



# Economic and Social Council

Provisional

26 December 2012

Original: English

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**Substantive session for 2012**  
**High-Level Segment**

**Provisional summary record of the 16th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 3 July 2012, at 3 p.m.

*President:* Mr. de Alba (Vice-President) . . . . . (Mexico)

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**General debate** (*continued*)



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

**General debate** (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Acharya** (Observer for Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that as the most vulnerable and weakest segment of the international community, the least developed countries continued to grapple with enormous economic, human and social development challenges as a result of their structural constraints and unique vulnerabilities. Most would be unable to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 as they had been especially hard-hit by the persistent global downturn.

2. Their limited productive capacity undermined their economic diversification and international competitiveness, further exacerbating their supply-side constraints and restricting the employment opportunities available to their people. It was essential for them to build capacity in the agriculture, manufacturing and services sectors in order to sustain inclusive, equitable growth, eradicate poverty, generate productive employment and decent work and build resilience, including to the disproportionate impact of climate change. In order for them to do so despite the ongoing economic and financial crisis, they needed to reduce their infrastructure deficits and gain access to affordable, renewable and reliable energy and related technologies so that they could bridge the digital divide. The highest priority should be given to agriculture and rural development as the backbone of the economy and the primary source of employment, but greater attention should also be paid to human resource development through quality basic education and vocational and technical training.

3. As strategically important sources of employment, small and medium-sized enterprises should receive comprehensive support in order to improve national, regional and international value chains, thereby compensating for the limited size of markets in the least developed countries. It should be borne in mind that since those countries had the lowest levels of productivity, even if their people found jobs they were unlikely to rise above the level of working poor. There was a need for new international policies and mechanisms in order to boost the real economy, provide jobs and increase incomes, particularly in vulnerable countries, and for a global jobs pact that took into account unemployment and disguised employment, particularly among youth and women

around the world. Greater coordination of jobs, productive capacity and macroeconomic policy was critical to sustainable recovery from the crisis. A cycle of low pay, low productivity, depressed demand and jobless growth was becoming a recurrent phenomenon in the least developed countries. A better understanding of those challenges, together with policy coherence backed by strong international solidarity and support, would help to sustain job-rich growth and alleviate poverty.

4. Although it was primarily the responsibility of the least developed countries to pursue their own development agendas, their development partners had the political and moral obligation to provide sustained and enhanced financial and technical support. While those countries appreciated the support and cooperation that they had been receiving, they urged their partners to provide more, dedicated and targeted support in the future. The increasing complementary role of South-South and triangular cooperation should also support their efforts, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development, technology transfer and capacity-building as agreed in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action).

5. There was particular concern over figures cited in a recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report, which documented an 8.9 per cent reduction in real official development assistance (ODA) flows to least developed countries. Aid delivery to those countries still fell short of the target of 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP); he called on the developed countries to meet their commitments in that regard. ODA should be allocated in a balanced manner between the productive and social sectors, and policy coherence and coordination should be improved. Debt sustainability was critical in enhancing the productive capacity of the least developed countries and foreign direct investment (FDI) remained an important source of support for their development efforts, which should be encouraged through incentive schemes targeting small and medium-sized enterprises.

6. Because trade was an essential engine of growth for developing countries, it was troubling that the least developed countries' share of global trade was only 1 per cent. He called for full duty-free, quota-free market access for those countries, for simplified rules of origin and for the removal of non-tariff barriers to

their exports. In that context, the least developed countries deserved an “early harvest” in light of the stalled progress on the Doha Development Agenda. He also called for a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system. Development partners should provide robust trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building through Aid for Trade initiatives and the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries with the aim of removing their supply-side and trade-related infrastructure and productive capacity constraints.

7. **Mr. Errázuriz** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Economic Community for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), said that the instabilities of the global financial system, first noticed in the summer of 2007, had continued over time and the impact of the crisis on the real economy was still evolving. The Council could play an important role in ending the current crisis and preventing future ones and, to that end, should be strengthened.

8. Productive capacity was the opposite of speculative capacity. For too long, the financial sectors of certain developed countries had heedlessly monopolized the international economic and financial system. They had succumbed to the lure of high returns in the short term, especially through structured financial instruments, in a profit model that was based on speculation. The United Nations should call for the term “productive capacity” to be restored to its proper context — the real economy — and a firewall between speculation and the production of real goods and services should be built.

9. To that end, ECLAC called for the creation of an enhanced international financial coordination mechanism that took the nature of the needs of the developing, and particularly the least developed, countries into account. Not only had the economic and financial crisis been the primary cause of the current employment crisis, but the remedies applied had exacerbated the problem. International Labour Organization (ILO) statistics showed that over 200 million people were currently unemployed and an increase to over 206 million by 2016 was predicted. As documented in the report of the Secretary-General's on promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals

(E/2012/63), 80 million new jobs would have to be created simply to reach pre-crisis employment rates; under the existing conditions, however, only 40 million additional jobs could be expected.

10. Alternatives to decent work — underemployment, informal employment and casual employment — were becoming increasingly frequent. Such precarious forms of employment were a negation of the United Nations principles concerning labour as they were characterized by low pay, heavy workloads, little or no social protection, abuse and disregard for the international labour standards established in international agreements. Investment in human resource development should be promoted as essential to job creation and social inclusion, which in turn would contribute to economic growth and social development.

11. In 1995, at the World Summit for Social Development, the participants had undertaken to work towards the goal of full and productive employment. The austerity measures and fiscal consolidation that had been applied over long periods during the current crisis had failed to increase productivity, employment and economic growth. While ECLAC encouraged State planning and macroeconomic stability, economic policies should be non-dogmatic, evidence-based and focused on the needs of the majority, including the most vulnerable. One of the top priorities in the current economic climate should be to increase productive capacity and improve decent employment indicators while maintaining the social progress achieved to date. Social protection nets had proved to be an effective and socially fair approach to the crisis; they protected workers, but they also boosted domestic demand and thus accelerated sustained, inclusive economic recovery. ECLAC therefore endorsed ILO recommendation No. 202 on national floors for social protection, adopted in June 2012.

12. It was important for the Council to take into consideration the common position of the ECLAC member countries on a number of critical issues. First, the crisis had had an ongoing adverse effect on economic and social development, as described in the report of the Secretary-General entitled “World social situation 2011: the global social crisis” (A/66/226). Its impact was seen in higher unemployment and poverty rates, reduced economic growth, a decline in international trade and investment, excessive volatility of the prices of food and raw materials, a drop in income from tourism and reduced social spending. The

same period had also been marked by the adverse effects of climate change, high energy prices and difficulties stemming from wealth concentration and increased inequity. The number of persons suffering from hunger had increased to over 1 billion in 2009, owing primarily to the rise in unemployment, and most of those people were living in middle-income countries. Structural inequalities had grown and investment in education was crucial.

13. Second, in light of the alarming reduction in ODA, he urged the developed countries to fulfil all their commitments in that regard, including that of providing 0.7 per cent of GDP to developing countries by 2015 and 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of GDP to the least developed countries. In 2011, ODA had been 23 times less than the 3 trillion dollars mobilized in response to the economic and financial crisis. In that connection, he thanked the countries that had already met their ODA targets: Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands. In addition to ODA, a new criterion for the allocation of development resources was needed in order to take into account the individual needs and changing economic conditions of States as they moved towards the MDG target date of 2015.

14. Third, at the seventeenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, held in New York from 22 to 25 May 2012, the participants had stressed the need to enhance the importance of South-South cooperation within the United Nations system. Regrettably, it had not been possible to reach a final decision on the draft text submitted by the Group of 77 and China within the available time. It was essential for the Committee to adopt a decision on the matter by consensus with a view to reaffirming the principles set out in the Nairobi outcome document of the 2009 High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. It should, however, be borne in mind that South-South and triangular cooperation should complement, not replace, ODA.

15. Fourth, as the best forum for discussion of global governance owing to the legitimacy of its universal membership, the United Nations should open a dialogue on international development cooperation initiatives, including the Aid Effectiveness process, which had been promoted outside of the United Nations framework.

16. Fifth, the General Assembly's 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities

for development of the United Nations system would have repercussions beyond 2015. The participants should therefore confirm the fundamental principles underlying the functions of the Organization's operational activities and establish political guidelines for strengthening them on the basis of, inter alia, sufficient, predictable and stable financial resources. The quadrennial review should also reflect the need for modern, transparent, effective and efficient management of United Nations entities, which should be held accountable at all levels for the results achieved in implementation of their mandates.

17. And, lastly, in light of the importance of international trade and of information and communications technologies as engines for sustainable economic growth and social development, ECLAC called for a prompt, ambitious conclusion of the Doha Development Round. It urged all States to avoid protectionism and the adoption of measures that distorted production, trade and investment, including those incorporated into stimulus packages and monetary expansion policies, and to correct those measures where they existed, particularly if they had a negative impact on developing countries.

18. The current international situation required a global response with the universal, democratic and equitable participation of the developing countries. The United Nations, as the coordinator of global governance, should play a key role in seeking permanent and comprehensive solutions to the ongoing crisis and it was essential for the Council and the General Assembly to fulfil their respective mandates by monitoring compliance with the commitments made at United Nations economic, social and environmental conferences and summits.

19. **Mr. Ngatjizeko** (Observer for Namibia) said that, owing to the global economic and financial crisis, his country's unemployment rate currently exceeded 50 per cent. In response to the report of the Secretary-General on promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (E/2012/63), which had noted with concern the rise in informal and casual work worldwide, his Government had implemented the Labour Amendment Act of 2012, which regulated and protected the status of workers placed with user enterprises by private employment agencies; prohibited the hiring of such

workers in anticipation of a strike or lockout or following collective termination; and conferred on the Minister for Labour and Social Welfare the power to deem such persons to be employees.

20. In an effort to promote decent work, especially for vulnerable workers, and pursuant to ILO Convention No. 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers, his Government had established a Wages Commission in 2012 and mandated it to investigate terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration, and to report to the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare with a view to the issuance of a wage order benefiting the working poor.

21. The need for legislation to govern the licensing and regulation of private employment agencies had led to enactment of the Employment Services Act in 2011 and the Government was finalizing a bill that would establish a Commission responsible for mainstreaming employment creation into all sectors of the economy and coordinating such efforts.

22. The ILO Global Jobs Pact recognized that respect for fundamental principles and rights in the workplace was critical for human dignity, economic recovery and development and the current crisis made it more important than ever to enforce labour standards. His Government had therefore increased the number of labour inspectors in order to provide workers with the protection that they deserved, thereby increasing awareness of the rights and obligations of workers and employers, to raise labour standards and to promote the creation of decent work.

23. The economic recession and the recent waves of revolution in the Arab world had resulted in high inflation and a consequent rise in commodity prices. It was therefore important to expand social benefits to include workers in the informal sector. His Government endorsed ILO recommendation No. 202 on national floors for social protection and had requested an ILO audit of its labour and social welfare functions and structures. It planned to conduct a gap analysis of its social protection arrangements and was reviewing its social welfare legislation with a view to channelling funds to those with the greatest need rather than providing a basic State grant to every citizen. It also planned to establish a national medical benefit fund and a contributory pension fund.

24. Unemployment in his country was greatest for young people aged 20 to 24. The Government had

adopted short-, medium- and long-term strategies to address that problem and hoped that its three-year Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth, introduced in 2011, would have a significant impact. The Programme's key intervention areas were agriculture, transport and logistics, tourism, housing and sanitation, public works and Government relations with the private sector. It was designed to ensure rapid implementation and was underpinned by a monitoring and evaluation mechanism so that corrective measures could be introduced quickly. Accountability was vested in the State's Cabinet. The Government was, however, aware that sustainable reduction of unemployment, rapid growth and wealth creation would require a collective effort by all stakeholders, including the private sector, which would ultimately be more effective than the State in creating sustainable jobs.

25. He hoped that the high-level segment would lead to global recognition of the urgent need to create and sustain decent work as the primary strategy for reducing the poverty that continued to blight the lives of millions, particularly in Africa.

26. **Mr. Souhail** (Observer for Morocco) said that the global economic crisis had affected populations throughout the world with repercussions ranging from societal instability to structural transformation of economic systems, all of which had compounded the problems of social marginalization and disequilibrium. Bearing in mind that the challenges of unemployment had social and legal as well as economic ramifications, his Government had made those concerns a top priority in keeping with the principles of the country's new Constitution, which enshrined the right to work and to social protection, education and training.

27. Work was a source of dignity as well as a contributor to sustainable development. In order to meet the demands of the country's leading sectors, agriculture and tourism, a number of programmes had been introduced with a view to rationalizing the labour market and providing market-oriented training. In fiscal terms, States should endeavour to maintain deficits at a reasonable level without neglecting social spending. Because austerity measures often had a negative impact and because Morocco's demographic situation favoured the young, the Government had embarked on reforms in order to improve the country's potential for sustainable development, guarantee social justice and ensure prospects for future generations.

28. **Mr. Carr** (Australia) said that although there had been considerable progress towards the MDGs, the ongoing global financial crisis had unleashed financial market turmoil and a sovereign debt crisis. Some 50 million jobs had disappeared since 2008; chronic underemployment affected over half of the world's labour force, particularly women; and 75 million young people were desperately searching for work and a future.

29. Sustained, inclusive and equitable growth was critical to addressing the challenge of unemployment and underemployment, and a strong and open trading system that resisted protectionism, reduced tariffs and embraced competitive industries was the key to such growth. Because many of those living at or near the poverty line were employed in agriculture, trade reform, particularly in that sector, was essential. One-fifth of exports from least developed countries still faced high tariff barriers; he urged other countries to join Australia in providing duty-free, quota-free market access for all exports from those countries.

30. At the recent United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the participants had recognized that environmental degradation posed a threat to sustained economic growth. In particular, acidification of the world's oceans undermined the development prospects of many countries, including small island States. He welcomed the participants' commitment to protect biodiversity, manage oceans, enhance agricultural productivity and achieve food security. His Government was doubling its contribution to the World Bank's Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme to over \$100 million and expected to spend over \$45 million on similar initiatives during the next 12 months.

31. His Government was also working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Nepal to support thousands of micro-entrepreneur groups that employed 45,000 of the poorest and most marginalized people. In the coming year, that programme was expected to help over 2,500 people, most of them women, to gain access to financial services. The situation of youth was most urgent in post-conflict countries; the Government of Timor-Leste, in partnership with ILO and Australia through the Youth Employment Promotion Programme, had provided jobs for 78,000 young people.

32. Despite the enormous challenges, there were sound reasons for optimism. Growth rates in a number of Asian, African and Latin American economies over the past decade had lifted millions of people out of poverty, while strong social protection measures in countries such as Brazil, India and Indonesia had helped their vulnerable populations to weather the crisis. It was incumbent on the international community to provide continued support for such efforts. With its mandate from Rio+20 to integrate the three pillars of sustainable development, the Council had a vital role to play in that process, as did the universal intergovernmental high-level political forum established in paragraph 94 of the Rio+20 outcome document, "The future we want", which would bring together a wider range of actors in a search of a solution. The Group of 20 had played a discrete but important role, including by setting the target of reducing the average global cost of sending remittances to 5 per cent by 2014, a step that would place an estimated \$15 billion per year in the hands of those who needed it most.

33. **Mr. Hossain** (Bangladesh) said that despite the global economic crisis, Bangladesh had been able to maintain a sustainable economic growth rate of 6 per cent by applying prudent macroeconomic policies and had made remarkable progress towards the MDGs. His Government's sixth five-year plan had been formulated with the aim of generating productive employment opportunities for the country's growing workforce and expanding the social safety net for the working poor.

34. The Government had adopted a National Skills Development Policy in 2011 and the Expatriate Welfare Bank provided migrant workers with collateral-free soft loans, banking services and low-cost remittance transfers in order to increase expatriates' welfare both within and outside the country; 8 million expatriates from Bangladesh were working in 143 countries around the world, sending home \$12.17 billion in 2011. The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) provided instruction to 50,000 workers annually through 38 technical training centres; another 35 centres were planned in order to increase training capacity to 100,000. The Government had taken green jobs initiatives in cooperation with the tripartite constituents and partners of ILO and was implementing a national child labour elimination policy under which 40,000 children had been removed from hazardous jobs

through the provision of non-formal education and skill development, a supply of trade materials and microcredit for their parents.

35. The Employment Guarantee Programme, introduced in 2008-2009, provided employment to the poor as a way of combating seasonal food shortages in economically depressed areas, such as the northern districts and areas prone to cyclones. The Food or Cash for Work programme allocated food, grain and cash to poor people during the slack season as a means of generating employment. With the help of its development partners and with the involvement of the private sector, including women entrepreneurs, the Government was creating self-employment opportunities for women and providing them with training in life skills. Other relevant programmes included, inter alia, the Primary Education Stipend programme, the Female Secondary School Assistance programme and an old age allowance for poor people. Pregnant mothers received prenatal care and reimbursement of childbirth-related expenses. Workers received compensation for major and minor accidents and their families received compensation for their accidental death. Tea garden workers and their families received free residential accommodation, health care, rationing facilities, primary education, pensions and gratuity benefits and the large subsidies provided to the agricultural sector benefited marginal farmers and other members of rural communities.

36. His Government was grateful to its development partners and to the United Nations system. However, many countries had yet to put in place adequate legal frameworks to guarantee migrant workers a minimum wage, minimum contractual periods, legal aid and a safe working environment. In order to develop productive capacity and create job-intensive growth, there should be no barriers to labour mobility. A global arrangement to ensure such mobility in the face of rising barriers to migrant workers, even in countries with labour shortages, was needed.

37. **Mr. Oquist** (Nicaragua) said that multilateral agencies, including the Council, needed to be revitalized in order to reverse recent inertia and unwarranted attempts to elude commitments owing to the ongoing financial crisis. Despite the optimism generated by early global summits, later events had proved disappointing; in particular, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Durban in 2011, at which the major greenhouse-gas-emitting countries had

postponed efforts to reduce emissions until 2020 despite International Energy Agency (IAEA) warnings, had been a debacle.

38. That inaction at the international level was in stark contrast to the national and regional solutions being implemented in the South, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ASEAN+3) process, agreements between China and other countries to conduct foreign trade transactions in national currency and, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and, above all, the oil purchase agreements between Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) and Petrocaribe, which had transformed the greatest obstacle to the development of poor countries, the cost of oil, into a development financing mechanism.

39. Nicaragua's Christian Socialist solidarity model was another example of success. In five and a half years, President Ortega's Government had increased the employment rate by 40 per cent and reduced income-based extreme poverty by more than half. The country had a 5 per cent growth rate and had more than doubled its exports and tripled its FDI since 2006. It would also double its electricity production capacity over the next five years and would raise the renewable-energy share of its energy matrix from 25 per cent in 2007 to 94 per cent in 2017; only Iceland had achieved such rapid progress. Other planned strategic projects included construction of the Inter-Oceanic Nicaragua Canal and of a logistics corridor that would require \$30 billion in additional investment. Nicaragua now had the lowest cost of living and the highest level of public safety of its region; it was not troubled by gang warfare or drug cartels and had single-digit inflation.

40. A number of factors had allowed the Government to transform the region's second poorest country during the worst and most prolonged crisis that global capital had seen in the past 80 years: the National Human Development Plan included policies based on individuals, families and communities; almost 10 per cent of the population was enrolled in literacy or adult education programmes; and over 20 per cent were involved in social programmes as volunteers. The Government was redistributing wealth by restoring Nicaraguans' constitutional right to universal free education and health care and providing, inter alia,

transport and other subsidies, loans, seeds and fertilizer to women and poor families in urban and rural areas, thereby compensating for the capitalist market's tendency to focus year after year on income and wealth, increasing inequality and fomenting economic, social and political crises.

41. The ALBA-Petrocaribe agreements provided funding for social and production programmes that stimulated the economy and made it possible to make deferred payments on loans in cash, thereby further stimulating small- and medium-scale and cooperative agricultural production. Of those funds, 38 per cent were allocated to non-reimbursable programmes and projects and to emergencies. Such freely available financing was far more valuable than international cooperation, which was subject to the values and priorities of donors, particularly in a country which, like Nicaragua, was undergoing revolutionary change. Over the past three years, President Ortega had built an alliance of workers, producers and the Government that had set the minimum wage through negotiation; even workers in the export processing zone had negotiated a minimum wage for the next three-year period. The social, political and labour stability and social cohesion resulting from that alliance provided, in turn, an economic stimulus through a virtuous circle.

42. Notwithstanding the progress made, Nicaragua was experiencing the impact of climate change in the form of chronic flooding; significant funding was required in order to repair the damage suffered and prevent future disasters. The rich countries that had caused climate change were now refusing to accept their responsibilities; they had irresponsibly decided not to commit themselves to reducing emissions or to providing funding for adaptation until after 2020. A further problem was the financial, economic, social and political crisis caused by global capitalism. The financial sector had triggered the crisis and was preventing recovery by encouraging speculative investment that the political sector could not control because it was, in fact, controlled by the speculative financiers. It was unacceptable that developing countries were unable to obtain financing for sustainable development or for mitigation of climate change. Since they could not wait, national and regional solutions such as ALBA were increasingly important and necessary.

43. **Mr. Holmås** (Observer for Norway) said that the current employment crisis made it vital to focus on

sustainable, inclusive and job-led growth and to balance social and economic growth with responsible environmental stewardship; the transition to a green economy could generate new jobs, particularly in the agricultural sector. A coherent international response was crucial when addressing the employment crisis and it was encouraging to see the role played by ILO and other international institutions.

44. In Europe and in North Africa prior to the Arab Spring, youth unemployment had averaged 30 to 50 per cent. The loss of hope for young people, many of whom would be permanently excluded from the labour market, was a personal tragedy for them, a loss for their economies and a potential social time bomb unless the situation was handled properly. His own country had introduced austerity measures after the First World War, and history had shown the error of that policy. States should formulate coherent, integrated development agendas that made capacity-building, especially for young men and women, a core priority; their goal should be full employment coupled with respect for human and workers' rights. The agenda should include efforts to bring informal enterprises and workers, most of whom were women, into the formal economy, as well as policies for revenue mobilization and redistribution of wealth through taxation.

45. Strong organizations of small-scale farmers, workers in the formal and informal sectors and employers were extremely important. Many low- and middle-income countries were experiencing strong development, but the profits were sent overseas or remained in the hands of a few wealthy individuals rather than reducing poverty in the general population. The key to alleviating poverty and creating the stronger service sector needed for development was to ensure that revenue remained in the country, and that goal could only be achieved through taxes and wages. A tripartite system for social dialogue could be a strong contributor to that goal. Decent job creation must be at the core of all economic reform policies and inclusive growth strategies and social dialogue was the key to ensuring their legitimacy and success; it also contributed to social cohesion and enhanced the ability of society to restructure and adapt by promoting job-led growth, development and stability and distributing advantages and disadvantages more evenly and fairly. It should be borne in mind that the tripartite system was a product of, and remained particularly important during, times of crisis.



46 In the face of increased and persistent unemployment, it was important to avoid a global race to the bottom with deteriorating working conditions, lower wages, weakened social protection and an undermining of rights. Standards and rights should be upheld and, whenever possible, raised and should be used as guidelines to develop policies that boosted output, created good jobs and shared profits fairly.

47. Women made up half of the world's pool of talent and their participation in the labour market was essential to mobilization of a nation's productive capacity. Gender equality and gender-responsive policies were thus particularly important in addressing the job crisis, including in the agricultural sector. Women often faced discrimination in the labour market and bore the lion's share of family caregiving during difficult times. Anti-discrimination legislation and national policies should guarantee their fundamental rights, including to maternity and childbirth coverage, child care, sick leave, family planning and the exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights. The current crisis was not a time to pull back, but to move the gender agenda forward, not only as a matter of justice but as a smart economic policy.

48. Efforts to create decent work should not be considered an obstacle to competitiveness and progress; on the contrary, policies that were carefully planned and executed enhanced competitiveness by maximizing the potential of the individual and the community. Moreover, higher wages gave employers an incentive to make the best use of the individual worker. Apart from contributing to wealth creation, decent work also provided tools for wealth redistribution. Clearly, an economic growth strategy that had the creation of good jobs at its core was also a good development policy.

49. **Mr. Shide** (Ethiopia) said that, in its drive to become a middle-income country by 2025, Ethiopia had pursued ambitious national programmes to accelerate economic growth with poverty reduction as a central policy concern. Two MDG-based, medium-term development plans had focused on human and rural development, food security, agricultural transformation and commercialization, public service reform, decentralization and empowerment, and public- and private-sector capacity-building. Those plans had increased the State's GDP by an average of 11 per cent over the past eight years and reduced poverty significantly in rural areas, where 80 per cent of the

population lived. A new plan for the period 2011-2015 entailed a major transformation of the economic structure, seeking to double agricultural production and increase industry's share in the economy.

50. His Government believed that the growth process was more important than the growth itself; in order to reduce poverty and create jobs, growth must be broad-based and pro-poor. Ethiopia's workforce was increasing much more rapidly than the population as a whole; almost two-thirds of the nation's people were under 25 years of age. Creating productive employment opportunities for young people outside the agricultural sector was therefore a priority. Key strategies included intensifying market-oriented economic reforms, improving agricultural productivity and promoting the private sector as an engine for economic growth.

51. Micro- and small enterprises had absorbed over 1.5 million workers and played a vital role in providing employment opportunities, including for vulnerable groups such as rural women, youth and landless persons. The Government was providing substantial assistance in the form of credit, training, guidance, production and market facilities, technology support and information services. Policies focused increasingly on strengthening a regulatory and policy environment that encouraged entrepreneurship and competitiveness and on promoting capital formation and savings by entrepreneurs and employees.

52. The Government realized that achievement of its long-term vision of transforming Ethiopia into a middle-income country would require transformation of the economy, including through the conscious application of science, technology and innovation as major wealth-creation instruments. A system of technical and vocational education and training had been introduced in order to better prepare youth for the labour market and to facilitate technology acquisition, accumulation and transfer so as to improve the livelihoods of all Ethiopians and to reduce poverty sustainably.

53. **Ms. Kabaka** (Observer for the United Republic of Tanzania) said that unemployment and underemployment caused by rural-to-urban migration, the rapid growth of the informal sector and income poverty were global problems. The demands of youth were growing disproportionately to the possibilities open to them and had translated into democratic

movements that were demanding increased Government support for education, employment and business opportunities. Those challenges were particularly complex in poor countries such as his own. In Africa, youth constituted 60 per cent of the unemployed population and only 37 per cent of the working population; each year, another 10 million young people entered the labour market. The unemployment and underemployment rates were rising and unpredictable climatic patterns, drought and floods were compromising rural economic activities. Those problems were a potential time bomb that, if not addressed, would become a major source of instability in the region.

54. His Government had formulated policies and established a number of programmes in response to the challenges facing youth and had involved public institutions, private sector umbrella organizations and civil society. It was making a significant effort to protect children and adolescents from early pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and drug abuse and viewed education as a vital tool for empowerment. However, job creation was not keeping pace with the growing number of university graduates. Consequently, vocational training had been expanded and the creation of small-scale enterprises was being encouraged through the provision of microcredit. Land titles were being formalized so that the land could be used as collateral for loans and one-stop market facilities for traders had been established. A Youth Development Fund provided soft loans to young people for income-generating initiatives through credit and savings cooperative associations; there were specific seats for youth in the Tanzanian Parliament; and, in the rural sector, pilot projects were being implemented to promote self-employment in farming and off-farm rural service businesses so that young people could remain in their communities.

55. Together with its development partners, Tanzania had put in place strategies for achieving the MDGs. Its Decent Work Programme promoted productive capacity and employment and laws and policies on gender equality, decent job creation, public-private partnerships, health insurance, workers' compensation and social security, elaborated through tripartite mechanisms, had been enacted in order to expand social protection services to the uncovered urban and rural population, including domestic workers and the informal sector. The Government was also committed

to eliminating the worst forms of child labour and was promoting HIV/AIDS workplace programmes as part of its effort to enforce labour standards and encourage social dialogue, collective bargaining and social partnerships. However, his country still faced many challenges and he hoped that the Council and the international community would continue to provide the technical and material support that it needed in order to achieve the MDGs.

56. **Mr. Rybakov** (Belarus) said that, given the economic impact of the global financial crisis, the highest priority for all Governments should be to find effective solutions to the challenges associated with maintaining and raising the living standards of their citizens, guaranteeing them decent work, providing stable social guarantees and eliminating poverty. His Government had responded to that challenge by pursuing a social policy aimed at creating the conditions necessary for sustained improvement in public well-being. The unemployment rate had been kept low and stable jobs and income, especially for poor and vulnerable citizens, had been ensured. Despite the problematic conditions engendered by the global economic crisis, social guarantees for families, children, persons with disabilities and older persons had not been reduced and considerable attention had been devoted to ensuring decent work and fair wages.

57. Like other middle-income countries, Belarus could not stabilize its economic and social situation without the assistance of the international community. Economic sanctions and other unilateral measures of coercion directed at unpopular Governments merely rendered those countries more vulnerable to economic shocks. International cooperation was one of the most important instruments in the transition to sustainable development. To that end, the Council's coordinating role in the search for and dissemination of new and innovative mechanisms for development should be strengthened and an integrated approach to reviewing the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development should be adopted.

58. In that context, his delegation welcomed the President's suggestion that a working group should be established in order to examine ways in which the Council might cooperate with development financing partners, including the international financial institutions. It also supported the implementation of action programmes which linked economic growth to environmental sustainability; the first priority should

be to enhance sustainable development partnerships and to strengthen the global rules governing not only trade, but climate change, food security and natural resources as well.

59. **Mr. Nakano** (Japan) said that nearly 16 months had passed since the devastating earthquake in his country, and Japan was grateful for the support and encouragement received from all over the world. The aftermath of the earthquake and subsequent reconstruction had led him to wonder how Governments could build a resilient society and provide social safety nets in order to mitigate the risks of the modern world, pursue sustained economic growth while providing social safety nets, and identify the most important elements of the international development agenda.

60. The unprecedented international financial crisis had led to significant social instability while European sovereign debt, natural disasters and social discontent caused by income inequality and unemployment posed further risks to the global economy. In a globally connected world, a crisis in one country could easily spread along supply chains and financial flows. The key to addressing such risks was to build resilient societies and to provide social safety nets in order to ensure human security and the sustainability of development. With a contribution of \$60 billion, Japan had been among the first countries to increase the resources available to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to reduce risk and build financial resilience; in June 2012, the members of the Group of 20 had agreed to contribute over \$456 billion to that effort.

61. His Government was hosting the World Ministerial Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Tohoku on 3 and 4 July 2012, at which the participants would share lessons learned from disasters and undertake to mainstream disaster reduction into international cooperation. His Government would provide \$3 billion to developing countries' disaster reduction efforts over the next three years.

62. Unemployment frequently resulted from crises, and broad social safety nets should be developed in anticipation of the inevitable risks. Japan had gradually enhanced its labour legislation and social security system and would continue to take measures to build social safety nets in other countries in cooperation with ILO and other stakeholders.

63. Clear strategies were required in order to achieve sustainable economic growth and job creation. The transition to a green economy with superior energy and resource efficiency was a promising solution, although one that required human resource development and technology transfer during the transition period. Japan felt the obligation to share its knowledge and technology; it would dispatch some 10,000 "green cooperation volunteers" to other countries and provide \$3 billion in international cooperation over the next three years.

64. His Government was committed to achievement of the MDGs and had convened an informal contact group on the development agenda beyond 2015. Emerging countries and the private sector should play an increasing role in that process; it was important to move beyond the old dichotomy of developed and developing countries.

65. **Mr. Mbonjo** (Cameroon) said that the greatest obstacles to developing his country's productive capacity were its energy and infrastructure deficits. Consequently, numerous projects in the housing, transportation and renewable energy sectors had been undertaken with the assistance of Cameroon's development partners and the private sector, always preceded by rigorous environmental impact assessments to ensure that they were executed within a sustainable development framework. It was hoped that the combined effects of the Government's education and training policies and improvements in infrastructure and human resources would energize the business sector and improve living conditions through job creation, thereby reducing poverty; a 6 per cent annual growth rate for the next three years, half of it outside the petroleum sector, was anticipated. A labour-intensive approach to infrastructure projects would generate 120,000 jobs; local communities were being involved and local entrepreneurs were being hired as subcontractors. In addition, 25,000 graduates were being recruited to the public administration in order to improve public services and provide decent work that would, in turn, increase domestic demand.

66. In Cameroon, where 90 per cent of the active workforce was employed in the informal agricultural sector, access to decent work would entail migration to the formal sector. A longstanding Government support strategy for small and medium-sized enterprises in the formal and informal sectors included simplified administrative and tax requirements; trade and

enterprise facilitation centres were being set up throughout the country; loan guarantees facilitated lending by traditional banks; and a specific bank for small and medium-sized enterprises had been established. Sharing the fruits of economic growth also called for redistribution mechanisms and for sector-based, increasingly inclusive health, housing and education strategies.

67. Each State must create the enabling conditions for its own economic development, especially through the establishment of national mechanisms that were conducive to foreign partnerships and attractive to investors. However, owing to the magnitude of the challenges facing developing countries, renewed international solidarity within the framework of a global poverty reduction partnership was needed.

68. **Ms. Saad** (Egypt) said that in the wake of her country's recent revolution, which had been brought on in part by demands for employment, income equality and social justice, her Government and all political stakeholders were working for economic renewal. The 2012-2013 budget plan had set the goal of sustainable growth for all social groups by creating new jobs, especially for marginalized groups and young people, and providing microcredit for small enterprises, including loans for women. Job creation investments would be made in all sectors and social services would be improved with a view to spreading growth evenly between urban and rural areas and between Lower and Upper Egypt. While the private sector played a pivotal role in development, the State would remain important and cooperation among the Government, business and labour would be crucial.

69. As it entered a new stage of its development, Egypt would be counting more than ever on support from its international partners and the United Nations. Knowledge exchange and South-South and triangular cooperation should be given due weight in upcoming discussions of the development agenda beyond 2015. The agricultural sector was particularly important to countries of the South. She welcomed the Council's efforts to coordinate international and national responses to global economic challenges and the commitment of the participants in Rio+20 to launch an intergovernmental process on sustainable development. What was needed was the political will to translate commitments into actions. She also urged further discussion of the role of the United Nations in global

governance in light of the activities of other bodies, such as the Group of Twenty.

70. **Mr. Yalnazov** (Bulgaria) said that a new model of sustainable growth, combining a green economy with increased employment and social security, would require a concerted effort by all relevant national, regional and international stakeholders, including business, civil society and trade unions. He therefore welcomed the work of ILO in that area, the recently adopted Group of 20 Growth and Jobs Action Plan and the Rio+20 outcome document.

71. In the context of the Euro 2020 growth strategy, Bulgaria had developed a national strategy for poverty eradication and social inclusion for the period 2012 to 2020, which included policies on employment, education and training, the work environment, public health and housing, and the integration of vulnerable groups. According to recent statistics, the rate of youth unemployment in Bulgaria was significantly higher than the European average, especially among vulnerable groups such as the Roma community. That situation was due not only to the economic recession, but also to the State's aging population, emigration and deficits in the education and training system. The problem, to which his Government attached great importance, required effort by the Government, the private sector, social partners and specialized international bodies.

72. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which would soon host an international conference on youth unemployment, had recently adopted innovative policies and programmes to support the transition of young people from education to the workplace, including through internships and apprenticeships, and numerous young people had already benefited from new opportunities on the labour market. Long-term measures included improving vocational training in view of the expected higher demand from the information technology sector and the green economy.

73. **Mr. Byambasuren** (Mongolia) said an internal report indicated that Mongolia would achieve 66 per cent of the MDGs by 2015. Nevertheless, the important goal of halving poverty remained the most challenging and called for targeted intervention. The Government had declared 2011 the Year of Employment Promotion. As a result of a major legislative reform, improved job registration services and the allocation of soft loans to small and medium-sized businesses, 73,200 jobs had

been created over the past year, the economy had grown by 17.4 per cent in 2011 and the poverty rate had fallen to 29.8 per cent. According to the World Bank, Mongolia was now a lower-middle-income country with per capita GDP estimated at \$1,630; however, growth had not been translated into equal distribution of income.

74. In view of the importance of self-employment and home-based businesses to the country's economy, the Government had declared 2012 the Year of the Promotion of Household Development. It had approved a national programme of expanded social services for those in need and was using the ILO Jobs Pact as a framework for harmonizing its policies on labour market needs and demands and increasing the effectiveness of resource utilization through intersectoral coordination of poverty alleviation activities. The provision of support to small- and medium-sized enterprises in job-rich sectors of the mining-based economy remained a Government priority.

75. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that productive capacities, employment, decent work and social protection should be given greater prominence in the development agenda beyond 2015 with targets and indicators in line with the core values and objectives of the Millennium Declaration, and his Government would work with the United Nations and other international development partners on those and other relevant issues.

76. **Mr. Dubov** (Russian Federation) said that current circumstances had made the promotion of full employment and decent work a top priority on the international agenda. Open dialogue within the framework of the Council was particularly relevant and timely in the context of collective efforts to mitigate the consequences of the current world economic crisis, improve global economic governance and achieve the MDGs. The crisis had revealed serious deficiencies in the international economic system and the world was currently experiencing wholesale deindustrialization and the elimination of decent jobs, with devastating effects on wages and social mobility. Of particular concern was the unemployment rate among young people, which was undermining prospects for long-term economic growth and innovative development and placing a strain on the social safety net.

77. He hoped that the Council's deliberations would provide a solid basis for further international efforts to radically create jobs and reduce unemployment through close coordination and mutually reinforcing cooperation among key partners, including the United Nations system, the Group of Eight, the Group of 20, leading specialized international agencies and regional integration structures. Governments should also pursue structural reforms of their macroeconomic policies in order to create more decent jobs and improve living standards.

78. His Government was committed to doing its part and would continue to implement the key elements of the ILO Decent Work Agenda by enhancing social dialogue and establishing a new model of economic growth. It had ratified ILO Convention No. 174 on the prevention of major industrial accidents in 2011 and ILO Convention No. 173 on the protection of workers' claims (employer's insolvency) in 2012; a number of other relevant conventions would soon be ratified as well. His Government would help to fund the ILO programme on job training and labour market development in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Asia and the Middle East and would follow ILO guidelines in creating 25 million new high-value jobs. It had earmarked 500 billion roubles for anti-crisis measures in 2013.

79. The International High-Level Conference on Decent Work, to be held in Moscow on 11 and 12 December 2012, would be a landmark event that would provide a strong impetus to countries' efforts to achieve inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth.

80. **Mr. Li Baodong** (China) said that his delegation endorsed the ideas contained in the report of the Secretary-General (E/2012/63) and, in particular, the policy recommendations concerning the need to expand the real economy, stabilize the financial sector and enhance vocational training. While the prospects for global economic growth had begun to improve, instability and uncertainties remained. Various forms of trade and investment protectionism were appearing and the developing countries were forced to grapple with the dual pressure of inflation and weakening external demand.

81. The real economy was the foundation of the national economy. In the context of the current economic crisis, macroeconomic policy should be more

forward-looking and flexible. It should promote the steady growth of productive capacity and judiciously manage the relationship between financial balance, monetary stability and economic growth while supporting manufacturing industries, upgrading technology in traditional industries and developing public infrastructure in order to prevent the virtualization of the economy. Countries should build long-term mechanisms with a view to virtuous interaction among economic growth, industrial structural adjustment and job creation and should coordinate employment policy with industrial policy, financial policy and the social security system; particular attention should be paid to the employment of youth and vulnerable groups.

82. Macroeconomic policy should also aim to advance sustainable development. The green economy represented an important tool for world economic recovery and sustainable development and should be pursued with an emphasis on job creation and sustainable production and consumption patterns; it should not become a pretext for erecting “green barriers”. Policies should strengthen coordination, cooperation and complementarity among States so that they could respond jointly to systemic risks in the world economy, improve the global economic governance mechanism and establish a fair, inclusive and orderly international financial system and an open global trading system, thereby creating an enabling environment for economic development.

83. China had put into practice the concept of inclusive growth based on the increasing use of technology. The Government had implemented an active financial policy and a stable monetary policy and had endeavoured to strike a proper balance between economic development, adjustment of the economic structure and management of inflation. The promotion of employment had been identified as a strategic task in the effort to increase public well-being. During the first quarter of 2012, China's GDP had increased by 8.1 per cent as compared with the same period in the previous year. The Government combined economic development with the improvement of its people's lives and had created new jobs for 12.21 million urban-dwellers. At the same time, as the largest developing country, China still faced acute problems of inequity, a lack of coordination and sustainability, multiple constraints to economic development and formidable challenges to

employment promotion. Its employed population would soon reach a peak of 1 billion, with 25 million urban residents entering the labour force each year.

84. The achievement of sustained, inclusive and equitable growth required countries not only to strengthen cooperation, but also to advance steadily along the path of development that they themselves had chosen. China stood ready to work with the international community with a view to achievement of the MDGs and the eradication of poverty.

85. **Mr. Núñez Mosquera** (Cuba) said that the severity of the global economic and financial, food and energy crises and the negative impact of climate change, together with an unfair international economic and political order, hindered the achievement of full employment and decent work, and therefore of the MDGs. The developing countries were the most affected; one in three workers was living below the poverty line and 1 billion of the world's people were undernourished. International cooperation was not even close to the target of 0.7 per cent of GDP to ODA and interest payments on foreign debt took a large share of the income that could have been devoted to development.

86. Despite the intensified economic, trade and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America, his Government had left none of its people unprotected. Social expenditure continued to rise as part of a comprehensive development strategy that had been harmonizing economic growth with social policies since the triumph of the revolution in Cuba. Education was free at all levels and compulsory through middle school and jobs were found for university and technical school graduates and qualified workers. All States had the responsibility to establish social protection floors; in Cuba, Social security was universal, including for artists and self-employed workers, and social assistance was provided to those who were unable to work and had no one to support them.

87. The Government was updating the country's economic model and planned to expand employment in the private sector as an alternative mechanism for job creation and to introduce the principle of demonstrated suitability for access to employment. The Constitution prohibited all forms of discrimination and established the right to work and to social protection, workers and trade unions were involved in all levels of decision-

making on relevant matters and in the drafting of employment and social security legislation.

88. International cooperation was essential to social development and Cuba had provided disinterested assistance to other developing countries, particularly in the area of human resource development. Economic growth was not the only requirement for poverty eradication; in order to create an enabling macroeconomic environment, the problem of Third World debt must be resolved, countries of the North must meet their ODA commitments and the products of developing countries must be given full market access.

89. **Mr. Seger** (Switzerland) said that Governments, in cooperation with the private sector and civil society, should establish an enabling environment for job creation by fostering productivity and hiring and supporting green-economy initiatives. Only decent, productive employment could help people achieve their full potential. His Government was committed to implementing the ILO Decent Work Agenda and had learned that respect for labour rights and standards increased the productivity of businesses and of the economy as a whole.

90. The education and vocational training system should allow young people to acquire the skills required by the labour market, as well as those that would allow them to innovate and develop new technologies. Switzerland had achieved excellent results from its dual vocational training system, which combined on-the-job training with formal education, and promoted that system through its international cooperation with developing countries.

91. A universal social protection system was also essential. His Government welcomed the recent adoption by the International Labour Conference of a recommendation concerning national floors of social protection, which envisaged measures to encourage the rapid reintegration of unemployed persons into the labour market. States should take a coordinated approach to the problem by making full, productive employment and decent work the top priority of national policy. Tripartite social dialogue was the key to social and economic stability, policy coherence, and the design of social protection measures and made it easier for the public to accept political decisions.

92. A State that brought the same question before different international organizations must not receive different, or even conflicting, replies; he therefore

welcomed the improved cooperation between the World Bank and ILO. Switzerland and the United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity were cooperating in an effort to help some of the least developed countries increase their productive capacities and promote their integration into global markets, and he encouraged all members of the multilateral system to continue and increase such efforts. The Council could play an important coordinating role by ensuring the dissemination of ILO norms and standards within the United Nations system. He hoped that the ministerial declaration to be adopted at the end of the annual ministerial review would take the multi-dimensional nature of the problem into account so that Member States and the United Nations system could focus on the promotion of productive capacities, employment and decent work.

93. **Mr. Percaya** (Indonesia) said that although decent work was highly regarded, it was in short supply; over half the global labour force was unemployed or involved in casual or informal work. At the same time, the negative impact of the financial crisis was ongoing with much of the world's attention centred on preventing economic collapse and social unrest.

94. Youth constituted the fastest-growing segment of the population in developing countries. Prolonged youth unemployment posed a threat to inclusive, sustainable and equitable growth; the potential of young people to play a meaningful role in development must be harnessed. Growth should be expanded in sectors that could generate increased employment, and investment in health and education and policies that supported a successful school-to-work transition were required.

95. Accelerating progress towards the MDGs was another pressing concern. Indonesia was fully committed to meeting its targets in that regard and to helping other developing countries to reach theirs, including through South-South cooperation with regional bodies. States that failed to achieve the Goals by 2015 should renew their commitment in that regard; at the same time, new goals and strategies must be set. Although it was for each country to determine its own development strategy, it was time to consider how national development strategies could be more effectively implemented through genuine partnerships.

96. In such challenging times, the Council should exercise a proactive role and demonstrate its leadership in tackling the world's economic and social problems. It should therefore be involved in the discussion of a development agenda beyond 2015, which should take a comprehensive approach and incorporate the concept of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development.

97. **Mr. Kim Sook** (Republic of Korea) said that the ongoing adverse impact of the economic crisis was causing uncertainty about the future and adding to the difficulty of addressing global challenges such as poverty eradication, climate change and food security. Thus, the need for coordination and cooperation by the global community had greatly increased. Rio+20 had been a success; the participants had reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable development and laid a strong foundation for the future. The Conference had set the stage for continued sustainable development, but the decisions contained in its outcome document — renewed commitment to sustainable development, transition to a green economy and strengthening of the architecture to support international actions for sustainable development — must be implemented.

98. As the target date of 2015 approached, progress towards the MDGs must be accelerated through global partnerships for poverty eradication, which should also be a priority on the subsequent development agenda. More efficient ways of mobilizing and using the limited resources available were needed. His delegation considered it essential to expand global development partnerships and welcomed the recent launch of the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

99. Unemployment, particularly among youth and women, was one of the most urgent global issues and had the potential to prolong the global recession by decreasing aggregate global demand and undermining sustained economic development. It should be considered one of most significant elements in discussions on the development agenda beyond 2015. The importance of mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment into sustainable development had been stressed during the Rio+20 process; women's empowerment would yield strong economic returns for all and enhance the enjoyment of human rights. He hoped that the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) would develop a coordination mechanism,

thus enabling the United Nations to “deliver as one” on gender issues.

100. Lastly, in follow-up to Rio+20, the Council should focus on how it could strengthen and reform itself. It should become more inclusive and transparent and should take a more coordinated and integrated approach to the three pillars of sustainable development.

101. **Mr. Kogda** (Burkina Faso) said that, over the past decade, Burkina Faso had been combating poverty through economic growth based on a reform of public financing, infrastructure development, improved access to basic services and social dialogue. While liberalization of the country's economy had increased FDI, vulnerability to external crises and intense demographic pressure were hindering the Government's development efforts. An accelerated growth strategy had been put in place with a view to strong, sustained economic growth that would improve the living conditions of the population and establish the conditions for sustainable development, and public-private partnerships were being developed in order to mobilize resources to finance growth in agriculture, mining, infrastructure and industry. A World Bank project sought to establish a viable agro-industry, creating numerous jobs; combating poverty required full, decent productive employment, social protection, food security and environmental protection. A Ministry of Youth, Vocational Training and Employment had been created in order to help young people find jobs by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and establishing financial support systems, and particular attention was being paid to the empowerment of women and youth.

102. **Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri** (India) said that, for developing economies, the generation of sufficient productive and gainful employment capable of absorbing the growing labour force was critical to poverty eradication and sustainable development. Labour was the sole asset of the poor, and in most developing countries it was under-used and underpaid. Heavy reliance on agriculture, rapid demographic growth, significant increase in youth unemployment and the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on the labour force had made the challenge of full employment more difficult. In addition, trade barriers had a deleterious effect on employment growth in developing countries; the negative impact of farming subsidies in the developed countries on agriculture in



the developing world was a well documented example. An early conclusion of the Doha Round was therefore imperative.

103. A significant increase in public investment in infrastructure, technology, education, and skills development, combined with social spending, was required in order to enhance productive capacity and generate employment, particularly in the least developed and landlocked developing countries. The multilateral development banks, particularly the World Bank, should expand lending for infrastructure projects in developing countries.

104. Full and productive employment played a crucial role in sustained growth and inclusive development, and economic growth was the best means to that end. His Government had intervened directly to generate employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, which made employment a fundamental right by guaranteeing every rural household 100 days of paid employment annually and provided a social safety net, infrastructure and access to health care in rural areas. At least one-third of the beneficiaries were women and the programme currently covered one of every five households in the country. The Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme provided financial assistance and skills training to individual entrepreneurs and self-help groups, including women, and the National Health Insurance Scheme provided free coverage to persons living below the poverty line, including 25 million workers in the informal sector. Because India had the youngest population in the world with a median age of less than 24 as at 2000, efforts were being made to expand skills development programmes for young people in collaboration with the private sector, technology developers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Primary education was free and compulsory and additional resources had been allocated to the education sector.

105. **Mr. Maza Martelli** (El Salvador) said that his Government considered it crucial to change its development strategy and focus on promoting productive capacity, including through investment in infrastructure, technology and human resources; creating decent jobs with a gender perspective; providing opportunities for youth; and reducing poverty. Strengthening the international financial system in order to support productive capacity was crucial, as was reducing instability and speculation;

hence, more effective monitoring mechanisms were required.

106. El Salvador's industrial policy promoted innovation, technology, productivity and the application of modern standards. A national development bank had been created to provide financial support for projects involving innovation and entrepreneurship. Following an assessment of national priorities, a five-year development plan had been designed in order to ensure coherence and coordination of the Government's actions and as a tool for implementing a comprehensive, inclusive, equitable and sustainable development process while consolidating a more democratic political system.

107. His delegation shared the concerns of other developing countries regarding the decline in development assistance flows and joined the call for donor countries to comply with the relevant international agreements. The economic and financial crisis had made donors reluctant to increase ODA to middle-income countries, many of which were located in Latin America. The United Nations system should be strengthened with a view to pursuing a cooperation agenda with such countries in order to reduce poverty and support their social inclusion and development processes; it should also allocate additional resources to South-South and triangular cooperation while respecting national sovereignty and should support technology transfer and capacity-development programmes. The United Nations, as the primary forum for global governance, should develop appropriate mechanisms for discussing implementation of the Busan Declaration. He hoped that the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system would provide an opportunity to pursue reform of the United Nations system under the Delivering as One initiative.

108. **Mr. Shalgham** (Libya) said that Goal 1 of the MDGs on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger was a continuing challenge that would require increased global partnership between Governments, civil society and the private sector. In his country, economic activity had been at a standstill since the revolution of 17 February 2012, leaving the Libyan people more dependant than ever on Government support. The National Transitional Council had been forced to issue a decision raising wages in order to keep pace with prices and there were plans to almost double oil production, the country's main source of revenue. The

incoming Government would need assistance in order to provide services that were essential to poverty reduction, including, in the short term, water and electricity and, in the longer term, schools, universities, factories, markets, hospitals and residential units. Water, in particular, was essential to expansion of the agricultural sector, which was important for reducing poverty in rural areas. His country also needed to take advantage of its geographic location to increase its trade and expand its manufacturing, tourism and service sectors with a view to greater integration into the global economy. Education was the key to development, particularly for the young men and women who had been the backbone of the revolution and represented the country's future.

109. **Mr. Oguntuyi** (Nigeria) said that full and decent employment was crucial to achievement of the MDGs. Education, skills upgrading and increased productivity were needed in order to create job opportunities and stimulate growth. However, in developing countries, lack of resources and infrastructure constituted significant obstacles. Africa had the highest level of unemployment of any region and continued to face considerable challenges, owing largely to economic vulnerability and limited productive capacity and governance. Small- and medium-sized enterprises could play a key role in driving productive capacity, growth and job creation on the continent; he called on the international community to support capacity-building, facilitate access to affordable credit and create a more favourable environment for national economic development.

110. In its effort to eradicate poverty, his Government had developed a strategic policy framework for the rapid development of physical and social infrastructure and of social and human capital. The primary objectives included implementing a structural transformation from a mono-product economy to a diversified economy in order to increase per capita income, create an enabling environment for development and promote wealth distribution. Nigeria's GDP had been rising steadily and the Government was continuing to promote public-private partnerships in light of the important role of the private sector in the country's economic development and in job creation.

111. The concept of an inclusive future embraced all sectors of the population. In particular, women and girls must be empowered through education and

employment and factored into the productive sector and all barriers to their participation in decision-making and governance must be removed.

112. **Mr. Motanyane** (Lesotho) said that the global economic recovery remained fragile; significant unemployment and underemployment had resulted in high rates of human trafficking, child labour and other social and economic challenges, exacerbated by food insecurity, price volatility and the effects of climate change. Such problems made it difficult for developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and those of Africa, to reach the MDGs and called for greater collaboration and coordination in utilizing the limited resources available. An action-oriented development framework beyond 2015 was urgently required; efforts to build a prosperous and resilient world would not succeed without a change towards an inclusive sustainable future that advanced human development. Gender stereotypes dominated the job market and women and girls were concentrated in unsafe working situations that left them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation while men were afforded the opportunity to occupy secure, high-paying jobs. That discrepancy was widening the pay gap between the sexes and undermining international efforts to achieve gender equality. Measures to empower women and youth and investment in inclusive development programmes were needed in order to achieve equity in the labour market, equal access to social protection programmes that were tailor-made to the needs and capacities of each country, and inclusive democratic governance with accountable institutions that promoted equality, the rule of law and human rights.

113. In Lesotho, the unemployment rate, which currently stood at 22 per cent, was increasing in all sectors of the population. Subsistence agriculture employed 41 per cent of the working population with the remainder spread across the public sector, migrant labour and private households. The Government was making progress in poverty eradication and job creation through measures such as business advisory services, micro-financing for small and medium-sized enterprises, support for smallholders and the mainstreaming of youth employment into macroeconomic policy, but it relied on external support to implement its development agenda. He therefore called for better coordination of development assistance and increased technical and financial support.

114. **Ms. Dzhanayeva** (Observer for the Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan) said that inclusive, sustainable development depended on full implementation of commitments to the economic and human rights of women. The experience of Kyrgyzstan had shown that women contributed to job creation. During the post-socialist crisis period, it was they who had turned the country into a trade hub of the Central Asian subregion, creating thousands of jobs for the marginalized and removing numerous families from extreme poverty. Nevertheless, women were particularly vulnerable to the exclusive growth paradigm that was currently being implemented in the region, and women without financial resources were the main victims of poverty and human rights violations. Decent work for women required a specific support system, including childcare, social benefits and education opportunities.

115. Strengthening the role of women in development required ensuring decent employment with full protection of their rights, recognizing and supporting them as generators of employment growth and including them in economic and financial decision-making on the same basis as men.

116. **Mr. Ryan** (Observer for AARP) said that the current economic recession had forced many older workers out of the workforce and curtailed their retirement benefits; in the United States of America, the number of employed persons aged 55 and older had risen by 331 per cent between 2000 and 2009 and World Health Organization (WHO) statistics indicated that in five years, adults aged 65 and over would outnumber children under 5 worldwide for the first time in human history. Older persons should therefore be included in discussion of the relationship between employment and poverty eradication. Global life expectancy was steadily increasing and by 2050, there would be 400 million people aged 80 or older, 100 million of them in China alone. Many high-income countries were already facing rapidly ageing populations and low- and middle-income countries would soon see equally dramatic increases.

117. While there were many affordable solutions that Governments could put in place to help their older citizens lead healthy and active lives, in developing countries the lack of a secure income was one of the greatest problems faced by that sector of the population; family support for older persons was under pressure; fewer than one in five people over 60

received a pension, there was age discrimination in the workforce and older workers were not being hired and were often the first to be laid off. In the United States, it was projected that over the next decade, nearly half of all additional workers would come from the 55-and older category and only one in five from youth. Innovative employment models such as flexible work hours, time off for family caregiving services and retraining should be explored in order to accommodate a multi-generational workforce and to harness the experience and knowledge that older workers provided.

118. In the current competitive world market, employers' success would depend on their ability to attract and retain a more mature, experienced workforce. Possible solutions included, inter alia, allowing workers to bank compensatory time for sabbaticals or family caregiving; employer-provided care for older persons; corporate retirement housing options; one-on-one training to increase the confidence and employability of older retail workers; and a back-to-nursing programme for former nurses who wished to re-enter the workforce. In that connection, she endorsed the analytical outcome paper on normative standards in international human rights law in relation to older persons, prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in preparation for the third session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons, which was available online at <http://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/OHCHRAAnalyticalOutcomePaperonOlderPersonsAugust2012.doc>. She urged States to support efforts to negotiate a convention on the rights of older persons at that session.

119. **Ms. Stefanyk** (Observer for the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development) said that the worsening youth employment crisis called for targeted measures aimed at increasing the availability of professional and vocational training. Since 2000, her organization had been partnering with the public and private sectors, civil society and academia in the Dominican Republic to provide training, internships, courses and degree programmes in 14 disciplines that had been identified as critical to development, including, inter alia, public administration; environmental management; and security, crisis and emergency management. The inclusion of internship programmes in the employment and poverty eradication strategies of the Dominican Government

and ILO and the Government's employment programme for youth with low levels of education and single mothers, financed by multilateral banks, provided examples of good practice in that regard.

120. **Ms. Zindani** (Observer for IFENDU for Women's Development) said that her Nigeria-based organization sought to address the roots of gender inequality. Despite some progress in increasing access to education, challenges remained, including endemic poverty and hunger, persistent gender equality, health, and environmental degradation. All stakeholders should take advantage of the new technologies to facilitate ongoing communication. Access to information on proposed Government legislation relating to the MDGs was vital; the numerous networks of organizations with different goals should converge and exchange ideas in order to develop new projects aimed at achievement of the Goals by 2015 and beyond.

121. In order to move forward, Governments should be persuaded, through incentives, advocacy and proven research, that macroeconomic policies such as human capital development, expanded access to improved technology, job creation and increased access to land, especially for the disenfranchised — a group that included women in many societies — were ultimately in the interests of the State.

122. **Mr. Brennan** (Observer for Salesian Missions) said that the youth unemployment rate had been nearly three times that of adults in recent years, creating the risk of a lost generation and posing a threat to social cohesion. In the past year, youth-led political and social movements had emerged throughout the world under the unifying themes of jobs, freedom and social justice. It had become increasingly difficult to find decent work in the formal sector; many young people were being forced to accept jobs below their level of education and training and the principle of equality of opportunity across generations seemed likely to vanish. Such a decrease in the economic and employment prospects of youth could initiate economic stagnation, and even retrogression.

123 Preparing young people for work had always been a priority for the Salesians. Their experience had shown that the most effective interventions occurred when partnerships were formed with all stakeholders in the community. Young people needed to be taught the skills needed by the green economy and jobs, including

green jobs, must offer a living wage, health care and fair, decent working conditions. Increased collaboration between Governments, employers, trade unions and technical training institutions was required in order to ensure that training was tailored to the needs of the labour market; young people needed training in entrepreneurship as well as technical skills so that they could start their own businesses.

124. **Ms. Rodrigo** (Observer for the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries) said that increasing unrest across the globe clearly indicated the growing gap between rich and poor; there was an urgent need to restructure the current unjust social and economic system. People were losing confidence in their Governments and were trying to find their own solutions to their problems.

125. Population growth called for economic growth that promoted public well-being. Finance-driven globalization had proved to be a failure; the international community should move towards development-driven globalization with fair economic governance. The goal should be to build sustainable communities where every human being had the right to lead a decent life. The development of cooperatives and small- and medium-sized enterprises was the best way to increase employment and achieve the MDGs. The potential of youth should be tapped for innovative ideas about sustainable economic growth, public-private partnerships should be strengthened and the private sector should be encouraged to contribute to social development and create green jobs. The most dangerous trend in recent years had been the growing influence of financial markets in bending public policy and resources to their own needs and interests. Inclusive and sustainable growth could only be achieved by promoting the human rights approach through a regulatory framework based on social justice. Lastly, a portion of military expenditure should be redirected to the global social protection floor. The existence of extreme poverty was not only a matter requiring urgent attention, but also a matter for shame.

*The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.*