



General Assembly

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58th plenary meeting
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Official Records

President: Mr. Jeremić (Serbia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Charles (Trinidad and Tobago), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 15 (continued)

Culture of peace

Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/283)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/67/284)

Draft resolutions (A/67/L.44, A/67/L.45 and A/67/L.46)

Mr. Srivali (Thailand): Thailand aligns itself with the statement made at the 57th plenary meeting by the representative of Cambodia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). As an ASEAN member State, Thailand is proud to be a sponsor of the draft resolution entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace” (A/67/L.44).

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report entitled “Intercultural and inter-religious dialogue” (A/67/283), and the Director-General of UNESCO for the report on the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace (see A/67/284). We also wish to commend the role of United Nations entities, especially UNESCO, in embracing the idea of a culture of peace, including their efforts in translating that ideal into reality.

Peace has been the *raison d'être* of the United Nations since its inception. The horrors of the two world wars compelled all nations to come together to lay down the foundation for durable peace. While we so far have avoided another global conflagration, a durable, universal peace continues to elude us. Issues of sovereignty and territorial claims and sectarian conflicts, such as those driven by ethnic and religious animosities, all remain potential powder kegs that must be managed and defused if possible. A key to doing so is tapping into people's hearts and minds. In today's world, if sufficiently motivated and equipped, an individual can inflict large-scale violence with relatively little effort. One important constraint against that is a set of societal norms and values that reject violence outright.

Thailand believes that conceiving peace as a way of life and rejecting the alternative is the best way to prevent violence that often stems from intolerance, discrimination, exclusion and hatred. Those problems also need to be addressed at their roots, such as through training, tolerance and exposure to diversity, which would help foster peaceful coexistence and deepen the culture of peace.

In the international context, Thailand believes that there are certain elements that should inform our efforts to cultivate a culture of peace.

The first is the idea of a culture for development that emphasizes the links between cultural diversity, dialogue and development. Both the fourth Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

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(Rio+20) outcome document, “The future we want” (resolution 66/288, annex), reaffirmed the positive role of cultural diversity in economic development and social cohesion. A culture of backwardness and stasis is a recipe for restlessness. Societies need to feel that they are moving forward towards a shared goal, preferably one of sustainable economic prosperity. Thailand therefore attaches great importance to promoting the mutual reinforcement between a cultural peace and dialogue, on the one hand, and socioeconomic development, on the other.

Secondly, we share the view that peace can be real only when human rights, justice and equality are upheld. At the same time, we also concur with the report by the Director-General of UNESCO: “The fundamental principles of peace ... must be ‘appropriated’ by different cultures so that ... they do not remain abstract concepts” *A/67/284, para. 3*). We note that such appropriation should be in the direction of the protection and promotion of those principles. Thailand therefore supports a rights-based approach to intercultural and interreligious dialogue. We commend the work of the Human Rights Council and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in that respect. We also share the view among ASEAN member States that violence and extremism should be countered by encouraging, among other things, the voices of moderation and reason to exercise their rights of expression.

Finally, a culture of peace requires a holistic approach. In terms of participation, that means involving Member States, United Nations agencies, civil society and all other stakeholders in order to have the broadest and deepest possible impact. It also means a multipronged approach that is not afraid to include disciplines and industry traditionally devoted to the waging of war. If we are truly to devise more effective machinery for peace, we must understand better the machinery of war in all its aspects. To strengthen the global movement for a culture of peace and to achieve the ultimate goal of sustainable peace would therefore be an immense task that involves everyone and may take generations. All members of society can and should play a role; for peace or the essence thereof affects us all, whether we realize it or not.

Education must be enhanced so that peace is cherished, while war and violence are stripped of any glamorous or romantic connotations. When people refuse to raise a hand against one another, for any

reason, when people prefer to engage one another in dialogue to resolve any dispute, only then will our work here be done.

Human history is so steeped in blood and war that the notion of a culture of peace can seem impossibly utopian. But we would not be here if we truly believed that. Indeed, there are cultures when peace is so deeply ingrained that violence is all but unthinkable. Those are cultures we should learn from. We must persist in our efforts to create a global culture of peace. It is not beyond our reach if we can first grow it in our hearts and minds as individuals, communities and societies.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Albania is happy to sponsor draft resolution A/67/L.45 as introduced this morning by the representative of Hungary. I would like to thank Hungary for taking the initiative and for the excellent work done in presenting the text after having conducted a very smooth and effective process of negotiation.

While over all the years, the calendar is meaningfully enriched with important remembrance dates, the text presented today shows that we have been missing something important. Charity is work with a basic definition, but it has a much deeper meaning and has different perceptions and understandings in different regions, cultures and civilizations. Yet the term translates everywhere into a highly noble action. Every year, hundreds of billions of dollars or euros are donated to charity in order to help the poor, assist those in need and to care for victims of wars, conflicts and human and natural catastrophes. But it would be missing an essential part if it were to be confined only to financial or material health. Charity is also about time, energy, dedication, comfort, warmth and love to those in need. The act of spending one’s time in an effort to enrich the enjoyment of others in need and to contribute to alleviating their pain or improving their situation, their everyday lives, even if just for a day or more, has proved to be crucial and to have lasting effects. We know only too well that charity also advances and supports the human rights and dignity of those marginalized and in need, and by doing so it helps to create a better and safer world.

Charity is the fruit of the work of millions of people who can care for millions of people who are in need. Yet in choosing a symbol, an individual person of highest charity at its best, there hardly would have been another person than Mother Teresa. In choosing the date of 5 September, the day the world lost Mother Teresa, as a

national day of charity, the General Assembly helps to make it more tangible, to bring it closer to the people, and to serve better the aim of recognizing the role and promoting charity worldwide. It also pays well-deserved tribute to the tiny woman with a great heart, internationally recognized for her lifelong work helping the sick, the poor and the marginalized.

Albanians will always feel proud of Mother Teresa, of her work and her legacy, which we consider our best gift to humankind. We always recall one of her sayings, as it translates the essence of her work: “By blood I am Albanian. By citizenship, an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world”. It is precisely that calling that on 5 September of every year we will celebrate and remember the irreplaceable role of charity in every society and in every work in every country — in order to recognize the work and contribution of different people from different regions across the world, to raise awareness about it, to help mobilize the resources for charitable actions across the world, including the United Nations, and last but not least, teach and transmit it to younger generations.

The Acting President: In accordance with resolution 49/2, of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Lobry-Boulanger (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) welcomes the reports of the Secretary-General on intercultural and interreligious dialogue (A/67/283) and of the Director-General of UNESCO on the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (see A/67/284), as well as the progress described in those reports.

The IFRC is strongly committed to fostering a global culture of respect for peace and non-violence, intercultural dialogue and social inclusion, wherein human values and dignity are truly celebrated. Indeed, promoting social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace is one of our three strategic aims for the present decade. In that context, the IFRC has articulated the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace around three pillars — non-discrimination and respect for diversity; violence prevention, mitigation and response; and intercultural, intergenerational and interreligious dialogue.

Violence exists in every corner of the world — in low-, medium- and high-income countries, in urban slums, in school classrooms, as we have recently seen, behind the locked doors of homes and institutions and through technology — and it can boil to a peak in disasters. Again and again in disasters the risk of self-directed and interpersonal violence — people hurting other people, or people hurting themselves — intensifies as fragile protective systems become strained or even collapse, stress levels soar and people engage in harmful or exploitive behaviour.

Populations that already face the highest risks, such as children, women and the elderly, become even more threatened. A woman is attacked at dusk as she seeks shelter in a crowded camp. A girl is forced to trade her body to feed her family. A boy is beaten, as others watch in silence, and then abandoned in a frightening and lonely environment. A gang steals from and threatens people in a shelter. A father loses his livelihood and unleashes his sense of shame and anger on his family. An elderly man’s despair leads him to take his own life. Such stories are common in disasters — and they are not acceptable.

Yet, for all the challenges, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is not without solutions. Violence, while complex and frustrating, is not inevitable. In fact, like the risk of other public-health crises, such as cholera, respiratory illnesses, measles, malaria and a lack of nourishment, which can escalate in disasters, self-directed and interpersonal violence can be contained, curbed and ultimately prevented. The ability of violence to thrive on ignorance, secrecy, denial and the chaos of disasters can be thwarted.

An IFRC report published this year jointly with the Canadian Red Cross entitled “Predictable, preventable: best practices for addressing interpersonal and self-directed violence during and after disasters” challenges all of us, and the humanitarian community in particular, to respond to the problem through early and proactive action, using a public health approach, incorporating gender and including children and youth in our approach.

We should ensure, for instance, that our own internal systems — policies, standard operating procedures, education and monitoring — are in place to create safe environments. We must also integrate the prevention of violence within vulnerability and

capacity assessments, to better understand the risks and strengths of communities in preparing for disasters and to ensure the do-no-harm principle in addressing violence. Additionally, we must educate and support communities and disaster responders at all levels to be prepared to minimize the risk of violence and to respond rapidly and effectively if it does occur.

While the International Federation has an essential role and benefits from many assets to tip the scales in favour of safety—our fundamental principles, dedicated local volunteers and networks of diverse partnerships, including auxiliaries to Government—today all of us must acknowledge the predictable and preventable problem of violence in disasters, accelerate our actions and respond.

The IFRC views education as a key tool to foster such an individual, family, community and societal transformation towards building respect for diversity, non-violence and social cohesion. As enshrined in international human rights law, a major purpose of education is to promote a culture of non-violence and peace at many different levels. Regrettably, education that fosters a culture of non-violence and peace is not yet embedded in most national educational systems. When it is incorporated, it is often in post-conflict settings rather than serving a preventive, transformative role for society. The essential mission of education therefore needs to be translated into action by policy- and decision-makers at international and national levels.

Goals 2 and 3 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aim at universal primary education and equal access for boys and girls, and by doing so focus only on educational availability and accessibility. Echoing the second priority of the Secretary-General's Education First initiative, which is quality of learning, the IFRC calls upon policymakers and decision-makers to dedicate equal importance to the quality and acceptability of education in the post-MDGs reflections and policy dialogues.

The motto adopted for IFRC 2020 is "Saving lives, changing minds". While we are well known for our work in saving lives in disaster situations, we count also on our 187 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to work at the community level to change mindsets. Changing minds is not only relevant but also critical to saving lives, to alleviating suffering and to building resilience. We believe that tolerance, social inclusion

and respect for diversity are important building blocks for a more resilient community.

That belief is translated into one of our IFRC's flagship programmes, called Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change. It raises young people's awareness and understanding of issues related to the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace, such as non-discrimination and respect for diversity, violence prevention, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, gender equality, the Red Cross and Red Crescent fundamental principles and international humanitarian law. The programme does not convey knowledge, or tell youth what to think. It encourages youth to change perspective, to realize that there is no black-and-white truth, to break conditioning transmitted through upbringing, education or media and to develop and act upon one's own position.

In conclusion, let me underscore that violence is predictable and preventable. Violence prevention is a moral and humanitarian imperative. As such, it behoves all of us to garner all the human and financial resources at our disposal and commit them to the prevention of self-directed and interpersonal violence of all kinds. In the context of disasters, as I have shown today, concrete steps can be taken to prevent and minimize the occurrence of violence, especially towards the most vulnerable populations. Within our communities, and particularly with our youth, the role of education in changing minds and fostering tolerance, social inclusion and respect for diversity are important building blocks for a more resilient community.

Violence obsesses and consumes our world; if we do not seek to prevent it, our future and the future of our children and grandchildren will be seriously jeopardized. Promoting a culture of non-violence and peace is necessary, because the human cost is just too severe to bear. That cost manifests itself in the stunted growth of children, in lives brutally snuffed out prematurely, in psychological damage that lasts a lifetime, in the physical pain of the countless millions who have been maimed, in the intergenerational transmission of violent tendencies and, finally, in the financial burden imposed on families, hospitals, humanitarian agencies and Governments.

The Acting President: I now call on the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Chullikatt (Holy See): My delegation is pleased to express its support for the draft resolution

introduced this morning (A/67/L.45) entitled “International Day of Charity”, and wishes to thank in particular the main sponsor, Hungary, for its initiative in that regard and for the collaborative manner in which consultations were conducted.

The fifteenth anniversary of the death of blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, affords us a welcome opportunity to reflect anew on the importance of public support for charitable activities at the local, national, regional and international levels.

Far more than simply collecting and distributing funds — necessary as that may be — charity speaks rather to the underlying motivation urging individuals or societies to reach out to one another in true solidarity. Without recognizing this deeper meaning and understanding, charity risks becoming nothing more than mere sentimentality and emotionalism, which deprives it of its relational and social content and its ability to teach people the importance of sharing, respect and love for their brothers and sisters in need. Today’s draft resolution is an opportunity to reawaken and renew the international community’s understanding of the concept of charity, which was so eloquently exemplified by blessed Teresa of Calcutta, by demonstrating that true charity must be rooted in both truth and love.

We all recall Mother Teresa, who addressed the General Assembly on 26 October 1985. In introducing her to the Assembly, the then-Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar said:

“This is a Hall of words. A few days ago we had, in this rostrum, the most powerful men in the world. Now we have the privilege to have the most powerful woman in the world. I do not think I need to present her. She does not need words. She does need deeds. I think that the best thing I can do is to pay tribute to her and to [say] that she is much more than I, much more than all of us. She is the United Nations. She is peace in [the] world.”

In her address to the General Assembly on her works of charity, Mother Teresa then highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of charity when she asserted that works of love begin at home and works of love are works of peace. The simplicity of that message highlights a great truth: that charity is an expression of love received and given.

The Holy See continues to urge charitable or philanthropic organizations to be committed to achieving truly humanitarian solutions to the social and political problems of the day, independent of parties and ideologies, and remains ready to cooperate with charitable agencies to achieve the goal of a true humanism, which acknowledges the dignity of each person and strives to aid him or her to live in a way consonant with that dignity.

With modern means of communication now virtually eliminating the distances between peoples, charitable activity can and should embrace all people and all needs. In carrying out such activities, organizations should show special concern for people in need and exercise a valuable educational function, helping them to appreciate the importance of sharing, respect and love. Accordingly, different stakeholders will appreciate the contribution that this draft resolution makes towards establishing a universal framework for realizing our common objective of helping communities and individuals to fulfil their physical, social, economic and spiritual needs.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 15.

Before proceeding further, in view of the desire of members to dispose of this item expeditiously, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to considering draft resolution A/67/L.45. In that connection, since the draft resolution was circulated only this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

“As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting.”

Unless I hear any objection, I will take it that the Assembly agrees with that proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/67/L.44, A/67/L.45 and A/67/L.46.

Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position, may I remind the delegations that

explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Alyas (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): May I begin by extending our warmest thanks to the delegation of Hungary for introducing the draft resolution entitled “International day of charity” (A/67/L.45). We would also like to express our appreciation of the Member States who participated in the negotiations to reach consensus on the text. The draft resolution seeks to make 5 September each year the International Day of Charity, which should show how much importance the international community attributes to charity and the important role played by States and individuals to alleviate suffering throughout the world.

Like other societies throughout the world, charity and giving are essential underpinnings in the lives of Saudi citizens. There is no doubt that charity at the international level has an important impact on reducing the suffering of those in need. However, my delegation would like to reiterate that charitable action cannot replace international aid for development, whose role is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and for resolving the problems of poverty, particularly in the least developed countries. The debt situation of such countries is therefore particularly relevant in that regard. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia plays an important role in providing relief and assistance to poor countries, as well as in the sphere of development. Among donor countries, we are leaders in allocating a higher rate of our gross domestic product to official development assistance than the 0.7 per cent that other countries devote — a figure that amounts to more than \$100 million annually.

To date, Saudi Arabia has devoted \$7 billion to debt cancellation, in addition to our contributions to the World Food Programme and other charitable activities. King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud believes, along with others, in the importance of charitable activity for individuals and for the community. We appeal to the countries of the world to stand by the international commitments agreed upon in order to carry forward the process of development in developing countries so that poverty can be alleviated.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.44, entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Saijin Zhang (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.44, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Fiji, Grenada, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Peru, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, Singapore, the Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Turkmenistan.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.44?

Draft resolution A/67/L.44 was adopted (resolution 67/104).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.45 entitled “International Day of Charity”.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Saijin Zhang (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.45, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Angola, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Honduras, Ireland, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Pakistan, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.45?

Draft resolution A/67/L.45 was adopted (resolution 67/105).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.46 entitled “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace”.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Saijing Zhang (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.46, the following countries have become sponsors: Brazil, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Georgia, Grenada, Israel, Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Myanmar, the Niger, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Seychelles, Suriname, Tunisia and Vanuatu.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.46?

Draft resolution A/67/L.46 was adopted (resolution 67/106).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the speaker in explanation of position following the adoption of the resolutions, may I remind the delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

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

Ms. Phipps (United States of America): The United States firmly supports efforts to foster peacebuilding, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and interreligious and intercultural dialogue and cooperation. We are pleased to have joined the consensus on all three of the resolutions adopted under the agenda item “Culture of peace”. The United States strongly believes in encouraging a culture of peace through the adoption and promotion of values based on freedom, justice, democracy and human rights that reject violence and address the root causes of conflict. We are encouraged by the consensus-based efforts to promote tolerance, solidarity, dialogue, reconciliation and respect for cultural diversity. As a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious nation, the United States also believes

that dialogue, understanding and cooperation among and between members of different religious and cultural backgrounds is important to the development of peaceful and harmonious relations between groups and between States.

We understand the resolution 67/104, on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, reaffirms the international community’s recognition that article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in its entirety provides the international framework for the protection of the freedom of expression. In that regard, the United States reaffirms our well-known position that the exercise of the right to the freedom of expression should be afforded the maximum possible protection.

With respect to language in paragraph 6 of that resolution, the United States would also highlight our understanding that the paragraph refers to human rights obligations to which States have consented, and having willingly entered into such agreements, they must comply with those obligations.

We support the intent behind the Declaration of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures. With regard to the financial implications of conducting the activities that the International Decade will entail, we would note that, as the lead agency, UNESCO will be responsible for supporting many of those activities. The necessary decisions on committing resources to support those activities properly belong to the UNESCO General Conference and Executive Board.

Turning to resolution 67/106, on the follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, the United States would like to express its appreciation for the recognition of International Jazz Day, which uniquely contributes to a culture of peace. Jazz music has been a medium for bringing people together from diverse backgrounds and cultures for decades around a shared interest and enthusiasm for that art form. We look forward to continuing to work together to build mutual understanding, including through next year’s celebrations of International Jazz Day, to be hosted in Istanbul, and through activities throughout the world to promote peace.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 15.

Agenda item 29**People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model****Draft resolution (A/67/L.47)**

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.47.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): I have the honour, on behalf of approximately 20 sponsors, to introduce, under agenda item 29, entitled "People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model", draft resolution A/67/L.47, entitled "People's empowerment and development".

A year ago, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, proposed at the General Assembly a development model based on people's empowerment. Her inspiration for the concept stemmed from the fact that billions of people around the world suffered from political, economic, social and cultural disempowerment, deprivation and exclusion. It is believed that the empowerment of those people can foster just and sustainable development. That is a dedicated development philosophy that targets marginalized and vulnerable peoples. At its previous session, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on people's empowerment and development (resolution 66/224), which highlighted the interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements of people's empowerment and development as envisaged by the Prime Minister. I express sincere gratitude to all Member States for their overwhelming support, which resulted in the consensual adoption of the resolution last year. I hope that the resolution will receive members' full support this year.

In a world in which billions of people suffer from extreme poverty, hunger, disease, malnutrition and illiteracy, and millions live in situations of conflict and deprivation of their fundamental freedoms and human rights, peace remains more elusive than ever; development an ever-widening challenge; and the marginalization of the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded are an everyday story. Millions of people around us are unable to meet their basic needs and remain disempowered and voiceless. Even high economic growth in many developed countries has not been translated into people's empowerment. It is evident that the disempowerment of a sector of the population

remains at the core of most of the problems of the contemporary world and has resulted in sociopolitical unrest, insurgency, terrorism, fundamentalism and the like.

The major United Nations conference of the 1990s, as well as the Millennium Summit, recognized that development, peace and security were interlinked and mutually reinforcing. It is no wonder that in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development — "The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex) — consensus was reached to have a world of inclusiveness and a holistic programme that encouraged social, economic and environmental issues. Yet, the goal of creating societies for all — societies that are stable, just and equitable — remains elusive. Many developing countries, in particular the least developed ones, cannot guarantee on their own the much-needed social protection, or address widening inequality. The systematic exclusion of selected groups and persons from fundamental freedoms and employment opportunities still remains impediments to socioeconomic stability in many societies.

The philosophy of people's empowerment and development is dedicated to bringing empowerment, especially to the voiceless and the deprived, by giving them a voice, social equity and safety, human capability and economic opportunity through the promotion of mutually reinforcing peace and development multipliers. It has the potential to bring hope, relief and redress to the disempowered and marginalized all over the world.

Our confidence in the concept lies in its inherent strength in addressing deprivation and disempowerment, which economists and social scientists have branded as the usual causes. In a society where people are the prime movers and the agents of change and where people's participation in spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life is guaranteed, development is certain to gain momentum. It is so very important that people should be at the centre of endeavours to achieve lasting, holistic and sustainable peace and development and be the key focus of all plans, programmes and policies at all levels.

The global community and individual nations will face new and emerging challenges. As people are fully empowered with skills, technical know-how, education and the like, it will be easier for them to manage and face the challenges.

Extremism and terrorism are contemporary threats to peace, security and development. Poverty and underdevelopment, inequality and deprivation are largely at the root of those global menaces. As a result, eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality, mitigating deprivation, accelerating human development and employment, empowering with skills and education and guaranteeing participation in Government are essential for curbing extremism and rooting out terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

In this short draft resolution, the General Assembly appreciates our efforts in bringing this issue to the fore and acknowledges the international conference that we organized in Dhaka, as mandated in last year's resolution. In order to deepen understanding of the value of people's empowerment for development, it is requested that the draft resolution be brought to the attention of the high-level panel on promoting the empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration, full employment and decent work for all, to be held during the fifty-first session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2013. The Assembly has also requested the Secretary-General to include information relevant to the draft resolution in his report on the progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals to the General Assembly at its the sixty-ninth session. I therefore call upon the Assembly to support the draft resolution and adopt it by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.47, entitled "People's empowerment and development".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Saijin Zhang (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.47, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Eritrea, Georgia, Grenada, Guinea, Malaysia and Nigeria.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.47?

Draft resolution A/67/L.47 was adopted (resolution 67/107).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 29?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 114

Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/67/161 and A/67/255)

Draft resolution (A/67/L.41)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belize to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.41.

Ms. Young (Belize): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.41, entitled "Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade", on behalf of the 54 members of the African Group and the other States Members of the United Nations that are sponsors of the draft resolution.

Slavery and the transatlantic slave trade were abolished some 200 years ago. Eleven years ago, in Durban, South Africa, the States Members of the United Nations resolved, in paragraph 101 of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, to honour, inter alia, the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. We thank the Secretary-General for continuing to keep the momentum going, as reflected in his reports (A/67/161 and A/67/255) regarding the activities undertaken earlier this year in commemoration of the anniversary of the abolition of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, and in the status of the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships – Permanent Memorial, respectively.

Within our respective communities, we have a long tradition of honouring the legacy of slavery through music and poetry. I am reminded of our own Belizean poet, Mr. Roy Caetano, whose poem "Drums of my father", rejoiced in our spirit of survival:

"I, stretched and taut, have taken the beating and the pounding. But my spirit and my voice will not be quieted, will not be muffled. For I am the

hollowed, hallowed, haloed trunk and the hills and the vales and the streams and the soul of Africa, and the banks and the waters and the heart and the mind of the Amazon and the Orinico, and the wrinkled calloused handsdragged across the Atlantic and dumped on the golden studs and shores of the Carib-being waters”.

But the remembrance of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade must transcend our respective communities to reach a global public. In that regard, CARICOM States remained committed to the erection of a permanent memorial in a place of prominence at United Nations Headquarters in New York. As the representative of Guyana, Mr. George Talbot, noted in 2011, the last occasion on which a previous iteration of this draft resolution was introduced (resolution 66/114), the permanent memorial will “serve as a source of inspiration, a symbol of the indomitable spirit of human beings and their capacity to triumph over the worst forms of oppression and bigotry” (*A/66/PV.83, p. 3*).

CARICOM also commends the leadership of Jamaica’s representative, Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, who serves as Chair of the Permanent Memorial Committee. The Committee, under his stewardship, has made significant strides in its efforts to realize the erection of the permanent memorial, in particular through its collaboration with UNESCO for the successful conclusion of an international design competition for the permanent memorial. On behalf of CARICOM States, we would also like to express our appreciation for the contributions and pledges received from Member States to date towards the Trust Fund. We would like to encourage other Member States and interested parties to contribute to this important initiative.

The fifth annual commemoration of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade was held in March under the theme “Honouring the heroes, resisters and survivors” and was marked by, inter alia, a panel discussion, a commemorative meeting of the General Assembly and a global videoconference for students. Indeed, educating our children and youth about slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, its history, its toll, its legacy — that is a memorial in its own way.

CARICOM wishes to acknowledge the work of UNESCO, in particular its Slave Route Project, started in 1994 in Benin, West Africa, which last year made

its way through the CARICOM member State of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The Project seeks to raise global consciousness about slavery and the slave trade and to provide wide public support for the erection of the permanent memorial.

The draft resolution before us today retains the core elements of past versions of the resolution, including, first, references in the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs to paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration, which, inter alia, invited the international community and its members to honour the memory of the victims of slavery; secondly, the continued importance of educating and informing current and future generations about the causes, consequences and lessons of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade; thirdly, the establishment of a committee of interested States to oversee the permanent memorial project, drawn from all geographic regions of the world, with member States from the Caribbean Community and the African Union playing a primary role, in collaboration with various United Nations departments and agencies; and, fourthly, the importance of sustained voluntary contributions in order to achieve the goal of erecting the permanent memorial in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, an issue that cannot be overemphasized.

A new and important element is the inclusion of a paragraph — paragraph 9 — which reads as follows:

“Notes with appreciation the commitment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the permanent memorial initiative, and in this regard, requests increased collaboration with the Permanent Memorial Committee towards the successful conclusion of the international design competition for the permanent memorial”.

The intention is to ensure the completion of the first phase of the international design competition launched by UNESCO.

In response to inquiries about the budgetary implications arising from the adoption of the draft resolution, let me clarify that the permanent memorial will become a reality through the generous contributions received voluntarily from Member States and other interested parties, as well as the resource-mobilization activities that will be organized by the Permanent Memorial Committee.

CARICOM remains appreciative of the invaluable support, technical advice and assistance received from the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and members of the Permanent Memorial Committee.

By adopting this important draft resolution by consensus, the General Assembly would acknowledge the continuing legacy of slavery and the moral imperative to remember its impact, honour the descendants of slaves for what they have endured and pay tribute to the brave men and women who valiantly fought against the inhumane practices of slavery.

Mr. Doubane (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): Before I proceed to make my statement, allow me to express the condolences of the Group of African States to the host country and pay tribute to the memory of the deceased, while sending our sympathy to their families and loved ones at this very difficult time.

On behalf of the African Group, on whose behalf I have the honour to take the floor at today's important debate on agenda item 114, entitled "Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade", I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the subject (A/67/161 and A/67/255).

At the outset, allow me to convey our appreciation to and commend the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for their commitment and, above all, their efforts, which allow us to continue to reflect upon and examine past injustices that continue to have an adverse impact on our history, but more important, to celebrate the resilience of the human spirit to survive such adversity, as well as the efforts made to prevent our having to relive that unfortunate period in our history.

Six years ago, the General Assembly designated 25 March as the International Day for the Commemoration of the Two-hundredth Anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. By recognizing the effect of slavery in the modern world, Member States have acknowledged that slavery is at the heart of profound social and economic inequality, hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice that continue to affect people of African descent today. As the largest forced displacement in history, the transatlantic slave trade decimated millions of Africans, separated them from their families and their homes, dragged them in chains to the Americas and sold them as slaves. Its most salient outcome was the dehumanization of persons of

African descent, which led to a disturbing legacy of racism and racial discrimination in many countries.

Last year, the United Nations observed the fourth International Day for the Commemoration of the Two-hundredth Anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade with the theme "The living legacy of 30 million untold stories". That occasion was an opportunity to recognize the dearth of inquiry into the experiences of enslaved Africans and the continuing gap in the scholastic literature regarding their individual and collective perspectives. The relevance of the theme can be seen in the gap in the academic literature on the subject and should provide precious insight on the magnitude of the brutal treatment and the condition of slaves. To date, however, only a limited number of narratives have addressed the essential issue of the identities of enslaved Africans, their beliefs, value systems and expertise. As such, the diversity of skills and technological know-how that they brought to the Americas and their invaluable contributions to nation-building there have not been sufficiently acknowledged.

In that regard, the African Group believes that more efforts are needed to promote education and outreach programmes to ensure that that gap is filled. We therefore appreciate the outreach work of UNESCO, the committee of permanent representatives and the Department of Public Information. We hope to see that effort extended through the establishment of new scholarships in the field in order to provide a more insightful look into the history of enslavement during the 400 years of the triangular trade, as well as the legacy from the point of view, this time, of the victims.

We further express our appreciation to the Department of Public Information for its education and outreach programmes on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery organized in 2011, while encouraging it to continue its efforts to make the annual commemorative activities a fitting and solemn tribute to the victims of slavery.

One of the ways of sustaining lasting outreach efforts with regard to slavery and the slave trade is the erection of a permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the slave trade. We therefore welcome the initiative taken to date by States members of the Caribbean Community on the matter. We also recognize the need for sustained voluntary contributions — which we hope to see increase — to

build the permanent memorial at an early date. Several countries have contributed to the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial. I am glad to report that several African countries are among the contributors. The African Group would like to commend all those that have contributed to date, and we invite other countries to make timely contributions to this worthy project as well.

It goes without saying that the African Group remains firmly committed to the project, as we believe that the memorial will serve to recall the heroic actions of slaves and abolitionists who, in the face of grave dangers and adversity, stood up and took action. It will also serve as an educational venue for lifelong learning, a reconstruction of the past, a repository of memory, a lens through which to mould the future and, most importantly, a constant reminder of human vulnerability.

This is an apt moment to recognize the efforts and dedication of the Permanent Mission of Jamaica and to commend the personal engagement of Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, who has been unflinching committed to the initiative since 2007. He has our deepest gratitude.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the African Group's support for the efforts of the United Nations and countries in raising awareness about slavery and the transatlantic slave trade over the past year. It is our sincere hope that more will be done this next year and in years to come to honour all victims of the slave trade and all brave abolitionists, as well as the collective international efforts that led to the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and of slavery itself.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Belize on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and by our colleague the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic on behalf of the Group of African States.

At the outset, let me express my delegation's gratitude to the Secretariat for the reports contained in documents A/67/255 and A/67/161, which serve to inform our discussions under this agenda item. We are encouraged to learn that several Member States — including El Salvador, Greece, Jordan, Kenya, Qatar, Senegal, Spain, Togo and my own country, Jamaica — have undertaken national educational programmes in fulfilment of resolution 66/114. That is a clear indication of their commitment to ensuring that

the inhumane indifference to human life demonstrated by the terrible crimes committed under the callous system of slavery is never repeated.

It is often said that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. In that light, our reflection on the tragedy of slavery and those who fell victim to it must transcend into action as we continue to grapple with the ills of today's society. It is for that reason that Jamaica remains committed to spearheading the initiative to erect a permanent memorial at the United Nations to honour the victims of slavery and of the transatlantic slave trade, and that we will continue in our efforts to educate others on the history, legacy and lingering effects of the barbarism of the transatlantic slave trade.

Draft resolution A/67/L.41, which we are about to adopt, carries added significance for me, as it bears testimony to the journey I have taken over the past six years. Not long after arriving in New York, I humbly assumed the responsibility entrusted to the Government of Jamaica as Chair of the Permanent Memorial Committee, established to implement the decision taken in resolution 62/122 to erect the memorial — a decision reiterated in successive resolutions on the subject.

For me, it has been a long and arduous journey, which came with its ups and downs, but one that has given me a sense of personal fulfilment and continues to be a source of pride, because it has allowed me to pay homage to my ancestors as I have contributed to a process of immense historic significance in honour of their memory. As most of us are aware, slavery and the slave trade would today be condemned as a crime against humanity and an act of genocide. It has been a distinct honour and privilege to have worked with colleagues from CARICOM and the African States, who are more than passionate advocates of this and other initiatives of significance to persons of African descent.

I take this opportunity, as Chair of the Permanent Memorial Committee, to provide a brief update on the activities of the Committee over the past year. The Committee is proud to report that the first phase of the international design competition has been completed and that more than 300 design proposals, representing 83 nationalities, were submitted to UNESCO. From those, 16 semi-finalists were selected. The Committee is currently working to complete the second phase of the project, wherein an independent international panel

of judges will review the 16 semi-finalist designs and identify seven finalists, who will be invited to New York for interviews — ending in a winner being selected. In that regard, the Committee has already selected eight eminently capable individuals from various regions around the world, who will make up the international panel of judges.

The Committee has also endorsed and supported an initiative to host a concert and black-tie grand gala event in the General Assembly Hall to commemorate the on hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the United States. Those events are scheduled to be held on 22 March 2013, just prior to the week of activities that will be held in tandem with the annual United Nations International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, as agreed by the General Assembly in resolution 62/122.

It is the intention of the organizers to use the opportunity to raise much-needed funds for the permanent memorial. To date, the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial has received voluntary contributions from 61 Member States and 71 private individuals, amounting to some \$1.3 million. In this connection, I wish to encourage those Member States that have not yet made a contribution to graciously consider doing so.

I am delighted to report that some Governments have made multiple contributions to the Trust Fund, and I commend their decision to do so. I am particularly pleased to highlight the contribution made by the Government of India, which has provided the single largest voluntary contribution to the Trust Fund to date — \$260,000 — and we commend and thank the Government of India for its display of moral leadership in this cause. In this connection, I draw attention to document A/67/161, which reports the status of voluntary contributions.

Let me also pay a special tribute to the United Nations Office for Partnerships, which administers the Trust Fund, for its continued support for the permanent memorial initiative. Under the able guidance of the Office, we have managed to establish a new relationship with the prestigious Humpty Dumpty Institute, which will guarantee tax exemptions for donations made by United States residents under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

I applaud the members of the Permanent Memorial Committee themselves for their unwavering support and for the long hours they have committed to the myriad issues considered in our efforts to advance the permanent memorial initiative. For the record, the members of the Committee are Brazil, Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, the Netherlands, Portugal, Qatar, Senegal, Suriname, the United Kingdom, the African Union, the Chair of CARICOM, the Chair of the African Group of Ambassadors, the United Nations Office for Partnerships, UNESCO, the United Nations Department of Public Information, the New York Public Library Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the Chairperson of the Subcommittee for the Elimination of Racism of the NGO Special Committee on Human Rights.

The achievements we have made so far would not have been possible without the commitment and support of my own staff, and I publicly acknowledge their contribution to the process, and in particular my Third Committee officer, Ms. Andrea Wilson.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation of all those who have positively contributed to the draft resolution, which we expect will be adopted by consensus. I would like to encourage all stakeholders to keep in mind the aim of acknowledging the tragedy and considering, the legacy, lest we forget, and to remain steadfast in their commitment to make the permanent memorial a reality.

On a personal note, for me as an Ambassador to the United Nations, this is the last public statement that I will be making to the Assembly, and I would like to express my thanks to all colleagues for their cooperation and support.

The Acting President: I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Raymond Wolfe on his efforts with respect to the permanent memorial, as this, as he has indicated, may very well be his last speech in the General Assembly. I take this opportunity on behalf of us all to wish him all the best in the future.

Ms. Cousens (United States of America): On 22 September, the United States commemorated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, in which President Abraham Lincoln boldly declared that, on 1 January 1863, all people held as slaves would thenceforward be forever free. The Emancipation Proclamation stands as a

milestone in the advance of freedom for all humankind. As we pay tribute to that historic break with a painful past, we recognize the foundational chapter in American history and reflect on the progress that our country has made towards realizing its founding promise of liberty and justice for all.

The transatlantic slave trade has marked all of us, and the United States is steadfast in its commitment to remembering that history and to educating future generations about it. This shameful trade and the proud struggle for freedom to end it are part of our shared history. It remains our common duty to raise public awareness about its victims and its consequences, even as we work to combat racism, inequality and the deepest of inhumanities wherever they occur today. American voices will always be part of the global conversation about the transatlantic slave trade. We will always fight for its stories of suffering, struggle and redemption to be told.

The United States has supported UNESCO's Breaking the Silence: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project. As part of that effort, we engage Governments and civil society organizations alike to raise awareness about the history of the slave trade, as well as to highlight the invaluable contributions made by persons of African descent in every field of human endeavour. We are committed to UNESCO's work on the permanent memorial.

The United States is honoured and humbled to co-sponsor resolution A/67/L.41, which insists that we remember one of the most searing chapters in the history of man's inhumanity to man — one we must never forget. As President Obama has said, "Slavery is barbaric and evil and has no place in a civilized world". The United States remains dedicated to continued efforts and abiding partnerships to commemorate the victims of slavery, to ameliorate its lingering consequences, and to end its modern forms.

Mr. León González (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cubans are proud of our African roots. The identity of the Cuban nation is the outcome of the process of transculturation that took place with the integration of many ethnic groups into colonial society beginning in the sixteenth century. As a result, we are a combination of Hispanic and African people.

In Cuba, as in nearly all of Latin America and the Antilles, we see traces of the slave trade. In one component of that cruel trade, our island was home to

some 1.3 million Africans, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa. Our cultural diversity and characteristics are also the expressions of the bitter cultural history of the African peoples who enriched us with their wisdom, traditions, languages, religious beliefs, music, temperament and rebellious spirit. The bravery and resolve of the slaves who rebelled against exploitation fed the Cuban people's spirit of freedom and love of independence.

As long as the current unjust and unsustainable international political and economic order exists and the majority of the peoples of the planet are deprived the benefits of neo-liberal globalization, Africa will remain marginalized and that colonial legacy will never end. The former colonial mother countries must honour their historic debt to those who suffered during the centuries of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. The past cannot be ignored, and their responsibility for that past cannot be neglected.

Africa is now having to pay far more to service its foreign debt than on education and health. If we stay that course, Africa will continue to finance the opulence of rich countries that have pledged further official development assistance (ODA), but in most cases default on their pledges and continue to charge, in the form of debt servicing, hundreds of times more than the amount of the original ODA promised.

Cuba supports and sponsored draft resolution A/67/L.41, under agenda item 114. A similar text has been submitted annually to the General Assembly by the Member States from the Caribbean Community and African countries. The 2009 saw the founding in Cuba of the Museum of the Slave Route, the first of its kind on the continent, as a living educational instrument in the hands of the entire community. The museum has hosted a number of artistic events addressing the transatlantic trade, and has participated in educational programmes on this important theme.

Cuba recognizes the importance of holding annual events in the context of the United Nations, and looks forward to the outcome of the project for the construction of a permanent memorial at Headquarters, dedicated to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. It is the least that our Organization can do to remember the effects of the slave trade.

Mr. Magid (Israel): Allow me first to recognize and honour Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations.

We deeply appreciate Ambassador Wolfe's immense contribution and dedication as Chair of the Permanent Memorial Committee on Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel once wrote, "If anything can, it is memory that will save humanity. ... [H]ope without memory is like memory without hope". Today, we recommit ourselves to memory so as to ensure that the tragedies of the past serve as clear lessons for the future.

The transatlantic slave trade casts a dark shadow over history. In its course, 30 million people were forced from their homes, uprooted from their villages and forced into lives of bondage. Too many stories of unspeakable injustice, pain and slavery will remain forever untold. And yet, among the stories that have been told, among the stories of unimaginable suffering, there are stories of hope. There are stories of survival and stories of people who found unimaginable strength, even in the darkest of times and the darkest of places.

The Jewish people know too well the evils of oppression, persecution and slavery. We also know the joy of freedom. We understand what it means to realize aspirations and to fulfil dreams. We have built and rebuilt our national homeland in Israel as a free people. Driven by our own experience, the Jewish people and the Jewish State continue to lead global efforts to advance the values of tolerance, freedom and understanding.

As we have done every year, Israel proudly co-sponsors the draft resolution before us on this item. We are proud of our financial contribution to the permanent memorial in honour of the victims of slavery and the international slave trade. The permanent memorial will be seen by world leaders and citizens alike. The memorial will provide a permanent reminder here at the United Nations of the abhorrence of slavery. It will remind us of the words, ideas and deeds that led to millions being enslaved. It will remind us that everyone is born free, born equal and born with the right to decide his or her own destiny. The memorial must also serve as a call to action — a call to every nation, every leader and every citizen to do everything that they can to ensure that no human being is ever again enslaved.

And yet, as we sit here in the Assembly Hall, millions of people in the world are not free. Women are abused as sex slaves and children are being traded

as property. Millions are suffering. Too many children around the globe are being taught to hate. Racism and prejudice are all too prevalent in our world. They are the evil spark for persecution, violence and war. We must remember, we must memorialize and, most crucially, we must educate. Education is the only way to prevent such crimes. It is the only way to ensure that our children and our societies understand their obligation to prevent such a tragedy from ever occurring again. It is the duty of the United Nations to take up the challenge.

Israel today stands with the international community to make a solemn promise. Together, we say that freedom is universal. We promise to our children that we will never stand idle when we see others being enslaved.

Ms. Hosking (South Africa): My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement made by the representative of the Central African Republic on behalf of the Group of African States. We welcome the General Assembly's coming adoption of draft resolution A/67/L.41, on the permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

We wish to convey our sincerest appreciation to the States members of the Caribbean Community for their efforts over the past several years, under the exemplary leadership of the Jamaican delegation and Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, and working in partnership with other relevant players, to establish a permanent memorial at the United Nations in commemoration of the victims of slavery and of the transatlantic slave trade. We furthermore express our profound gratitude to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, representatives of the Secretariat, civil society and others for their tireless efforts and resources expended in support of this historically important project.

Undoubtedly, the permanent memorial will represent a powerful symbol of the victory of humankind over inhumanity, underscoring the indomitability of the human spirit and its ability to overcome unimaginable adversity and hardship against seemingly insurmountable odds. Consequently, and as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/67/255, we commend the ongoing public outreach and educational projects undertaken by the Department of Public Information, together with other partners, in giving visibility and voice to

the memories of countless millions of victims who suffered and perished as a terrible consequence of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. South Africa, in recognition of this critically important initiative, is pleased to have contributed to the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, as a demonstration of the importance we attach to its establishment and to the objectives it aspires to uphold.

We must all draw on the lessons learned from that tragic chapter of human history — which, alongside others, constituted crimes against humanity — so as to collectively address the immense challenge facing the global community in combating contemporary forms and manifestations of slavery.

We see an inextricable link between South Africa's struggle for political freedom and emancipation from the shackles of colonialism and apartheid, and the campaign to end slavery. The transatlantic slave trade, however, stands unprecedented in the annals of human history in terms of its massive scale and reach and the legacy of devastation it wrought — the consequences of which are still felt today in Africa and the nations of the Caribbean.

South Africa therefore urges all Member States to recommit themselves to the full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and, in particular, the relevant articles aimed at countering the legacy of slavery and contributing to the restoration of the dignity of the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri (India): I would like to begin by welcoming the Secretary-General's report on the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery (A/67/255) and for his status report on the permanent memorial to victims of slavery and on the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial (A/67/161). I also want at the outset to pay strong tribute to Ambassador Raymond Wolfe and his untiring efforts to get the idea of the memorial off the ground and to take the entire project to where it is today — that is, a very advanced stage — although much more still needs to be done.

The transatlantic slave trade ravaged African and Caribbean nations to satisfy the rapacious economic greed and exploitation of the colonizers. The effects of its violence and human suffering are still visible today. It is therefore imperative that we commemorate the great struggles and battles that have been fought to

get rid of that scourge, and that we pay homage to the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

The permanent memorial will be a small commemoration of the millions of victims who suffered silently, with no hope of freedom, before they disappeared into the night. The memorial will not only serve as a landmark where we can pay our respects, but will also be a reminder for the international community of the grief and tragedy borne by the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

We have noted that the first phase of the international design competition for the permanent memorial has been completed. UNESCO has shortlisted designs from a number of proposals received globally, which are now being considered by the Permanent Memorial Committee.

The United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, established to receive contributions to erect the permanent memorial, has so far received only about \$1.3 million, as against the anticipated expenditure of about \$4.5 million for the construction of the memorial. India, with a contribution of \$260,000, is the lead contributor to the Trust Fund. The international community, in particular those who benefited from the transatlantic slave trade, must come forward and contribute generously to this noble cause. The international community cannot let the idea of this memorial just remain on the drawing board. Once again, now that I have seen Ambassador Wolfe here in the Hall, I would once again like to reiterate my great praise for him and his untiring personal efforts in getting the project off the ground and to its current stage.

We also recognize the importance of educating current and future generations about the history, causes and impact of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. We support the initiatives the United Nations has undertaken to spread awareness of this important issue. India welcomes the various remembrance activities and programmes of the Department of Public Information (DPI), including the commemorative activities held at the United Nations in March. We support the DPI's efforts to use its global network to build awareness and promote partnership activities with Member States in this area of activity. We also welcome the initiatives taken by States to reaffirm their commitment to implementing paragraphs 101 and 102 of the Durban Declaration, aimed at countering slavery's legacy and

honouring the memory of the victims of slavery and the slave trade.

Let me conclude by quoting George Mason, one of the founding fathers of the United States, who said, “The augmentation of slaves weakens the states; and such a trade is diabolical in itself and disgraceful to mankind”. We have a chance to pay tribute to the victims who suffered this disgrace by openheartedly contributing to the Trust Fund.

Ms. Williams (Grenada): I am honoured to speak on behalf of Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago on draft resolution A/67/L.41, “Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade”. We associate ourselves with the statements made by the representatives of Belize, on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and of the Central African Republic, on behalf of the African Group.

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the work of the Permanent Memorial Committee and the programme of educational outreach, as contained in documents A/67/161 and A/67/255, respectively. Grenada supports the draft resolution as part of our ongoing commitment to this item, and proudly returns this year as a sponsor. We note the near-universal sponsorship of the draft resolution and look forward to its adoption by consensus.

As we have said in this and other forums, Grenada continues to feel deep abhorrence for the inhumanity that was slavery and also continues to commit to working for its rejection through remembrance work, aimed at eliminating its horrific legacy, including ignorance and denial, as recorded in paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General’s report contained in document A/67/255. We are pleased that the international design competition launched last year has made progress, and we encourage UNESCO and the Committee to make every effort to provide the necessary support to ensure a successful conclusion.

We wish to highlight the importance of 2013 as marking the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation in the United States of America. We hope that this pivotal year of commemoration will attract tremendous support for this project. Grenada strongly believes that a memorial place in a very prominent place in the grounds of the United Nations is the very least that can be done to recognize this most heinous crime committed against

humanity. We remain heartened by the fact that the resolution was again adopted by consensus last year, and, as I said, we look forward to its happening again this year.

Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago take this opportunity to warmly acknowledge the sterling leadership of Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations, and his country’s contribution to the slavery and transatlantic slave trade memorial initiative here at the United Nations. We wish him well in his retirement after 39 years in the Jamaican foreign service. May the wind be on our good friend’s face, fanning the fire of the slavery memorial that blazes in his heart, and may his country and his team here at the United Nations follow in his great footsteps and continue to pay tribute to him. Those of us in CARICOM left here will be doing well if we can but carry on a modicum of the noble work he has started here.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 114.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.41, entitled “Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade”. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.41, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Georgia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Japan, Lebanon, Maldives, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Solomon Islands, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and Vanuatu.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.41?

Draft resolution A/67/L.41 was adopted (resolution 67/108).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 114.

Agenda item 121 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

Draft resolution (A/67/L.27)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 121 and its sub-items (a) to (w) at its 40th plenary meeting, on 19 November.

I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.27.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): On behalf of its sponsors, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.27, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM”.

GUAM, the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, was formally established on 10 October 1997 in Strasbourg, France, when the Presidents of the four States involved signed a joint communiqué. In accordance with the decision taken at a summit in Kyiv on 23 May 2006, the group of four States became the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM. Over the 15 years of its existence and activity, GUAM has become a full-fledged international regional organization with a well-formed structure and distinct identity devoted to promoting democracy and economic development in its member countries. During that time, GUAM has undergone various tests and proved its strong viability and practical relevance, successfully developing a vision for its strategic objectives based on a commonality of historical ties, political views and interests.

The States members of GUAM are guided by and strictly adhere to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Its main purposes are, first, promoting democratic values and ensuring the rule of law and respect for human rights; ensuring sustainable development; strengthening international and regional security and stability; improving integration with Europe in establishing a common security space and expanding cooperation in the economic and humanitarian fields; developing

potential, whether social and economic, transportation, energy, scientific and technical or humanitarian; and intensifying political interaction and practical cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Stretching along the historic Silk Road, the territories of the States members of GUAM constitute a natural transport corridor, bridging Europe and Asia through the South Caucasus and the Caspian and Black Sea areas. GUAM is working actively to promote its geopolitical and geoeconomic advantages and exploit its role as an efficient component of the international transport system, with fewer barriers and more cost savings for moving passengers and shipping cargo.

GUAM’s working methods are based on the principle of consensus and on a developed network of mechanisms and instruments of interaction. Various projects and programmes are being implemented within GUAM, as well as with partner countries in the GUAM-plus format and with international organizations. Through resolution 58/85, of 8 January 2004, the General Assembly granted GUAM observer status. In recent years, cooperation between the secretariats of the United Nations and GUAM has developed, including by holding regular meetings in their respective headquarters in New York and Kyiv and implementing joint projects. Thus, in 2009 and 2010 two subregional workshops for GUAM States members, on preventing nuclear terrorism and enhancing international legal cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism and mutual legal assistance, which were also attended by several non-member States and other international and regional organizations, were organized in Kyiv jointly by the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Secretariat of GUAM.

In 2012, in cooperation with the GUAM secretariat and with the assistance of the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the United States Department of State, UNODC started implementing a project on strengthening the capacity of GUAM member States to cooperate at the national and regional levels in combating money-laundering as well as in seizing and confiscating crime proceeds. GUAM has been participating in the UNODC Afghan Opiate Trade Project since the beginning of 2012. We also look forward to developing our interaction with UNODC in combating nuclear terrorism, capitalizing on experience gained at a subregional workshop on the topic held in 2009.

The States members of GUAM are confident that the adoption of the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM will further promote development and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation between the United Nations and GUAM, and will contribute to peace, stability and development in the countries of the region. The text of the draft resolution has been extensively discussed and negotiated in an open and transparent manner with Member States, and we look forward to its adoption by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.27, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM”. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/67/L.27 was adopted (resolution 67/109).

The Acting President: The representative of Armenia has asked to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. I remind him that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia): I have requested the floor after the adoption of resolution 67/109 in order to present my delegation’s explanation of position.

First, we would like to express our regret that the consultation process on the text of the resolution was not sufficiently open and transparent. Despite what was just declared, the text was not extensively discussed. We would like to draw the attention of the sponsors, particularly Azerbaijan, to this fact, and to remind the latter that chairing a regional organization is indeed a highly challenging endeavour that requires the Chair to put aside national and personal agendas and to display a great sense of responsibility, impartiality and inclusiveness. Such essential qualifications, however, were not displayed by the delegation of Azerbaijan in its capacity as Chair of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM, while conducting informal consultations on the draft resolution.

Regarding the substance of the text of the resolution, specifically clauses relating to cooperation among States, let me reaffirm that Armenia strongly

advocates the principles of regional cooperation in every possible sphere that contributes significantly to peace, confidence-building and good-neighbourliness. Although the resolution acknowledges the Organization’s aims of encouraging democracy and economic development in further developing partnership relations with States Members of the United Nations, based on the principles of sovereign equality, mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation, one of the members of GUAM, namely Azerbaijan, continues to use economic projects as tools for imposing pressure and carrying on a unilateral and coercive blockade and measures in order to attain its political goals.

Such behaviour does not contribute to promoting the purposes and principles of the United Nations, or to achieving international cooperation and solving international problems of a political, economic, social, cultural or humanitarian nature, which the resolution highlights in its preambular paragraphs. My delegation hopes that Azerbaijan will follow up and implement Security Council resolution 1631 (2005), by which the Council recalled its invitation to regional organizations to improve and strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements or agencies in maintaining international peace and security. In that regard, it is important to note that regional cooperation in the South Caucasus should be open to all interested States.

My delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution in the belief that its adoption will strengthen States’ responsibility in promoting inclusive and mutually beneficial regional cooperation.

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to representatives who have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan) (spoke in Russian): I would like to speak in exercise of my right of reply in order to shed some light on the remarks just made by the representative of Armenia.

I would first like to remind those present that on 10 December, resolution 67/109, which the Assembly has just adopted by consensus, was submitted for informal consultations, which the Armenian representative attended without making any comments or additions

to the proposed text. The representative of Armenia also had a hard copy of the draft resolution. After that, and since no comments or proposals were made by the participants, draft resolution A/67/L.27 was circulated, according to General Assembly procedure, until 12 December. Again according to procedure, since no additions or amendments was proposed, the draft was transferred to the Secretariat after the expiry of the deadline. Thus Azerbaijan, as one of the resolution's sponsors and Chair of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM, fully complied with all existing procedures, and we categorically deny any comments suggesting that there was a lack of transparency.

Regarding the second comment about an economic blockade and other measures, I would like to remind the representative of Armenia that today Azerbaijan does not occupy one centimetre of Armenian territory, has no territorial pretensions in Armenia and has not carried out ethnic cleansing in its territory. Armenia, on the other hand, is occupying 20 per cent of Azerbaijan's territory and last year ethnically cleansed more than 1 million Azerbaijanis from Armenian territory last year, as well as all the Azerbaijanis living in the occupied territory, and is continuing its aggressive policies towards our country.

In my view, therefore, there are two possibilities here — either the Armenian representative is making a blatant attempt to confuse the Assembly or he simply does not possess any information about what his colleagues are doing and they are not enlightening him about it.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia): I regret that the representative of Azerbaijan has decided to exercise his right of reply. I would like to remind him that it is the duty of the Chair of a regional organization to inspire trust and confidence in all the other Member States that are actively seized of the affairs of that organization. My delegation was not given sufficient time to consider resolution 67/109 or to submit its proposals during the informal consultations.

The statement we just heard about the so-called occupation of Azerbaijani territories and ethnic cleansing proves that Azerbaijan is still far from adhering to the goals and aims of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM. We would like to draw the attention of the organization's member States, the other sponsors of resolution 67/109,

to the fact that Azerbaijan is pursuing a policy geared to the total isolation of Armenia. In particular, the President of that country clearly stated in a recent address that they would never let Armenia join any political, economic, energy or transport project; that they seek to isolate Armenia and do not hide it; and that they will continue their policy of isolating Armenia, as they see that it brings results.

The Azerbaijani Head of State and Government officials waste no opportunity to chatter about their desire to isolate Armenia and leave us out of projects that are expected to bring economic development to the region. But in reality it is Azerbaijani society that is being isolated. The Azerbaijani Government promotes war and xenophobia. It also restricts freedom of speech and information and perceives the Internet and social networks only as means to spread hatred, lies about Armenia and Armenians, and futile bragging.

This unacceptable behaviour on the part of Azerbaijan at the highest level is subject to international condemnation. It hinders the full exercise of the right to development of countries and peoples in our region, and violates the principles and purposes of the United Nations, as well as the intentions of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM reflected in the resolution we have just adopted. We strongly believe that the international community, and GUAM members above all, should no longer tolerate Azerbaijan's isolation policy, which lays the ground for a hostile regional environment for nations in our part of the world. We also call on the representative of Azerbaijan to renounce the use of provocative remarks and to respect the time and agenda of the Member States present in this Hall. We would also like to remind the Azerbaijani delegation that the principle of expanding economic and humanitarian cooperation is an aim of GUAM's European integration process, as was mentioned in the representative of Azerbaijan's statement.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan) (*spoke in Russian*): I apologize to the Assembly, but it was not I who initiated this polemic. I did not plan to do so, but I have a moral duty to respond when my country is confronted by such a flood of lies and slander about it. In typical fashion, Armenia is doing all it can to turn things on their head and falsify the facts. I repeat that we have not occupied anyone's territory. The war is being conducted against us. Our population is being occupied in our own territory. The Parliament of Armenia has

adopted legislation annexing Azerbaijani territory. If all of these facts are ignored, I do not know what we are calling aggression nowadays.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia): My delegation had no intention of using its right of reply a second time, but after hearing the representative of Azerbaijan's unacceptable remarks it is hard to remain silent. It is particularly unethical to proceed with defamatory statements at a time when a large number of Member States are trying to contribute to the work of the General Assembly. We believe that the time has come for the Azerbaijani delegation to refrain from its traditional means of propaganda and instead realize the paramount importance of debating serious thematic matters here in this body.

At present, we can only characterize the statement of the Azerbaijani representative as a desperate attempt to sidetrack the General Assembly from its basic tasks. We are not talking about that conflict in this Hall; we are talking about economic cooperation. Let me also remind the Azerbaijani representative that the framework for discussing the Nagorno Karabakh issue is the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), led by its co-Chairs, and not the General Assembly, and that the first meaningful step that Azerbaijan should take is to engage with the elected authorities of Nagorno Karabakh in constructive negotiations. It is of the utmost importance that Azerbaijan implement in their entirety all the agreements reached within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group-sponsored meetings and summits, remove all the blockades that hinder people's free movement, renounce the hate rhetoric and provocations, and allow the expansion of economic and humanitarian cooperation in order to strengthen regional security. We would also like to remind Azerbaijan that these are the stated main goals and principles of GUAM member States.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 121.

Agenda item 121 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Draft resolution A/67/L.40

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 121 and its sub-items (a) to (w) at its 40th plenary meeting, on 19 November.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Cambodia to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.40.

Mr. Sea (Cambodia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Cambodia, to introduce, under agenda item 121 (c), draft resolution A/67/L.40, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations".

So far, more than 70 States have sponsored the draft resolution. In addition to the 10 ASEAN member States, the following are sponsors: Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mongolia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tajikistan, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago and Turkey.

The United Nations and regional organizations have unique and complementary capacities with real potential to help Member States effectively address current and emerging global challenges, as well as to achieve several long-standing international goals. Based on that understanding, in recent years we have seen relations

and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations strengthen and deepen across a wide spectrum of activities. In the past 10 years, the relationship between the United Nations and ASEAN has been strengthened and accelerated so as to reach a new, high level of cooperation and partnership that is increasingly mutually beneficial. That is reflected in our biennial resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN, which over the years have clearly charted a positively evolving collaboration on a broad range of issues including, but not limited to, peace and security, socioeconomic development, environmental protection, disaster management and humanitarian assistance and the promotion of human rights and democracy.

I wish to highlight that this year's draft resolution is based on resolution 65/235 of 22 December 2010, with updates reflecting the strengthened cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations, particularly the adoption of a Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership at the Fourth ASEAN-United Nations Summit in Bali in November 2011. The Declaration is meant to facilitate closer collaboration between ASEAN and the United Nations in collectively addressing emerging global challenges, drawing on the experiences and expertise of both organizations. The Declaration established more coordinated and cohesive cooperation among ASEAN sectoral bodies in their relations with United Nations specialized agencies, and in so doing aims to bolster ASEAN's capacity to contribute and respond to global challenges. This important document has become a milestone by providing not only a firm foundation but, and most importantly, a clear vision for making cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN strong, active and concrete.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of all the ASEAN Nations, our sincere thanks to all Member States for their support for the past resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN that have been adopted without a vote in the General Assembly since 2002. In that connection, I would like to ask all Member States to continue their support for this year's draft resolution by adopting it by consensus, as in previous years.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.40.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.40, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Estonia, Gabon, India, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mongolia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Sweden and Turkey.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.40?

Draft resolution A/67/L.40 was adopted (resolution 67/110).

The Acting President: Several representatives have asked to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Plaisted (United States of America): The United States welcomes the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the support of peace and security in the region. Towards that end, the United States reiterates its position that the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration be implemented consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights agreements. The United States remains a committed partner with ASEAN in the protection of human rights.

Ms. Ventura (Canada): Canada is pleased to join consensus on resolution 67/110. We welcome the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in various fields, including the promotion and protection of human rights, which, in all contexts, are to be implemented in accordance with international obligations. Canada looks forward to deepening its partnerships with ASEAN on human rights and other issues.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 121?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to announce that consideration of agenda item 32, entitled “The

role of diamonds in fuelling conflict”, will take place tomorrow morning, 18 December 2012, immediately following the consideration of the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.