal of the international community. The General Assembly can expect India's constructive support and participation in those efforts.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): At the outset, allow me to express our gratitude to Ambassadors Sanja Štiglic of Slovenia and Jorge Argüello of Argentina for their diligent work at the helm of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the sixty-fourth session. Under their wise leadership, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/301, which represents an important step towards the revitalization of the General Assembly. We welcome its provisions, especially in relation to the role of the General Assembly in the process of the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, the strengthening of the institutional arrangements for the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the proposal to review the working methods of the plenary and the Main Committees.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Ambassadors Camillo Gonsalves, of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Dalius Čekuolis, of Lithuania, as the co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the present session. I pledge my delegation's full support to them.

As the most representative decision-making body of the United Nations, the General Assembly is the natural political forum for the consideration of all relevant issues on the international agenda. Its legitimacy, drawn from the universal nature of its membership and its democratic status, also confers upon the General Assembly a central role in overseeing the implementation of the mandates accorded by Member States and the United Nations system. In our

endeavours to improve and strengthen the multilateral system, it is vital to ensure the vigour, efficacy and relevance of the work of the General Assembly.

Brazil believes that the principal organs of the United Nations should work in close coordination and in a mutually reinforcing and integrated manner. Focusing solely on individual bodies and their functions and duties will not suffice. It is necessary to promote better coordination and collaboration among them, in full compliance with the letter and the spirit of the Charter.

As we have previously noted, the Security Council's work needs to be complemented by actions by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in order for the system to be fully effective. The General Assembly itself should do more to meet the global challenges that beset the international community. The need to improve the functioning of the governing bodies of the United Nations system is therefore increasingly clear. It is crucial that the different governance entities of the system function not only in an integrated but also in a complementary manner.

Enhancing the direct interaction between Member States and the Secretariat should also be at the forefront of the process of the revitalization of the General Assembly. More frequent and direct dialogue between the Assembly and internal system-wide coordination mechanisms, such as the Chief Executives Board, would be an important step in that direction.

The role of the General Assembly in the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General should reflect its position as the main governing body of the United Nations. We must build on existing resolutions in order to enhance the current procedure. The full membership should have an opportunity to meet and interact with prospective candidates in a structured manner, prior to endorsement.

Also, we would strongly support more in-depth consideration of the role of the General Assembly with respect to the procedures for selecting, appointing and confirming the heads of major specialized agencies, funds and programmes, with a view to ensuring greater transparency and enhancing the participation of Member States. We believe that more balanced regional representation and rotation across senior positions within the United Nations system could be considered in the interest of the whole membership.

Mr. Tashibayev (Kazakhstan): First of all, let me thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this joint debate, which gives Member States an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to strengthen the United Nations with a view to enhancing its authority, efficiency and capacity to address effectively the full range of global challenges through one of its key deliberative and policymaking organs, namely, the General Assembly.

In an ever increasingly complex world, with the escalating proliferation of pressing issues of an unprecedented nature, it is all the more imperative to revitalize the role and authority of this body through the political will and commitment of all Member States to enable it to perform optimally and to fully exercise the power granted to it in the United Nations Charter. The revitalization of the General Assembly is a core element of the entire reform process of the United Nations, which, in turn, would lead to the reform of its other main bodies and their working methods.

Notwithstanding the equal division of functions of the three principal organs, as reflected in the United Nations Charter, there continues to be debate about their relative powers based on different interpretations of the respective provisions described in the Charter.

The costs of delay in strengthening the General Assembly are extremely high. On the other hand, overcoming differences does not entail the same high toll, and can be easily achieved through strong collective political determination on the part of Member States.

Kazakhstan takes note of measures to improve the efficiency of the General Assembly. We wish to highlight the work done thus far by the two co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Slovenia and Argentina. We are grateful for their detailed analysis of the status of existing resolutions and decisions on revitalizing the Assembly.

Member States need to examine the General Assembly's inadequate performance and offer a constructive strategy for delivering results.

A sound and professionally competent Secretariat is a *sine qua non* for implementing the recommendations for revitalizing the General Assembly. It must therefore be staffed with the most qualified personnel to perform the multifarious tasks demanded of it efficiently and effectively.

We commend the positive initiative of the President of the General Assembly to meet periodically with the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, with a view to ensuring increased cooperation, coordination and synergy in the work of the three key organs. We would also like to acknowledge the proactive stance taken in recent years by former Presidents of the General Assembly in addressing critical global issues through thematic debates and informal plenary meetings. We expect that the President of the sixty-fifth session will lead constructive intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council, which is one of the most vital issues in the process of reforming the entire Organization.

Other welcome measures include Main Committees' use of interactive debates, panel discussions and question periods to enhance informal and in-depth deliberations and bring together experts from various fields. These have enabled a dynamic and candid exchange of views between heads of departments and offices, representatives of the Secretary-General and special rapporteurs, thereby enriching the decision-making processes of the Main Committees. However, we are of the view that those initiatives should not replace reforms aimed, first and foremost, at strengthening the authority of the General Assembly.

My delegation has repeatedly voiced strong support for a greater role for the General Assembly — through debates among Member States — in the process of selecting the Secretary-General, as well as for the establishment of a procedure to require candidates to present their views before the entire Assembly.

In June 2010, Member States welcomed the President's proposal to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly on strengthening the institutional memory of his Office. During a thematic meeting held on 18 June, Kazakhstan supported the President's proposal to review the budgetary allocation for that purpose — including a regular budget for staffing, protocol, safety and security and other pertinent requirements — and to consider establishing a trust fund.

(spoke in French)

We need to continue to analyse the reasons that the resolutions that have been adopted on the

revitalization of the General Assembly have not been implemented. Resolution 64/301, which has just been adopted, is the second substantive resolution on the revitalization of the General Assembly in the span of a few years. It addresses most of the issues that we have taken up and includes our conclusions. In adopting that document, we welcomed the tenacity and expertise of the co-Chairs and the goodwill of the many delegations that made the resolution possible.

We need to raise the profile of the work of the General Assembly. We must continue to look into the reasons for the seeming lack of interest in the work of the Assembly on the part of the public by proposing cooperation with major media outlets and by using modern communication technologies.

(spoke in English)

We endorse and call for enhancing public awareness of the work and decisions of the Assembly through intensive mass media outreach, supported by greater documentation and new technologies. Of equal priority are the General Assembly's relationship with the Secretariat and the need to focus on devising voting and balloting options and processes that are more time-effective, reliable, efficient and secure.

My delegation would like to conclude by expressing its hope that concrete and significant progress on revitalizing the General Assembly will be achieved during the sixty-fifth session.

Mrs. Kolontai (Belarus) *(spoke in Russian)*: Revitalizing the work of the General Assembly continues to be a relevant issue and a priority for the delegation of the Republic of Belarus. Our common efforts are geared towards strengthening the role and status of the General Assembly as the main deliberative, guiding and representative body of the United Nations. We believe that it is necessary to focus on creating conditions conducive to enhancing the effectiveness of the General Assembly and bringing its mandate into line with the requirements of the times and the international situation.

The delegation of Belarus welcomes the report (A/64/903) of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly and the outcomes of the Group's work during the sixty-fourth session. We believe that, in order to take advantage of the progress made in past years, we must define new approaches during this session to strengthen the role,

authority, efficiency and effectiveness of the Assembly on the basis, among other things, of the resolutions that have been adopted and the assessments of their implementation.

We share the view set out in the Group's report that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is primarily a political issue that requires Member States to show the necessary will to make the anticipated changes. We wish to note the important role of the Non-Aligned Movement in the negotiating process on the revitalization of the Assembly's work and the development of constructive decisions.

In general, efforts in recent years to enhance the work of the General Assembly are starting to bear fruit. Thematic debates and interactive dialogues of the Assembly are held regularly on current international issues that are of particular relevance to Member States. The delegation of Belarus welcomes the timely circulation by the President of the Assembly at its sixty-fifth session of a list of debates to be held in the context of this session. In our opinion, that practice should be retained in the future. Moreover, we believe that it would be useful for the President to hold consultations with Member States on the selection of topics to be considered.

Significant attention has begun to be paid to improving the working relationship with other principal bodies, including the Security Council and the Secretariat. Monthly meetings are held with the participation of the President of the Assembly and the rotating presidency of the Security Council, during which the President of the Assembly regularly briefs members of the Organization. The periodic briefings by the Secretary-General on his work in the context of informal plenary meetings are proof of the enhanced work of the General Assembly and the importance of its role and status.

The activities of the President and of the Assembly itself are now more transparent and receive more attention in countries' mass media. Among other things, increased transparency has facilitated the organization of meetings between the President of the General Assembly and regional groups, which has facilitated exchanges of opinion on the priority issues of the sixty-fifth session, its working methods and the interaction between Member States and the President and his Office. We believe that that practice should be developed in the future.

However, much still remains to be done. The delegation of Belarus supports further strengthening the role of the President, improving the working methods of the Assembly and the mechanisms for selecting the Secretary-General and modernizing the voting system, thereby ensuring effectiveness and transparency in the work of the Assembly. We support further analysis and review of the implementation of the resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly in order to identify and focus on elements that continue to hamper our work.

The Republic of Belarus considers the activities of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization to be an important tool for the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and the reform of the United Nations. We firmly believe that, as a universal and democratic forum, the Committee should be at the centre of activities related to the legal aspects of United Nations reform. The delegation of Belarus believes that it is now high time to ensure the substantive content of the work of the Committee in order to improve its effectiveness and meet Member States' expectations, namely, ensuring the legal elements of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and United Nations reform as a whole.

The delegation of Belarus is consistent in its position that strengthening the role of the General Assembly should in no way infringe upon the role and powers of the Security Council and the other principle organs of the United Nations. Strengthening that role is a logical step in the development and democratization of the United Nations. Improving the functional interaction between the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly and preventing the duplication of work will certainly have a positive impact on the efforts of the United Nations to give effect to its main principles and purposes.

Many delegations have today underscored the progress made towards revitalizing the work on the General Assembly. That is certainly a positive element. Many Member States have also expressed their readiness to continue to work jointly on the issue. All that gives us hope that we are on the right track. At the same time, we must not waste time. We believe that only the joint energetic and effective efforts of Member States will help us to achieve, on the basis of the

United Nations Charter, the goal of strengthening the role and status of the General Assembly and, thereby, that of the entire Organization.

Mr. Ang (Singapore): Darwin's law of natural selection, commonly known as the survival of the fittest, emphasized the need for constant adaptation and evolution by species to suit the changing environment or face the possibility of elimination and extinction. The General Assembly, too, must endeavour to demonstrate its relevance and adapt to changes and challenges in the global environment.

The world faced many global challenges last year. Among others, the economic crisis and the influenza A (H1N1) pandemic were acute examples of how dangers today have a global reach and impact. Even as the United Nations debates whether it has a role to play in dealing with those crises, it is telling that the delivery of the General Assembly's core expertise — development assistance — has yet to achieve real effectiveness. The *Least Developed Countries Report 2010* of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which was just published on 25 November, showed that the number of least developed countries had doubled over the past 30 years, with 421 million people living below the poverty line in 2007. That is a sober reminder that the United Nations must do better to meet long-standing and new challenges, as they affect the struggle of the United Nations to find its role in providing global governance and leadership. The reform and strengthening of the General Assembly cannot be more timely or urgent.

We must remember that we are the United Nations. United means that all 192 Member States are bound by common goals and a shared vision of peace and security, sustainable development and human rights, which make up the three pillars of the United Nations. The General Assembly should not create artificial divisions between "them" and "us", whether based on region or development status. We need to constantly remind ourselves of the need to work towards the common goals we set out to achieve in the first place. We need to continually repeat to ourselves the necessity for prospering thy neighbour. The recent global economic crisis and A (H1N1) pandemic are stark reminders that we live in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world.

The word "nations" means that the General Assembly provides a level playing field for all Member

States. It places large countries alongside, and on equal terms with, small and medium-sized ones. The beauty of universal multilateralism lies in giving each nation an equal voice. That right to an equal voice must be preserved. "United Nations" therefore means that all nations, regardless of size, must pull together in solidarity at all times. In delivering his report on the work of the Organization (A/65/1) in September, the Secretary-General said that "the soul of global governance" is "a collective stand, principled and pragmatic, against forces that would divide us" (A/65/PV.11, p. 1). Regardless of which other organizations or institutions we belong to, we must continue to proudly wear our badges as Member States of the United Nations, and remember the reasons that first made us part of it.

In order to be effective, resolutions passed by the Organization need teeth, and the General Assembly must be empowered to ensure their implementation. Each year, we gather together and spend many hours seeking consensus, which means the lowest common denominator among us; and each year, we go around in circles discussing the same issues with little progress. That cannot be the aim of our work. Resolutions should have clear action plans and realistic timelines. Most important, there needs to be a responsible commitment to action on the part of all Member States. The Assembly's agenda should also be reviewed and refreshed regularly to ensure its continued relevance. Member States should regularly review resolutions that are traditionally introduced in the Assembly, to ensure that the items they address are of continued relevance and importance.

There has been much talk here about cooperation with other bodies such as regional communities, associations and organizations. However, we should first consider whether the United Nations is a valuable partner for such organizations before we think of strengthening partnerships with them. We need to get our own house in order. The General Assembly must add value and concentrate on issues in which it possesses comparative advantages. This would result in greater efficiency in the multilateral process, including at the United Nations itself.

While we are on the topic of reform, we cannot ignore that the heart of reform lies in strengthening the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. My delegation has stressed on many occasions the need for decision-making to be inclusive,

participatory and representative of all Member States. That is the value of the Assembly, where we are all equals. Under the Charter, the Security Council is part of the United Nations and is bound to work towards its goals. The Council is neither supernumerary to the United Nations nor a body standing in isolated splendour apart from it. In order to more effectively achieve its goals and its duties to Member States, it must be transparent and inclusive, with early and increased consultation with, and the participation of, all Member States. Better cooperation between the Council and the Assembly will strengthen our capacities and improve the delivery of United Nations services to people in need.

In tune with the theme for this year, it is my delegation's hope that the General Assembly will continue to remain a strong voice in global governance for many years to come. In the fight for the survival of the fittest, the Assembly must go from strength to strength and become a truly indispensable global institution of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Sumi (Japan): At the outset, allow me to express my gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Joseph Deiss, President of the General Assembly, for convening today's meeting to discuss one of the most crucial tasks on the Assembly's agenda, namely, the revitalization of its work. I also wish to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly at the previous session, Ms. Sanja Štiglic and Mr. Jorge Argüello, the Permanent Representatives of Slovenia and Argentina, for their excellent report contained in document A/64/903 and their work on resolution 64/301. I also extend a warm welcome to the now co-Chairs of this process, Mr. Dalius Čekuolis and Mr. Camillo Gonsalves, the Permanent Representatives of Lithuania and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with whom I intend to cooperate closely in order to move forward our work on the most pressing issues.

The General Assembly, where all Member States participate, is the most representative organ of the United Nations. Except under the circumstances described in Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly is empowered to address all issues and questions that fall under the responsibilities assigned to it by the Charter. Japan has devoted serious effort to advancing the process of revitalizing the Assembly and continues to contribute to the activities directed to that end.

It is our firm hope that the relationship between the General Assembly and the other principal organs of the United Nations — the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — and mutual coordination between them will be further enhanced and strengthened as the revitalization process goes forward.

Japan greatly appreciates the submission of annual reports by the Security Council to the General Assembly and the regular consultations between the Presidents of the Council and the Assembly. We welcomed this year's report of the Council (A/65/2), prepared by Nigeria, and commended that country's efforts to interact with non-Council members in the report's preparation. As urged in resolution 64/301, such interaction has taken place more often in recent years. In addition, this year's report was prepared in line with the Council President's note (S/2010/507) on that body's working methods.

In selecting the Secretary-General, the United Nations Charter clearly provides distinct roles and responsibilities for the Council and the Assembly. In that context, we should focus our discussions on the role of the Assembly in ensuring the transparency of the process and taking into account past Assembly resolutions and existing practices. In that regard, Japan would like to recall paragraph 60 of resolution 51/241, which states:

“Without prejudice to the prerogatives of the Security Council, the President of the General Assembly may consult with Member States to identify potential candidates endorsed by a Member State and, upon informing all Member States of the results, may forward those results to the Security Council.”

In addition, in paragraph 20 of resolution 60/286, the General Assembly

“Also encourage[d] formal presentation of candidatures for the position of Secretary-General in a manner that allow[ed] sufficient time for interaction with Member States, and request[ed] candidates to present their views to all States members of the General Assembly”.

In following up on resolution 64/301, it would be useful to take stock of past experiences with regard to the implementation of those General Assembly resolutions in order to facilitate our discussion.

We are well aware of the necessity of strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly and have welcomed the efforts deployed by the current and past Presidents of the General Assembly to reinforce the role and functions of the President and the Office. Recognizing the importance of the issue, Japan is prepared to join in further discussions as to how to realize that objective in an efficient and cost-effective manner within the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

At the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, we also discussed strategies that the Assembly could apply to raise public awareness concerning its activities. Possible ideas were presented, such as strengthening the relationship with the Department of Public Information or the United Nations Correspondents Association. However, it is Japan's position that the most critical way to enhance the visibility of the General Assembly is for it to work effectively towards addressing the world's challenges. At the same time, we need to provide the press with accurate information on topics of interest to it. As we are all aware, the President of the Security Council participates in press stakeouts after almost every consultation. Accordingly, in order to raise the profile of the work of the General Assembly, the President of the Assembly, the Chairs of the Main Committees and other interested parties, such as the facilitators of particular events or resolutions, should perhaps be encouraged to address the press at stakeouts more frequently and hold more frequent press conferences.

Looking forward to constructive and fruitful discussions in the Ad Hoc Working Group meetings to be convened by the co-facilitators, my delegation reiterates its commitment to contributing to the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

Mr. Mashabane (South Africa): Our delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Algeria, who spoke in his capacity as coordinator of the Non-Aligned Movement's working group on the revitalization of the General Assembly.

South Africa joins other delegations in expressing sincere gratitude to the Ambassadors of Slovenia and Argentina, who so ably facilitated the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the sixty-fourth session.

Their patient leadership made it possible for the Working Group to adopt a substantive resolution on the revitalization of the General Assembly during that session.

Similarly, my delegation further wishes to convey its congratulations to the Permanent Representatives of Lithuania and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly for the sixty-fifth session.

South Africa will continue to participate actively in the deliberations of the Working Group, with the aim of making the General Assembly more democratic, transparent and responsive. My delegation will also work with the President in an effort to ensure that the Ad Hoc Working Group delivers concrete results.

The President has set as the theme for our work at this sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance". As our Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms. Nkoana-Mashabane, said in her statement during the general debate in September 2010, our delegation

"supports the choice of this theme, and we wish to reiterate our belief in the centrality of the United Nations and the system of multilateralism.

"Despite the challenges that face humanity in the twenty-first century, the relevance of the United Nations as a multilateral mechanism through which a myriad of complex world affairs can be administered and resolved cannot be overemphasized" (A/65/PV.17, p. 26).

It is our view that the full reform of the United Nations cannot be achieved without the proper and effective revitalization of the General Assembly. This body is the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations and fulfils a critical role in the codification of international law. It is here where the principle of the sovereign equality of States, on which the United Nations was founded, finds its clearest expression.

The General Assembly is the only universally representative body in the world and it therefore has the specific responsibility of addressing the challenges we face. In our work to revitalize this body, our aim should be to ensure the effectiveness of the General Assembly in representing the world's population and in

addressing their needs, especially those of the most vulnerable.

That is also true with regard to the role of the General Assembly in the maintenance of international peace and security. There have been several occasions over the past years where the General Assembly has acted promptly in matters of international peace and security. We would urge the Assembly to remain vigilant in these matters and to act when the Security Council fails, which can be done without the Assembly usurping the mandate of the Council.

If we are going to be successful in reasserting the central role of the United Nations, meaningful reform of the Organization, including the Security Council, has to be introduced as a matter of urgency. We therefore call on this body to ensure that the reform happens sooner than later.

Turning to the report (A/64/903) of the Ad Hoc Working Group, my delegation was pleased that the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly was able to adopt the report of the Working Group along with resolution 64/301, earlier this year. We were particularly pleased that the resolution is the first substantive resolution on the revitalization of the General Assembly in almost five years.

The resolution adopted in September addresses several areas of importance, namely, the role and authority of the General Assembly, the role of the General Assembly in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and the working methods of the General Assembly. We can accelerate the revitalization of the Assembly by redoubling our efforts to implement the many important recommendations contained in the resolution in all four of those categories.

South Africa emphasizes that the General Assembly has a central role to play in the appointment of the Secretary-General. We urge Security Council members to implement the recommendations we adopted in resolution 64/301, especially the decision to allow the General Assembly sufficient time and opportunity to engage with all the candidates being considered by the Security Council in its selection process.

With regard to the forthcoming session of the Ad Hoc Working Group, we reiterate the call made by the Non-Aligned Movement that the work schedule of the Working Group needs to allow enough time for interactive discussion on the issues before it so that it can conclude its work in a timely manner. That will allow the Working Group to move its agenda forward and be in a position to adopt a substantial report and a substantive resolution at the conclusion of its work. Such a resolution must move the revitalization process forward by adopting positions that are concrete and practical.

In our view, one area that can be improved upon, in addition to the four categories addressed in resolution 64/301, is the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions. We have noted improvements with regard to the reporting on the implementation of resolutions, and we will work with our partners in the Working Group to look at ways of further improving the implementation of resolutions and the review of agenda items in the sixty-fifth session.

In conclusion, we believe that the General Assembly has not always leveraged its strengths in service of the people we represent. It is therefore my delegation's aim, in collaborating with our partners in the Ad Hoc Working Group, to identify areas where the work of the General Assembly can be improved upon and made more effective.

Mr. Park Chul-min (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and for providing the membership with an opportunity to consider the revitalization of the General Assembly during the sixty-fifth session.

I would also like to congratulate the new co-Chairs, Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania, and Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

At the same time, I would like to express our gratitude to the two outgoing co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group, Ambassador Sanja Štiglic, Permanent Representative of Slovenia, and Ambassador Jorge Argüello, Permanent Representative of Argentina, for their excellent work during the past session.

The 2004 High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes concluded that the General

Assembly had lost its vitality and often failed to focus effectively on the most compelling issues of the day. We should note, however, that the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1) acknowledged the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. Indeed, my delegation believes that the General Assembly should be revitalized, so that it can properly play its intended role, as acknowledged in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

First, my delegation shares the view that more efforts are required to thoroughly review existing resolutions. Every year many resolutions are adopted, but many of them are not substantially different from previous resolutions. Many texts have not been significantly revised in decades. Therefore, we should examine what has been achieved so far and what remains to be done.

In that regard, the inventory chart developed at the sixty-second and sixty-third sessions would be a good base from which to start. My delegation believes that, by updating the chart on a regular basis, we would be able to easily identify areas that need further implementation.

Furthermore, the possibility of further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items on the agenda of the General Assembly should be explored in detail.

Secondly, my delegation supports the idea of organizing the General Assembly agenda around a number of thematic issues with a view towards more in-depth discussions. Thematic debates should focus on the most pressing contemporary challenges to the public interest and should produce more action-oriented results.

Furthermore, we would like to encourage the President of the General Assembly to work closely with Member States to decide specific themes and set the calendar of thematic debates in a more transparent and effective manner. We would also like to suggest that the General Assembly should undertake a review process examining past thematic debates so as to evaluate how much value has been added so far. That would provide us with a guide in preparing the future thematic debates in a more streamlined and productive manner.

Thirdly, my delegation welcomes the actions to strengthen the authority and functionality of the General Assembly by strengthening its interrelationships with other principal United Nations organs, such as the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

To that end, the General Assembly needs to coordinate the agendas and thematic debate items of all United Nations organs through regular and institutionalized consultations. That would make the General Assembly a more meaningful venue for discussion and also enhance organizational synergy by avoiding the duplication and repetition of discussions.

In that connection, we would like to encourage the President of the General Assembly to meet periodically with the Secretary-General, the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and the Chairs of the Main Committees and then share the outcomes of those interactions with Member States. In that regard, we support the practical initiative of the Secretary-General to provide timely briefings for the General Assembly on his activities and the work of the United Nations.

Fourthly, having held the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, the Republic of Korea has a particular interest in strengthening the role and authority of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. My delegation believes that ensuring the effectiveness of the Office, including through the strengthening of its institutional memory, is important, particularly given the short term of the President of the General Assembly and the limited number of long-term staff.

My delegation therefore supports the idea of the incumbent President submitting a report to the President-elect, including specific recommendations and lessons learned during the previous session.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to stress that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly should be a continuous and action-oriented process. My delegation looks forward to tangible results from the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the current session, and I assure you, Mr. President, of our full cooperation and support for the successful completion of that endeavour.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): I wish to felicitate Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania, and Mr. Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for their appointment as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly. We assure them of our fullest cooperation in achieving our shared objectives.

As the principal deliberative, policymaking, norm-setting and only truly universal and democratic body of the United Nations, the General Assembly's status should be unquestioned. It is, however, an abiding irony that the only universal principal organ of the United Nations that can be regarded the world parliament is engaged in a seemingly endless exercise to have its status recognized adequately. The realities on the ground being what they are, we would be doing a disservice to the General Assembly by downplaying the problem or by thinking that lip service is a substitute for concrete action.

What emerges, *inter alia*, from the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly is that a number of resolutions related to the revitalization of the General Assembly have been implemented, since their implementation required either one-time action or merely procedural adjustments. That should not, however, lull us into believing that some momentous progress has been made. Polemics and palliatives notwithstanding, the fact remains that the General Assembly does not enjoy its rightful place in the scheme of things.

At the same time, the Assembly is quite content with the pro forma exercise of the Ad Hoc Working Group's deliberations, which culminate in an annual resolution, while practical progress remains elusive. That brings us to the heart of the matter, which is that, in the absence of genuine political will, General Assembly revitalization will continue to be an exercise replete with clichés, while offering little in terms of substance. One cannot help discern a perennial perceptual gap, if not a chasm, between different stakeholders. While the General Assembly rightly complains of erosion in its status and power, the Security Council evidently feels that the General Assembly should not impinge upon its domain.

Some issues that fall entirely within the General Assembly's domain have now been taken up by the Security Council. Some feel that the General Assembly

should conform to a corporate model of productivity and efficiency in order to be considered a worthwhile organization. Needless to say, that is not why the United Nations was formed or conceived. Differences in perception and difficulties notwithstanding, the General Assembly alone offers a forum whose deliberations can boast of being of universal character. In today's highly interconnected and interdependent world it is all the more necessary to strengthen the General Assembly and ensure that participation in this body is equitable and across the board.

With regard to the implementation of resolutions related to revitalization, the Ad Hoc Working Group should concentrate on areas that require action. There should be a special unit in the Office of the President of the General Assembly to assess the status of the implementation of the various resolutions in the intersessional period.

The much vaunted rationalization of the General Assembly's work should be approached with caution. The General Assembly's agenda should remain open to the insertion of new items and new thoughts. Divisive and arbitrary concepts like the sunset clause should be eschewed and removed. In any event, no item should be considered for deletion from an agenda without the express agreement of concerned States.

As for the selection of the Secretary-General, there is a need to find a middle road between the General Assembly's desire to have a greater role and the requirements of Article 97 of the United Nations Charter. We must remember that whoever makes the appointment ultimately should be sure that the person concerned will reflect on what is being put before him.

On the question of strengthening the Office of the President of the General Assembly, we have noted with interest, Sir, the recommendations given by your predecessor, Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki. It would be beneficial if those issues were examined by a group consisting of the outgoing, incumbent and future General Assembly Presidents. In any event, the President of the premier United Nations organ should not be handicapped by inadequate budgetary and human resources. At the same time, strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly should not unduly constrain flexibility in the selection of staff by the incoming President of the General Assembly.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that General Assembly revitalization should be a high priority for members of the General Assembly in general and developing countries, including my own, in particular. We are convinced that a balanced relationship between the various organs of the United Nations will enable us to move beyond procedural wrangling and tackle the vexing questions that beset humanity, including peace and security, disarmament, development, poverty alleviation, disease control, climate change and the many other issues that daunt the world today and make us believe that it will never change.

Mrs. Morgan Sotomayor (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly (A/64/903) and notes the excellent work of the co-Chairs, Permanent Representatives Ms. Sanja Štiglic of Slovenia and Mr. Jorge Argüello of Argentina. Similarly, my delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/301 in September, in which we established the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly for the sixty-fifth session of the Assembly. We congratulate Mr. Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of Lithuania, on their appointment as co-Chairs for the current session.

Mexico devotes special attention to strengthening the General Assembly as the universal body par excellence and the main forum for the adoption of international standards. It is certain that revitalizing and strengthening this body require the political will of Member States as well as their commitment to produce substantive results in the short term. My delegation notes that there has been progress made in that area. It is disturbing, however, that important issues remain unresolved in the area of revitalizing and strengthening the General Assembly. The important contribution, provided by the co-Chairs in their report (A/63/959) on the implementation status of the resolutions in that area has not been used at all. In that respect we support the initiative to carry out a comprehensive review of the inventory so as to identify, first of all, the provisions that have been implemented with respect to the revitalization of the General Assembly and, secondly, those awaiting implementation, including the reasons why they have not been implemented. That should be done in order to avoid further delay in actions aimed at

enhancing the role of this important United Nations organ.

Mexico believes that it is important that the agenda of the General Assembly reflect the priorities of the international community. Rationalizing the agenda items of the General Assembly would make it easier to distribute the workload more efficiently, both in the plenary and the Main Committees. That goal can be achieved only if it is agreed to by the General Assembly as a whole, because it requires that Member States express their willingness to reduce appropriately the number of items that are dealt with in this forum.

We reiterate our view that one of the most feasible ways to achieve that goal would be to address agenda items every two or three years, and it would seem worthwhile therefore to continue that exercise. That approach would of course also depend on the will of the membership as a whole.

It is also important to continue analyzing innovative proposals to improve the manual voting method within the Organization so as to ensure that the process is always reliable and credible and that the vote remains confidential. Another aspect we must continue to work on in order to move forward decisively is the relationship between the General Assembly and the other principal organs of the United Nations. Greater and more efficient interaction and coordination among the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council is needed, especially in areas that affect international peace and security.

With respect to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, my delegation feels that the process should be carried out more openly, more transparently and with the full and active participation of Member States. However, the reality that the Security Council holds the power with respect to the important decision of selecting a candidate for that post and that the General Assembly simply sanctions that decision must be acknowledged. Pursuant to Article 97 of the Charter and relevant resolutions adopted in that area, the appointment of the Secretary-General falls to the General Assembly, which takes that decision after listening to the recommendation of the Security Council.

To fully comply with that decision, the General Assembly must have prior and extensive knowledge of all of the candidates with respect to their professional

experience, depth of knowledge and commitment, as well as their vision of the United Nations and what it represents. Unfortunately, that has not been the practice. Paragraph 14 of resolution 64/301 states that the Ad Hoc Working Group at the sixty-fifth session should continue its consideration of the revitalization of the role of the General Assembly in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General. Mexico believes that it is important to achieve swift, clear and concrete progress in that regard, which is one of the main reasons for the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

My delegation is prepared to continue to cooperate in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, with a view to focusing further on elements that strengthen the most representative and universal organ that we the Member States have. That would promote a broader and more constructive dialogue that would enable the Organization to respond in a more effective and legitimate manner to the global challenges facing the international community today.

Mr. Simanjuntak (Indonesia): Allow me to deliver this statement on behalf of the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Hasan Kleib.

Our deliberations today are relevant and in sync with the theme of the current session, "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance", which my delegation endorses.

My delegation wishes to align itself with the statements made earlier by the Ambassador of Algeria, as Non-Aligned Movement coordinator on this issue, and by the Ambassador of Viet Nam, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Indonesia would like to welcome the recent appointment of Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis of Lithuania and Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly at the sixty-fifth session. We congratulate them on their appointment and stand ready to resolutely assist them in their undertaking.

Our endeavour to revitalize the work of the General Assembly has spanned a period of more than two decades. We should build upon the achievements and make progress based on the constructive compromises we have made to reach consensus on the

many converging issues concerning the Assembly's reinvigoration.

In that regard, we would like to commend the work of the previous co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group, the Permanent Representatives of Argentina and Slovenia, for successfully steering the dynamic process in the Working Group that led to the adoption of resolution 64/301. That reflects the zeal of Member States to continue to underscore the gravity of the reform process of the General Assembly, a critical principal organ of the United Nations. The resolution highlights elements that are important to further advancing the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group during this session. We should focus on those elements at this session.

First, it is vital to carry out the mandate of the Working Group, which in particular has been referred to as undertaking a comprehensive review of the inventory contained in the annex to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session (A/63/959). The inventory charts annexed to the annual reports of the Working Group have been a very useful tool, which we should continue to use. We should also continue our work to translate into action the many resolutions and decisions that have been agreed on the subject of the Assembly's revitalization.

Secondly, the Working Group has a mandate to identify further ways to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia by building on previous resolutions and evaluating the status of their implementation. It should be ensured that all agreed resolutions in this area are implemented. Where they have not been fulfilled, the Working Group should further identify gaps, with a view to finding ways and means to address the challenges and obstacles to their implementation.

Thirdly, Indonesia welcomes the positive intent of the resolution that requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013, to review the budget allocation for the Office of the President of the General Assembly in accordance with existing procedures. That is in line with the efforts to strengthen the institutional memory and function of the Office of the President by providing it with separate and dedicated resources.

Fourthly, the report emphasizes the importance of balance among the principal organs, in particular

between the Assembly and the Security Council. It also points out that the discussion on the relationship between the two organs can be considered in the context of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary meetings of the General Assembly. That recommendation is very realistic and sensible. As the issue of the relationship between those two important organs has been dealt with as one of key issues in the debate on Security Council reform, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly could focus on other important issues before it.

Lastly, the report touches upon the issue of the appointment of Secretaries-General. We recognize that the Assembly has an instrumental role in making the process of selection transparent, inclusive and open for consultation by the wider membership. While the existing selection process has produced distinguished and commendable Secretaries-General, that does not mean that the process itself is perfect. In giving effect to democratic principles, there is always room for improvement. Without prejudice to Article 97 of the United Nations Charter, we share the views on the need for substantive interaction by candidates with the Assembly, in which due regard will continue to be given to regional rotation.

In conclusion, let me assure you, Mr. President, that Indonesia, for its part, is committed to continuing to work constructively with all delegations in our common efforts to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, my delegation would like to commend the efforts undertaken by Mr. Jorge Argüello, Permanent Representative of Argentina, and Ms. Sanja Štiglic, Permanent Representative of Slovenia, in their capacity as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank their successors, Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of Lithuania, and Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Today's debate has a central place in the reform of the United Nations. It addresses the major

challenges before us, namely, the balance between the different United Nations organs, their roles, the responsibility and efficiency of the General Assembly in the context of its fundamental mission and the modernization of its working methods.

The General Assembly has a central role to play as the main deliberative organ, with particular responsibility for steering the Organization, developing international cooperation on economic, social, cultural and educational matters and establishing norms and codifying international law. Over the past 20 years, the Assembly has adopted various measures to strengthen its role and its authority, as well as that of its President. We welcome those developments.

The General Assembly has also devoted itself to refocusing its work in order to better respond to current and future challenges facing it, namely, strengthening international peace and security, combating terrorism, strengthening the means to prevent crises and combat their recurrence, and preventing the destruction of the environment and its biodiversity. The resolutions adopted to date by the General Assembly have allowed us to make some progress towards the revitalization of the General Assembly. However, a great deal remains to be done.

Improving the practices and working methods of the Main Committees, strengthening the role and institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, consolidating the role and authority of the President and further rationalizing the agenda of the General Assembly are strategic objectives on which we must continue to work to make the Organization's primary deliberative body strong, credible, effective and up to the task of meeting the new challenges of the twenty-first century. In that pursuit, we should of course fully respect the provisions of the Charter and the balance between the General Assembly and the Security Council as the body with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

While strengthening the role and impact of the General Assembly calls for structural and organizational measures, it will also require that the decisions of summits and special sessions are implemented effectively, beginning with those relating to the Millennium Development Goals and the Middle East.

Greater efforts need to be made in the area of rationalization in order to bridge gaps, avoid duplication and strengthen the effectiveness of the General Assembly, while bearing in mind the need to minimize the financial burden on developing countries. My country remains convinced that under your leadership this year, Mr. President, which you have focused on the overarching theme of international good governance, Member States will continue to devote greater effort to advancing the process of revitalization.

We must not lose sight of the fact that, through the revitalization of the General Assembly and the reform of the Security Council, the international community hopes to re-establish and strengthen confidence in multilateralism, which is the only framework capable of ensuring that the legitimate interests and aspirations of all of the Member States of the United Nations are taken into account in an inclusive, differentiated and balanced way.

Mr. Salsabili (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for according due attention to the longstanding and important issue of revitalizing the General Assembly by placing it at the core of the agenda for the Assembly's work at its sixty-fifth session.

While my delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, I should also like to elaborate on a few points in greater depth.

The fact that a great number of United Nations resolutions deal with the revitalization of the role and authority of the General Assembly clearly demonstrates the importance that the general membership attaches to enhancing the role and authority of this organ. We should therefore redouble our efforts to explore concrete ways and means to fully realize the functions and powers of the General Assembly as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations.

With regard to the relationship between the General Assembly and the other principal organs of the United Nations, the particular relationship between the Assembly and the Security Council has been a matter of extensive debate, especially in the context of the various efforts to reform the United Nations over many years. A good number of General Assembly resolutions set out certain criteria to clarify the relationship

between these two important principal organs of the United Nations.

The Charter of the United Nations itself confers important functions and responsibilities on both organs. However, we have seen a constant and progressive encroachment by the Security Council upon the functions, powers and prerogatives of the General Assembly and other organs, in areas ranging from legislation and administrative issues to budgetary matters. In that respect, forming a study group to engage on all aspects of this issue could be considered as a positive step towards understanding and addressing the concerns of Member States. Of particular relevance here are the practices of the Security Council of setting norms, making laws and establishing definitions in areas beyond its competence. Let me recall paragraph 1, Article 13, of the Charter, in which the General Assembly, as the sole universal and representative organ comprising all Member States of the United Nations, is tasked with the progressive development of international law and its codification.

During the previous session, the President of the General Assembly submitted a valuable report on strengthening the institutional memory of his Office. While we emphasize that the institutional memory of his Office has a profound link with other substantial issues at hand, it is noticeable and quite alarming that the budget of that Office has not increased since 1998 — a period during which the budget of the United Nations increased three-fold. While any voluntary funds for correcting this budget situation would be appreciated, the need for funding to be predictable and sustainable and the need to preserve the impartiality of the Office oblige us to ask that a greater proportion of the regular budget be dedicated to the Office.

According to Article 10 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Assembly may discuss any questions within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the Charter. Since the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General is not outside the scope of the Charter, it can be raised and discussed in the Assembly as one of this body's basic roles.

The appointment of the Secretary-General, which is supposed to be approved by the authority or agreement of the General Assembly, should be arranged through a process or a systematic series of

actions. In our view, the great majority of the Members of the Organization share a strong will to articulate and improve the selection procedure of the Secretary-General through granting the General Assembly a more meaningful and determining role.

Paragraphs 56 to 61 of resolution 51/241 prescribed a set of provisions that, if implemented, would strengthen the role of the General Assembly in the selection of the Secretary-General. In particular, paragraph 56 reaffirms the need for the process to be made more transparent. In fact, that is a major matter for the entire international community, which regards the Secretary-General as its highest representative. His legitimacy and credibility should therefore be based on the widest support of its members.

Finally, as part of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations, the revitalization of the General Assembly is a dynamic and continuous process. We should remain committed and constructive throughout this ongoing exercise, with a view to strengthening the role and authority of the Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to align myself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on the functions and matters assigned to the General Assembly under the Charter. I also wish to emphasize the need for the General Assembly to fully carry out its mandate. We should all work together to put a halt to the Security Council's encroachment on the mandate of the General Assembly, and even enhance that mandate.

Unfortunately, we have seen how the end of the Cold War has served as justification for the Security Council to encroach upon the mandate of the General Assembly and to marginalize its role in important matters, such as the selection of the Secretary-General, the admission of new members and other matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. That is unacceptable in the light of the increasing changes in the international scene in all areas.

We welcome the establishment of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly. We believe it should focus on considering ways to implement General Assembly resolutions and end the encroachment on its mandate and functions.

The Assembly's functions should be enhanced and expanded so that it is the main body to adopt international resolutions. The resolutions of the General Assembly should be binding on all Member States and all organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, which should ultimately serve as a tool for the implementation of the Assembly's resolutions. General Assembly resolutions are the most legitimate resolutions in the United Nations system because the Assembly is the most representative body. It is therefore a world parliament of sorts, and should be the supreme legislative body to which all States submit.

The Articles of the Charter that limit the functions of the General Assembly should be changed so that the Assembly is not held hostage to decisions adopted by the Security Council on certain issues. Subjecting the will of 192 States to the decisions of the five permanent members of the Security Council is a situation that should not be allowed to continue. That is the only way of maintaining international peace and security.

In conclusion, Libya, which was honoured to preside over the previous session of the General Assembly, feels that there is an urgent need to support the Office of the President of the General Assembly, both in terms of financial and human resources support. Given the various financial obligations of the past few years, the current resources are insufficient to cover the expenses of the Office. The State presiding over the General Assembly therefore finds itself financing the activities of the General Assembly. In short, we should increase the financial and human resources devoted to the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela also welcomes the appointments of Ambassador Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania, as the new co-Chairs of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly. Allow me also to acknowledge the work done by Ambassador Sanja Štiglic, Permanent Representative

of Slovenia, and Ambassador Jorge Arguëllo, Permanent Representative of Argentina, as co-Chairs of the Group during the sixty-fourth session.

The previous session revealed the full validity and importance of the issues dealt with by the Working Group. Those include the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, the role and authority of the General Assembly, budgetary matters, the relationship between the General Assembly and the other organs of the United Nations and improving the Assembly's working methods. Those issues, which continue to be part of the Group's deliberations during the sixty-fifth session, should be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

The selection and appointment of the Secretary-General is a fundamental matter in terms of the revitalization of the General Assembly. A few proposals were made on this issue during the previous session. My delegation would like to emphasize the responsibility that the General Assembly should have in that regard. Venezuela believes that the monopoly exercised by the Security Council in electing the Secretary-General is an anti-democratic practice that does not enable effective participation by the General Assembly in the decision-making process. The selection process must be inclusive and transparent and involve the General Assembly at every stage of the process.

Likewise, my delegation would like to emphasize the need for the Secretariat to act in accordance with the terms of the Charter and the Assembly's rules of procedure and on the basis of what is agreed and adopted by Member States. That would guarantee credibility and legitimacy for the Organization, but also for the Secretary-General as he carries out his functions.

Complaints have been raised in the Working Group on various occasions with regard to the need to halt the harmful trend of the Security Council encroaching upon issues that are solely within the purview of the General Assembly, thereby minimizing the role of the Assembly relative to that of the Council. Not everything that happens in the world is a threat to international peace and security, and not everything should be handled and controlled by the Security Council.

Skewed perspectives lead to skewed responses. Only the General Assembly can devise comprehensive

approaches to situations that deserve much more than just responses divorced from reality as it is experienced on the ground.

Strengthening the General Assembly requires enabling it to fully exercise its powers in the area of international peace and security as set out in Articles 10 through 14 of the United Nations Charter. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomes the progress achieved by resolution 64/301, adopted in September of last year. We are prepared to expand the Group's work, especially with regard to the implementation of the resolutions that have been adopted. We can only vote effectively if we analyze the true causes that have hampered their implementation and if those responsible for the lack of implementation meet their responsibilities and commitments with a view to success in genuinely strengthening the General Assembly.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela once again pledges its full cooperation and willingness to work with the President and the two co-facilitators.

Mr. Feleke (Ethiopia): As "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance" is the theme of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, my delegation would like to take this opportunity once again to emphasize the need to revitalize the role and authority of the General Assembly in addressing the multidimensional challenges that the global community faces today. In that connection, Mr. President, Ethiopia fully supports the timely and appropriate reaffirmation of the central role of the United Nations and the priorities set for this session under your presidency.

My delegation aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Ethiopia strongly believes that there is a shared sense of purpose and expectation among Member States that the General Assembly will be revitalized to assume, as it should, its rightful responsibility as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. Enhancing the role of the General Assembly is a matter of urgent and paramount importance if the Organization is to tackle global challenges such as poverty, climate change, conflict and other pressing concerns facing the international community.

We also believe that the role and authority of the General Assembly in setting norms across the United Nations system, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, has to be preserved and enhanced. In that regard, the growing encroachment of the Security Council upon the purview of the General Assembly is a concern for many States, including mine. It is obvious that this undesirable trend in the Security Council derives from progressively redefining the scope and nature of threats to international peace and security. It is high time that we reverse that trend and restore the General Assembly to its rightful place, enabling it to address issues that fall within its domain.

Moreover, the role of the General Assembly in the process of selecting the Secretary-General is not in keeping with the status of the General Assembly. There is a widely held view that the process does not offer sufficient opportunity for the majority of the membership to select the Secretary-General. My delegation is therefore of the view that undertaking a comprehensive review of the Assembly's role in that process is timely and appropriate.

As the issue of the revitalization of the General Assembly is a political process, the commitment of all Member States and, more important, engaging political will at the highest levels are critically important to achieving our desired goal as a matter of priority. In that respect, in order to bring about tangible progress in moving the Assembly's revitalization process forward, it is important to focus on urgent and specific issues, including an assessment of the status of implementation of past General Assembly resolutions on revitalization. Also, a priority must be to streamline

the Assembly's agenda to focus on the most pressing issues and those of the greatest relevance to the membership and the international community.

The holding of thematic debates on issues of international significance and interest to the United Nations should continue in the course of this session. My delegation is of the view that, in order to avoid overlapping and duplication of discussions across the Organization, emerging issues, including the maintenance of international peace and security, should deserve our utmost attention in setting the agenda. As has been stated by Member States on numerous occasions, when thematic debates lead to the adoption of resolutions, ideas proposed by Member States during thematic discussions need to be incorporated properly in the resolutions.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to underline that improving the working methods of the Assembly with a view to strengthening its role remains an urgent priority. The effective and efficient implementation of the Charter-mandated functions and responsibilities of the General Assembly has a direct bearing on its relevance and credibility. Due consideration should therefore be accorded to improving the methods whereby the Assembly conducts its business.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in this debate. The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 117 and 118.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.