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104th plenary meeting
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New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Al-Nasser. (Qatar)

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

Tribute to the memory of His Majesty King George Tupou V of the Kingdom of Tonga

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of His Majesty King George Tupou V of the Kingdom of Tonga, who passed away on 25 March. On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of Tonga to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Tonga and to the bereaved family of His Majesty King George Tupou V.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Majesty King George Tupou V.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Group of African States to pay a tribute to the memory of the late King of Tonga, His Majesty King George Tupou V. The African Group learned with great sadness that His Majesty King George Tupou V had passed away. Through the visionary leadership of the late King, Tonga has cultivated friendship and enjoyed good relations with all African States within the framework of the United Nations, as well as with many African States in the context of the African, Caribbean and

Pacific Group of States, the Commonwealth and the coalition of Small Island Pacific States.

King George Tupou V was more than a visionary leader. He will be remembered as the architect of the democratization that moved his country to become a modern State. In a reign of only a few years, the monarch of Tonga was able to initiate good relationships and cooperation with many countries in order to actively involve Tonga within the international community. The late King will also be remembered for having driven the modernization of the economy of Tonga and the country's education system. The African Group is convinced that the legacy of the late King will continue to live on in the minds and hearts of the people of Tonga.

On behalf of the States members of the African Group, I would like to express our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Tonga, to the Queen Mother and to the members of the royal family for their great loss. May he rest in peace.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mongolia, who will speak on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group of States.

Ms. Ochir (Mongolia): On behalf of the States members of the Asia-Pacific group, I have the distinct honour to pay tribute to the memory of His Majesty King George Tupou V of Tonga. We extend our deepest condolences to the royal family and to the people and the Government of that fellow country, the Kingdom of Tonga.

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His Majesty King George Tupou V of Tonga will be remembered worldwide as a great statesman who steered his country towards democracy. While world history is littered with examples of leaders clinging to absolute power, there are very few examples of a leader with absolute power ceding it willingly for the sake of the people. The late King was one of those few. He voluntarily renounced most of his powers to launch an era of democracy and put together a framework for radical political reforms which led to the first democratically elected Parliament of Tonga taking office in 2010.

The late King's embrace of democratic reforms and his distinguished service to his people imprinted him in their hearts as a truly visionary leader who was deeply revered at home and held in great esteem worldwide.

With the sad passing of His Majesty King George Tupou V, the Asia-Pacific Group has lost a visionary reformer. Our thoughts and prayers are with the royal family and the people of Tonga in their time of mourning. May His Majesty rest in peace. May his enduring legacy be further pursued for the good of the people of the Kingdom of Tonga.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

Mr. Belev (Bulgaria): In my capacity as the current Chair of the Eastern European regional group, I would like to extend our most sincere condolences on the passing of His Majesty George Tupou V, King of Tonga. We were deeply saddened by the news, as we are acutely aware of the key role played by this prominent public figure in the promotion of stability and prosperity in Tonga. He was rightfully credited with ushering in a new era of democracy to the South Pacific archipelago following the holding of the first direct elections in November 2010, after 165 years of unpopular rule, and the transfer of power to a democratically elected Parliament. The Prime Minister, Lord Tu'ivakano, ended his announcement of the sad news with a Tongan expression meaning "the sun has set in Tonga".

We would also like to align ourselves with the statement made by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, John Key, which described him as the architect of evolving democracy in Tonga.

We seize this opportunity to express our hope that the legacy of the late King George Tupou V will

be further carried on by his younger brother, Crown Prince Tupouto'a Lavaka, with a view to enhancing Tonga's contribution to regional efforts to strengthen international peace and security and make the world a better place.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): As Chair of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, it is my sad duty to extend to the Kingdom of Tonga the heartfelt condolences of the countries members of the Group on the passing of His Majesty King George Tupou V. He will be remembered for having served his country with distinction. He was a visionary leader who set Tonga on the path to full democracy.

The influence that his Majesty had on the policies of the Kingdom was evident during his term as Minister for Foreign Affairs, from 1979 to 1998, and later, when, at the helm of the Kingdom, he set aside his prerogatives as a monarch so as to allow for realization of his people's democratic aspirations, delegating a large part of his power to his Prime Minister. That decision does honour to him, as he gave precedence to his vision of a democratic and pluralistic society, setting aside his rightful privileges.

The member countries of the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States therefore express their support for King Tupou VI.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Grunditz (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Group of Western European and other States.

I wish to convey to the people and the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga our deepest condolences on the loss of their head of State, His Majesty King George Tupou V.

As Crown Prince from 1966 to 2006, he had great influence on Tongan politics and society. He was an accomplished politician at the service of his country.

He served as Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1979 to 1998.

King Tupou inherited the throne from his father in 2006. At the time of his coronation, he announced important reforms. Parliamentary reform would be pursued and elections would be held. The monarchy was to become constitutional, and he would relinquish most of his powers.

King Tupou delivered, holding elections in November 2010, and set Tonga on the path to democracy. He is revered and remembered, nationally and internationally, for that, together with his many other achievements.

The members of the Group of Western European and other States wish to voice their appreciation and gratitude for the great contribution King Tupou made not just to his country, but also to the Pacific region and the entire international community.

We would like to express to his family and the people of Tonga our affection and sincere condolences. Our thoughts and sympathies are with them at this difficult time.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United States, who will speak as the representative of the host country.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): With the passing of King George Tupou V of Tonga, the United States lost a friend, and the people of Tonga lost a visionary leader.

Upon ascending to the throne, King George championed the process of peaceful democratization that led to the first majority-elected Parliament of Tonga taking office in 2010. King George was a strong advocate for democratic reform and was committed to bringing about a more open and representative Government for the people of Tonga.

As President Obama said to the King at the United States Coast Guard Academy graduation last spring, “Tonga is one of the United States’ closest partners among the Pacific island States, and we are grateful for its role in Afghanistan, where Tonga made an active contribution to the international coalition”.

On behalf of all Americans, we extend our deepest condolences to the Queen Mother, Halaevalu Mata’aho, the royal family and the people of Tonga on the passing of King George Tupou V.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Tonga.

Mr. Taumoepeau-Tupou (Tonga): I am honoured to convey, on behalf of His Majesty King Tupou VI, Queen Nanasipau’u and the royal household, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Tonga, our profound appreciation for the many messages of condolence and sympathy we have received on the passing of our much beloved King George Tupou V.

Born in 1948, he undertook his early studies in Tonga, New Zealand and Switzerland, where he found an affinity for foreign languages, particularly English, French and German. After becoming Crown Prince in 1966, he pursued diplomatic studies at Oxford University and then attended the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. He was commissioned Colonel-in-Chief of the Tonga Royal Guards and recalled to the Tongan civil service in 1970 as Assistant Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Defence.

In 1979, he was appointed First Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence, which also made him a member of the Privy Council as well as a Member of Parliament. During his tenure, he led Tonga at meetings of the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum and of the Commonwealth Heads of Government; as part of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group, he also participated in negotiating all four of the Lomé Conventions with the European Commission.

He devoted much attention to education, health, water and the development of infrastructure, and to encouraging the involvement of the private sector, which he saw as a key component and driver of sustainable economic growth for Tonga and its future development.

He focused on training the Defence Services Officer Corps, and officer cadets have continued to be trained in New Zealand and Australia, and more recently at Sandhurst and at West Point. Units of the Defence Services have served as peacekeepers in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, and in the Solomon Islands as part of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, as well as in deployments to Iraq and to Afghanistan.

He was involved in ensuring that young Foreign Service officers were trained overseas, principally at Oxford University, Monash University in Australia, Tufts University in Boston, and other institutions in China, Japan, India, Malaysia and Indonesia. He

established a presence in Beijing, a consulate-general in San Francisco and a consular agent in Honolulu, as well as a High Commission in Canberra with concurrent accreditation to Tokyo, Bangkok and Brunei.

Upon becoming King in September 2006, he turned his attention to strengthening and improving Tonga's governance structure by seeking to strike an appropriate balance between the tradition and culture of Tonga's ancient past and the promise of the new global democratic realities. And so, in July 2010, the Tongan Parliament unanimously accepted a package of reforms of the 1875 Constitution and other relevant legislation, increasing the number of elected people's representatives from 9 to 17 and investing the King's former executive power in the Cabinet and Legislative Assembly, so that the sovereign may act only on the advice of the Prime Minister and Government of the day.

In the November 2010 elections, Tongans exercised their vote in a climate of electoral democracy that had hitherto been impossible. Perhaps that may be his most enduring legacy and gift to his people, as he expressed when he addressed the nation at the time:

“You will choose your representatives to the Parliament and thus the first elected Government in our country's long history. At sunrise on Election Day, you will feel the warmth of the sun, as well as the gaze of your ancestors from the past and those of countless unborn generations in the future, turn towards you. For a few brief moments in our meagre lives, we shall occupy the attention of history itself and we will be judged on how we have kept its trust. It will be at this moment that our true character as a nation will show.”

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee under agenda items 132, 134 and 140.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Noel González Segura of Mexico, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee before the General Assembly in one intervention.

Mr. González Segura (Mexico), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee containing recommendations on

issues that required action during the first resumed part of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The Fifth Committee met from 5 March to 2 April and held five plenary meetings and numerous rounds of informal consultations and informal/informal consultations. I now have the honour to present the following brief report on the work of the Committee.

Concerning agenda item 134, entitled “Programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013”, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/66/637/Add.1, the adoption of a draft resolution entitled “Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013”, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under agenda item 140, entitled “Joint Inspection Unit”, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/66/761, the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 132, entitled “Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations”, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 17 of its report contained in document A/66/638/Add.1, a draft resolution entitled “Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat”, which was adopted by the Committee by a recorded vote, as noted in paragraph 13 of its report.

Finally, in paragraph 18 of the same report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision entitled “Questions deferred for future consideration”, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

I would like to thank all delegations for their cooperation, and to assure them that the measures adopted by the Fifth Committee at its 30th formal meeting have been duly taken into account for and are reflected in the draft resolutions and reports now before the Assembly.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before it today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind Members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

“when the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation’s vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee”.

May I further remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance. This means that where recorded votes were taken, we will do the same. I should also hope that we will proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Committee.

Agenda item 132 (continued)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/66/638/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 17 of its report and a draft decision recommended in paragraph 18 of the same report.

I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Torsella (United States of America): My delegation offers the following oral amendment to the draft resolution contained in paragraph 17 of A/66/638/Add.1. The amendment would replace section II with the following:

“Reaffirming its determination to strengthen further the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations, and thus improve its performance, in order to realize the full potential of the Organization, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and to respond more effectively to the needs of Member States and existing and new global challenges facing the United Nations in the twenty-first century,

“1. Welcomes the initiative of the Secretary-General and the work of the Change Management Team on the Change Management Plan;

“2. Reaffirms the role of the Fifth Committee in administrative and budgetary matters;

“3. Reaffirms the role of the Secretary-General as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization;

“4. Encourages the Secretary-General to engage closely with the General Assembly on his vision for a modern, efficient and accountable Secretariat;

“5. Notes the Secretary-General’s recognition that several recommendations will require close, in-depth consultations and direction from Member States;

“6. Requests the Secretary-General to revert at the second resumed part of its sixty-sixth session with an analysis of the recommendations that fall within his purview and those that require Member State review and approval in line with the provisions of this resolution.”

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Denmark.

Mrs. Rohrmann (Denmark): The European Union member States strongly support the oral amendment that was just presented by the United States. We believe that the language contained in the amendment is a very balanced reflection of the discussions that took place in the Committee. It also reflects the continued striving for compromise by some Member States across all regions and groups.

That proposal recognizes the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General, as well as concerns raised by Member States, with regard to change management. Furthermore, it safeguards the prerogatives of the General Assembly and gives an opportunity to consider

the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's Change Management Plan. We therefore urge all Member States to vote in favour of the oral amendment.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Mihoubi (Algeria): On behalf the Group of 77 and China, I call for a recorded vote on the oral amendment proposed by the United States.

The President: The representative of the United States has submitted an oral amendment to section II of the draft resolution contained in paragraph 17 of document A/66/638/Add.1.

In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on the amendment submitted by the representative of the United States.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic,

Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Mexico, Panama, Serbia, Ukraine

The oral amendment was rejected by 97 votes to 48, with 4 abstentions.

The President: As the oral amendment submitted by the representative of the United States has not been adopted, I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Mexico, Panama, Serbia, Ukraine

The draft resolution was adopted by 98 votes to 48, with 4 abstentions (resolution 66/257).

The President: The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision entitled “Questions deferred for future consideration”. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 132.

Agenda item 134 (continued)**Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013****Report of the Fifth Committee (A/66/637/Add.1)**

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution entitled “Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013”. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 66/258).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 140**Joint Inspection Unit****Report of the Fifth Committee (A/66/761)**

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 66/259).

The President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to make statements on the resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Mihoubi (Algeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the conclusion of its consideration of the report of the work of the Fifth Committee on the first resumed part of its sixty-sixth session.

The Group of 77 and China is on record as strongly supporting the strengthening of oversight and accountability in the Organization. This can be achieved only in an environment in which the Charter principle of the sovereignty and equality of Member States is upheld. The United Nations derives its legitimacy from the fact that all Member States bear equal rights, irrespective of their size, population or socio-economic development.

The diversity of the United Nations membership, national interests and positions must be taken into account if we are to remain true to the letter and the spirit of the Charter. All Members must be accorded equal opportunity to participate in decision-making, including on policy matters.

The Group of 77 and China wishes to emphasize its principled position that reform initiatives in the Organization can be successful, effective and legitimate only with the leadership and full involvement of the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations.

The Assembly has just taken action on a resolution emanating from the work of the Fifth Committee. It is commendable that all the draft resolutions recommended to the General Assembly by the Committee have been

adopted without a vote, with the exception of one. That exception is the draft resolution under agenda item 132, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", on accountability.

Although the Group sought, supported and actively engaged in various efforts to reach consensus on this issue, the differences in the positions of the negotiating parties could not be bridged. Under those circumstances, and given the importance that the Group attaches to the issue of accountability, it was imperative that a decision be taken by vote, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

There have been suggestions that the adoption of the accountability resolution by a vote undermines the push for greater accountability in the United Nations and the role of the Secretary-General as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization. It has even been suggested that by adopting this resolution, the General Assembly has halted or even reversed the reform initiative of the Secretary-General.

The Group of 77 and China states categorically that the resolution adopted today does not in any way undermine efforts to achieve greater accountability, nor will it delay or prevent United Nations reform. The text in its entirety reflects areas on which there was agreement among Member States; the exception is the content of an instruction to be given to the Secretary-General in regard to the Change Management Plan.

For the Group, it is of the utmost importance that the Secretary-General truly engage with and revert to the Assembly at the earliest opportunity with a proposal on how he seeks to implement the recommendations of the change plan that require the Assembly's prior consideration and approval.

By allowing for discussions and decisions on this issue, the resolution will go a long way towards enhancing accountability and conferring greater legitimacy on United Nations reforms by inviting the Secretary-General to work closely with the General Assembly to achieve the aims and objectives of the Organization in accordance with the Charter.

In view of the foregoing, the Group welcomes the commitment that has been given by the Secretary-General that all provisions of the resolution will be implemented in full.

Ms. Power (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the European Union (EU). The acceding country Croatia aligns itself with this statement.

In our opening statement to the first part of the resumed sixty-sixth session of the Fifth Committee on 5 March, we expressed the hope that the session would be constructive and that all Member States would work in a spirit of collegiality and true and real consensus, and show flexibility in trying to reach a consensual outcome. We regretfully note that the Fifth Committee did not perform in accordance with that standard.

First of all, let me recall that, among the important items that the Committee had on its programme of work, none was so crucial to the functioning of the United Nations as the scale of assessments. As we stressed time and again, only through a more equitable financing arrangement, based on Member States' actual capacity to pay, can a sustainable financing architecture for the United Nations system be secured. In that spirit, paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 64/248 mandated a comprehensive review of all the elements of the methodology.

Last December, the States members of the European Union proposed the establishment of a high-level group of eminent persons to implement resolution 64/248 and carry out the review, building on a successful 1994 precedent. As we mentioned before, that process would have safeguarded the competences and prerogatives of the Fifth Committee.

Our proposal met with strong resistance, in particular from one group, during the session. That group did not come up with an alternative approach to carrying out the review. As a result, the review mandated by resolution 64/248 has not yet taken place, which we deeply regret. Nonetheless, we still look forward to a process that would ensure the carrying out of the review as mandated.

We would also like to express our deep regret that the Committee was unable to reach a consensus on agenda item 132, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations". EU member States have been actively involved and engaged in trying to reach a consensus on that agenda item. During the negotiations, EU member States made it clear that the proposals by the Change Management Team to the Secretary-General should not be part of the accountability agenda item during

the current first resumed session. As stated before, the proposals of the Change Management Team are part of an internal document, and we have made it clear many times that it is up to the Secretary-General to look carefully at those recommendations and come back to the General Assembly when he deems it appropriate.

We believe that it is important to further strengthen the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations and improve its performance. Therefore, we welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General and the work of the Change Management Team and their Change Management Plan. We have full confidence in the Secretary-General as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization.

EU member States, with other like-minded countries, reached out again to the Group of 77 and China and proposed compromise language. In a spirit of compromise, we were willing to agree to a compromise proposal presented by the Committee's Chair. Unfortunately, no consensus could be reached. We regret that, which is why we were forced into a vote today.

We continue to be strong supporters of the change management initiative of the Secretary-General. Above all, we are true supporters of effective multilateralism and therefore in favour of a more effective, efficient and leaner Organization. EU member States support the need to ensure a more effective delivery of mandates through innovation and change management. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue working on and implementing the recommendations.

The unfortunate situation that resulted from the confrontation I have described has prevented the Committee from pushing forward a number of overdue reform initiatives that we had on our programme of work. Consequently, the discussion of other important items, such as the condition of service of judges and the standard of accommodation for air travel, could not be completed. That is also regrettable.

The States members of the European Union are deeply concerned about the working methods of the Fifth Committee. The fact that a majority of Member States used their majority and did not show any willingness to compromise risks jeopardizing the partnership among Member States and the sustainability of the Organization.

We look forward to discussing in depth all the issues relating to our working methods at the upcoming retreat the President is hosting. The EU member States appeal to all Member States to redouble their efforts in future sessions, keeping in mind what should be our common goal — an efficient Organization that delivers on its mandate effectively.

Mr. Ballantyne (New Zealand): I take this opportunity to make some remarks on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand (CANZ) at the conclusion of the General Assembly's consideration of the reports of the Fifth Committee.

CANZ is disappointed that the General Assembly was unable to reach a consensus outcome on all of the Fifth Committee items before it today. That is a disappointing departure from the Fifth Committee's usual working practices. We are particularly disappointed that consensus was not achieved on the important issue of accountability. CANZ, along with other partners, exercised a great deal of flexibility to get to a point where we believed consensus was possible. Unfortunately, the will was not there.

CANZ remains committed to caring for the vital work of the Fifth Committee, to working constructively with all delegations towards that end in a positive manner and in good faith, supporting the General Assembly's reform agenda and, above all, making the United Nations a more accountable, transparent and efficient organization.

CANZ will continue to work towards those objectives. We take the opportunity afforded us today to express our full confidence and trust in the Secretary-General and his Office, and particularly in his determination to deliver on his reform agenda with the support of Member States.

Ms. Takahashi (Norway): As we conclude the current resumed session, allow me to make a few remarks regarding our decision today on accountability. Norway firmly supports the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization. We regret that we ended up having to vote on an issue that has yet to be fully considered by the Assembly.

It is an underlying tenet that the work of the Fifth Committee should be guided by the principle of consensus. We are therefore deeply disappointed that we had to resort to a vote. We also regret that it was not

possible to amend the text before us — an amendment presented in a spirit of compromise and consensus.

Mr. Okochi (Japan): At the conclusion of the first resumed session of the Fifth Committee, our delegation would like once again to express our sincere appreciation for the various and tireless initiatives and efforts made by Ambassador Tommo Monthe, Chair of the Fifth Committee, and many representatives with a view to reaching a consensus agreement, which, regrettably, was not achieved. In that regard, our delegation expresses its sincere hope that the utmost efforts will continue to be made during the upcoming session of the Fifth Committee so that the spirit of resolution 41/213 will be fully observed, which should be one of the main issues to be discussed during the upcoming retreat organized by the President of the General Assembly.

Our delegation also looks forward to seeing constructive dialogue in the coming months between Member States and the Secretariat, as well as among Member States, on the implementation of the change management report, since we are confident that promoting the Organization's efficiency, which is an underlying principle of that report, is a goal shared not merely by some but by all Member States. Once again, our delegation assures the Assembly that we will continue to engage in dialogue on this issue in various forums and in a constructive manner.

Mr. Torsella (United States of America): We are pleased with the Fifth Committee's strong action on the Change Management Plan, but disappointed in the lack of responsible action on public disclosure of the Office of Internal Oversight Services audit reports, air travel reform and other areas. We note in particular that the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly had an opportunity at this session to strengthen the accountability framework of the United Nations and to promote a more modern, efficient and transparent Organization that responsibly stewards resources to deliver better results.

But despite the common ground on a number of important areas related to accountability, many Member States took the regrettable and premature action of forcing a vote on and sidetracking the Secretary-General's change management initiative before it had even properly begun. That unnecessary action, on an item not even on the agenda for this session, undermines the Charter authority of the

Secretary-General and his successors as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization.

The United States strongly supports a more modern, engaged and efficient Secretariat. We commend the collegial spirit in which the Secretary-General shared his internal Change Management Plan with Member States. We also appreciate the Secretary-General's commitment to forging relationships based on mutual trust, greater flexibility and accountability, as outlined in his Plan. We trust that he will, as he and his predecessors have, consult with Member States where our approval is required, and we note that the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly will have ample opportunity to assert their prerogatives on specific initiatives in the normal course of events.

My delegation therefore did not support resolution 66/257, and instead proposed a constructive and balanced amendment, allowing Member States to express their concerns while not unduly constraining the Secretary-General's authority. Resolution 66/257, as adopted, indeed erodes rather than promotes a culture of accountability by attempting to delay the implementation of approximately 50 per cent of all the recommendations of his Change Management Team, claiming those areas as the uncontested prerogative of the General Assembly. Just one example illustrates the overreach of that claim. Recommendation number 40 simply asks the Secretary-General to direct his own senior managers to fly economy class for travel of less than six hours on one continent.

My delegation profoundly regrets that some Member States did not seek to achieve the broadest possible agreement on this issue, even when presented with a compromise Chairman's text. They have departed from the long-standing principle of consensus-based decision-making in the Fifth Committee by including provisions that a significant number of delegations clearly oppose. We regret that consensus, the legitimate basis of all Fifth Committee decisions, was not achieved at this session despite being so clearly within our grasp. The United States stands ready to work collaboratively to achieve such consensus in the future, as we have always done in the past.

Mr. Dettling (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Sir, for giving my delegation the opportunity to make a few remarks at the conclusion of this session of the Fifth Committee.

Switzerland has always called for the effective and modern management of the Secretariat, and we have complete confidence in the Secretary-General as the senior civil servant of the Organization. The various proposals made by the Change Management Team seek to make the Secretariat's management more effective, and we therefore firmly support his initiative.

We regret that there was no opportunity to discuss those proposals and recommendations with the Secretary-General earlier. We believe that an in-depth discussion would have been useful, and we would have been very interested in participating in it. We therefore regret that the decisions called for in the draft resolution in paragraph 17 of document A/66/638/Add.1 are not based on in-depth consideration of the proposals. As we await such a discussion, we encourage the Secretary-General to continue his modernization efforts and to implement all possible measures to improve the management of the Secretariat. He can count on our delegation's support in this important initiative.

Mr. Ulibarri (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): In explanation of our position on agenda item 134, the delegations of Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay welcome the adoption of resolution 66/258, particularly its section dealing with financing of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from resolutions and decisions of the Human Rights Council. In its resolution 65/281, the Assembly clearly recognized

“the need to provide adequate financing to fund unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from resolutions and decisions of by the Human Rights Council”.

Moreover, it requested that a report be presented for consideration by the Fifth Committee.

We believe that the text adopted today, endorsing the resolutions of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the information contained in the report (A/66/7/Add.16), is a sufficient response to this urgent need and mandate, to which our countries attach the greatest importance. We emphasize the fact that, in accordance with paragraph 14 of that report, the Advisory Committee stands ready to consider urgent requests for resources relating to human rights activities mandated by the Human Rights Council under the existing procedure for financing unforeseen and extraordinary expenses not related to peace and

security, as described by the Secretary-General in paragraph 9 of his report (A/66/558).

We also understand, in accordance with the explanations provided by the Secretariat during the negotiations, that in the same paragraph, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General that the use of this proposal include a qualitative as well as quantitative analysis — that is, a review of whether or not this process would be able to respond to demands arising from resolutions and decisions of the Human Rights Council. We await the results of that analysis to confirm that this mechanism will genuinely accomplish its objective, and we reiterate our firm commitment to this pillar of the Organization's work.

Mr. Kim Seo Jung (Republic of Korea): We have just adopted resolution 66/257, entitled “Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat”.

The resolution contains a section on the Change Management Plan.

As we all know, the Change Management Plan is an initiative of the Secretary-General to enable the Secretariat to become a stronger Organization by enhancing accountability, transparency and efficiency. My delegation is of the view that it was not appropriate to include a section on the Change Management Team under the resolution, given that it is still in the stage of internal discussion within the Secretariat. We also believe that the Secretary-General, as Chief Administrative Officer, can exercise his discretion on issues under his purview. We firmly believe that accountability should be coupled with flexibility. In addition, the resolution does not reflect a balanced view of the Member States as a whole. For those reasons, my delegation voted against it.

Finally, my delegation would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Chair of the Fifth Committee for his tireless efforts in bridging the gap between the differing views and trying his utmost to come up with a compromise text that reflected a balanced view.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.