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President: Mr. Oh Joon (Vice-President) (Republic of Korea)

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In the absence of Mr. Sajdik (Austria), Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Annual ministerial review: Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future (*continued*)

National voluntary presentations ([E/2014/57](#), [E/2014/83](#) and [E/2014/76](#))

1. **The President** invited Mr. Shank, Associate Director of the Friends Committee on National Legislation and Adjunct Professor and Board Member of the George Mason University School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, to act as moderator for the national voluntary presentations.

2. **Mr. Shank** (Associate Director, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Adjunct Professor and Board Member, George Mason University School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution), moderator, said that the purpose of the national voluntary presentations was to assess progress in individual countries towards achievement of the United Nations development agenda, generate the momentum needed to move that agenda forward, serve as a forum for exchanging lessons learned and successful practices, and improve the implementation of development policies and strategies. Lively debate and questions were encouraged. The national voluntary presentation by Qatar would be reviewed by Kuwait and Malaysia; the presentations by the United Kingdom and Kuwait would be reviewed by Ethiopia and Pakistan, and by Qatar, respectively.

Qatar ([E/2014/57](#))

3. **Mr. Al Nabit** (Qatar) said that the Qatar National Vision 2030 aimed to transform Qatar into an advanced country capable of sustaining its own development and ensuring a high standard of living for its people by 2030. The pillars of the Vision were human, social, economic and environmental development. The National Development Strategy for 2011-2016 identified priority development initiatives to achieve the goals of the Qatar National Vision and contained measurable outcomes and targets. The initiatives aimed to reap the benefits of economic and social

development without sacrificing cultural and national values and traditions.

4. The national development planning framework consisted of a six-year planning cycle aligned with the Qatar National Vision, encompassing the National Development Strategy 2011-2016, specific sectoral strategies for the same period, and a series of ministerial plans to support the implementation of the sectoral strategies.

5. In 2013 a mid-term review of the National Development Strategy had been conducted in order to take stock of progress in implementing the strategy, identify critical gaps and make necessary realignments. The review had revealed that the strategy had transformed the way government agencies operated, increasing awareness of the need to collaborate across sectors in development planning. However, greater efforts were required to achieve total synergy in cross-sectoral collaboration. Deficiencies had been found in some sectors' human resource capacity for project management and implementation, illustrating the importance of monitoring and evaluation at programme, project and policy levels. Moreover, ministries and agencies with comprehensive communications strategies that targeted multiple stakeholders and citizens had been most successful in implementing the strategy.

6. Among the cross-cutting development challenges faced by Qatar were rapid population growth and demographic changes resulting from massive influxes of expatriate labourers to work on infrastructure projects, which were having an adverse impact on planning in various development sectors. Since the launch of the Qatar National Vision in 2008, the population had grown from 1.4 million to 2.1 million by 2013, with over 200,000 people added in a single year, 2012/2013. The risks of rapid population growth included huge pressures on existing social infrastructure, the dilution of traditional Qatari and Islamic cultural values and identity, the economic fallout from dependency on large numbers of expatriate labourers, significant environmental degradation owing to the mismatch between existing infrastructure and the needs of the growing population, and the safety-related repercussions of increased vehicular traffic.

7. Major infrastructure projects, including the development of the national road network and

preparations for the 2020 World Cup, had led to a sharp increase in heavy vehicles and trailers, which, in turn, had resulted in a rise in carbon dioxide emissions and an increased risk of traffic accidents. Measures to address road safety included improving the road network and traffic management and reducing the response time of the emergency services. A national committee on traffic safety had been established in 2010, and a national road safety strategy and action plan had been adopted. The higher fatality rate among Qatari youth and the high number of pedestrian deaths had yet to be addressed.

8. With regard to human development, the chief pillar of the National Development Strategy, over the previous decade, Qatar's Human Development Index ranking had risen from 51 to 36 out of 187 countries ranked. The country's achievements in health were exemplary, but Qatar still lagged behind the top five countries in terms of education.

9. Balancing economic growth, social development and environmental protection remained a challenge for Qatar; its ecological footprint was the world's largest at 11.7 global hectares per capita. Future actions to address the environmental dimensions of sustainable development included creating a high-level sustainable development committee; ensuring integration of environmental and social considerations in macroeconomic and sectoral policies; reviewing regulations to ensure that environmental and sustainability considerations were taken into account in different sectors; and investing in clean technologies to promote more efficient production, and reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

10. Qatar was developing a broader complementary approach to measuring social welfare, which had traditionally been assessed in terms of income growth alone. Indicators of individual and national well-being, both quantitative and qualitative, were used to assess the extent to which people benefited from national income growth. In a survey on overall life satisfaction, 84 per cent of respondents had reported that they were very or somewhat satisfied with their lives.

11. In conclusion, Qatar's national development planning framework supported advances in human, social, economic and environmental development, but rapid population growth was affecting the pace of progress. His country had achieved a high level of human development and continued to strive to improve

quality and performance in education. Sustainability had been integrated into all stages of planning, and high levels of life satisfaction had been reported by both the Qatari and expatriate populations.

12. **Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait), reviewer, said that Qatar's national development strategy attached great importance to sustainability in order to meet the needs of the current generation of Qataris without compromising those of future generations. Economic development and environmental protection were inextricably linked. Like Qatar, his country faced challenges in diversifying its extractive-industry-dependent economy and in ensuring environmental sustainability in the extractive industries.

13. In the light of Qatar's rapid economic growth and high Gross National Income (GNI), he would welcome more information on the challenges the country had faced in implementing its sustainability plan, as well as on the ways in which Qatar was integrating sustainability issues into the framework of its governmental and other institutions. Noting Qatar's gains on the UNDP Human Development Index and its persistent efforts to improve human and social development — a human-centred and long-term process — he requested specific examples of successful programmes put in place by Qatar to achieve in those areas.

14. **Mr. Raja Zaib Shah** (Observer for Malaysia), reviewer, said that Malaysia noted with great interest the inclusive national development planning process of Qatar. In the light of its own experience, Malaysia understood the numerous challenges involved in the implementation of development programmes. In that regard, he asked the representative of Qatar to elaborate on the lessons learned during the national development strategy mid-term review process, in particular with respect to sustainability. Further elaboration was also requested concerning the use of subjective criteria, in addition to the traditional indicators, to measure the progress made toward the achievement of development goals.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
(E/2014/83)

15. **Mr. Smith** (United Kingdom) expressed the hope that the national voluntary presentations would generate momentum towards achievement of the shared development agenda.

16. The United Kingdom had recently stepped up its efforts towards that end, including the launch of the Africa50 Infrastructure Fund. It had enacted legislation for the express purpose of providing international development assistance for poverty reduction that was independent of commercial considerations. The legislation had subsequently been amended to require reporting on a range of issues, including progress toward achieving the official development assistance (ODA) target, aid effectiveness and transparency, and to determine whether the programmes implemented were conducive to the reduction of gender inequality.

17. The United Kingdom took a strong cross-cutting approach to development, and had established a separate department with responsibility for international development. The Prime Minister had co-chaired the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and a series of joint initiatives engaging other areas of the Government had been launched. His Government was very proud to have attained the target for ODA. It had focused on bilateral efforts over the past few years, and had reduced the number of partner countries to 28. Then, as budget resources had increased, it had established larger programmes in order to make a greater impact on poverty. For example, over the past decade £350 million had been invested annually in Ethiopia to accelerate progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals. By 2015 the United Kingdom would be providing assistance to enable 4 million Pakistani children to go through school. Sixty per cent of that assistance, or about £6 billion, was allocated for bilateral aid, almost 40 per cent of which went to sub-Saharan Africa.

18. His Government had contributed about £4.4 billion to multilateral institutions as well, including half a billion pounds to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, £2.5 billion to global funds and multilateral development banks, and £100 million for European Union development programmes. The new sustainable development goal framework should not only include a stand-alone goal on gender, but should also cover those issues missing from the Millennium Development Goals, such as economic growth, peace, accountability and effective institutions. The framework should also allow for quantification, monitoring and strengthened data collection, including disaggregated data.

19. With regard to economic development and domestic resource mobilization, the international community should help countries generate their own resources through economic activities and effective tax systems. The United Kingdom was doubling its spending on economic development issues that year, with special emphasis on reducing barriers to economic growth both domestically and internationally, supporting capital market development in sub-Saharan Africa, stimulating businesses to help tackle development priorities, and working with international partners to avoid tax evasion and avoidance.

20. The United Kingdom had also developed a strategic vision for empowering girls and women through education, income-generating activities, and the safeguarding of their sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to live free from violence. His Government would soon host a summit on those issues.

21. An international climate fund totalling almost £4 billion had been established a few years earlier. Strong partnerships were needed to achieve sustainable progress in that area, and the United Kingdom had therefore signed memorandums of understanding with Brazil and China, and had stepped up collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank and other Arab donors.

22. The four key elements of development effectiveness, namely results, transparency, inclusivity and country ownership, should be highlighted. Those aspects were central to the operation of the Department for International Development, which included strict documentation of all relevant activities and presentation of that information to the public. The Government of the United Kingdom and its citizens widely shared the view that their support of other countries would result in the sustained well-being of their country as well.

23. **Mr. Tekeste** (Ethiopia), reviewer, said that the United Kingdom national voluntary presentation testified to the country's efforts to place transparency and responsiveness at the centre of its development cooperation and global engagement, which was a welcome attitude to developing countries.

24. Ethiopia also welcomed the United Kingdom's focus on eradicating extreme poverty through inclusive economic growth, which was in line with his Government's own priorities. His Government attached

high priority to poverty reduction, as reflected in its substantial investment in agriculture and food security, water and sanitation, health, education and rural transport. Those efforts had resulted in double-digit economic growth over the past decade and great progress towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals. Not only had there been a sharp decline in poverty, but Goal 4 had been achieved well ahead of time. The role of the United Kingdom had been vital in achieving those results.

25. The United Kingdom had rightly reported that poverty eradication would prove unattainable without addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development. In that regard, its support to Ethiopia in its efforts to become a low-carbon-emitting middle-income country within the next decade was crucial. The United Kingdom's forward-looking approach to addressing the challenges of poverty was also critical to ensuring sustainable development. Ethiopia believed that strong United Kingdom support would help developing countries to exit from poverty and aid dependency in future.

26. The United Kingdom had managed to maintain its commitment to the international community by providing 0.7 per cent of its gross national income as official development assistance, and was the only country among the Group of Eight to do so. Ethiopia, in particular, had benefited from that ODA. In addition to the increased volume of aid, the United Kingdom approach to delivering aid maximized the use of funds and was a good lesson to all actors involved in the global partnership framework. It was an approach that respected country ownership of development priorities and allowed space for policy choice without undermining local responsibilities, another important lesson that should be learned.

27. As co-chair of the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, the United Kingdom played a critical role in promoting the development agenda. The Department for International Development had fully aligned its support with the development priorities of the Ethiopian Government, and had helped to build up Ethiopia's institutions and systems by using them to deliver development assistance. Delivering aid untied to political or commercial concerns had also increased its development effectiveness.

28. Ethiopia encouraged the United Kingdom to maintain its commitment to support developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty and pursue sustainable development, and to share its experiences and exemplary achievement in effective development cooperation with member countries of the OECD -Development Assistance Committee.

29. To achieve sustainable development, the Government of the United Kingdom should go beyond ODA, and consolidate its development cooperation with developing countries in the areas of investment, trade, knowledge-sharing and the transfer of technology. Ethiopia valued the strong and effective development cooperation it had with the United Kingdom.

30. **Mr. Masood Khan** (Observer for Pakistan), reviewer, said that the United Kingdom presentation demonstrated that country's impressive development assistance record and confirmed its deep involvement in the global debate on the post-2015 development agenda, while reinforcing the conviction that it was possible to eradicate poverty by 2030 and to build effective and accountable institutions. Pakistan had established its own "Leave Nobody Behind Project" and a Millennium Development Goals task force.

31. The United Kingdom was advocating a paradigm shift, in that countries were encouraged to exit poverty and aid dependence by essentially financing themselves out of underdevelopment. To achieve that end, economic growth and development, and institution building were essential. Traditional development cooperation would be increasingly complemented by South-South and triangular cooperation with new State and non-State actors, and non-traditional sources of revenue generated by more efficient tax systems. The United Kingdom had rightly refocused attention on fragile and conflict-affected States, disaster resilience and climate change. The goals of the international community for development and climate change should complement rather than duplicate what had been agreed in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

32. Pakistan welcomed the report's emphasis on good governance, the rule of law, fair justice systems and the inclusion of women in society. The fundamental assumptions of the report were sound in that an international development financing system should

capture and incentivize support for development from a variety of sources rather than exclusively from ODA.

33. The Governments of developing countries should skilfully leverage international assistance to streamline fiscal policies and modernize tax collection systems. If developing countries were to finance themselves out of poverty, a development-oriented international trade regime would be necessary. Pakistan could attest to the results that the United Kingdom's development cooperation approach was producing in the areas of education, job creation, women and children's health, and democracy. Pakistan was grateful for the timely assistance from the United Kingdom during the devastating floods in 2010 and 2011, and valued its close relationship with the United Kingdom in all areas, in particular with respect to development cooperation.

34. Pakistan wished to know the objective the following year's International Conference on Financing for Development, what place that objective would occupy in the United Kingdom's vision for bilateral assistance programmes, and whether the United Kingdom would work alone or in consultation with other member countries of the European Union or OECD to fulfil that vision.

35. He was also interested to know what the United Kingdom would recommend to stimulate economic growth in developing countries, and what such countries should do to stabilize macro-economic indicators. He wondered whether the World Trade Organization would move to a genuinely development-oriented agenda in the near future, and asked the representative of the United Kingdom to clarify how the global economy could be rebalanced, where the most strategic interventions could be made, and who could make such interventions.

Kuwait (E/2014/76)

36. **Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) said that Kuwait had achieved three of the MDGs ahead of the 2015 deadline. Kuwait was equally committed to its own attainment of development targets and to effectively assisting the development efforts of other countries by providing official development assistance (ODA). As a high-income developing country, Kuwait was not faced with cases of extreme poverty or hunger, and its per capita GNI was approximately three times the global average.

37. Kuwait had allocated a large portion of its annual budget to supporting social protection programmes, including government subsidies for unemployment and marriage benefits and the provision of assistance to such vulnerable groups as divorced women and widows. The Government also subsidized communications, electricity, water, fuel and basic food commodity prices.

38. With regard to MDG 2, Kuwait had made great strides in the area of education. In 2012, some 97 per cent of Kuwaiti children had been enrolled in primary school, with roughly equal enrolment rates for boys and girls. In that same year, 98.3 per cent of Kuwaiti children had completed the primary stage of education. The proportion of children who did not complete primary school was declining steadily. His Government had closed the gender gap in education by 1999 and expected to achieve universal primary education by 2015. Formal education was compulsory for all Kuwaiti children through the intermediate level. In addition, all levels of education had been free of charge since 1965. The Kuwaiti Government was eager to provide an ideal and enriching educational environment through the use of outstanding educational methods and well-designed classes.

39. Kuwait's success in achieving universal primary education had not diminished its efforts to maintain enrolment rates and expand access to education at its various stages. In that regard, its priorities included improving the quality and efficiency of the educational system; developing national curricula; strengthening information-technology based education and training national educators and improving their effectiveness.

40. With regard to MDG 3, significant progress had been made in the indicator on educational achievement by Kuwaiti women, according to the global indicator on closing the gender gap. Progress in education meant greater job opportunities for all. In 2013, roughly half of Kuwaiti women were employed, with Kuwaiti women increasingly occupying senior positions. Women had also managed to break into professions previously restricted to men, attain ministerial positions, and achieve legislative victories strictly through the ballot box, without the benefit of a quota system. Kuwait honoured its international agreements as part of its renewed commitment to achieve full gender equality.

41. Despite his Government's efforts to achieve balanced gender representation in political and public life, women's participation remained limited. Kuwait therefore continued in its efforts to pave the way for greater political participation by women and to employ women's expertise in shaping the future of society, in cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular civil society organizations and the various print, radio and visual media outlets. Legislation was in place to uphold women's fundamental rights, freedoms and equality.

42. With regard to MDG 4, Kuwait had reduced the under-five mortality rate by about half between 1990 and 2012. Infant mortality rates had dropped from 14.8 per thousand live births in 1990 to 7.7 per thousand in 2012. Moreover, the proportion of Kuwaiti children vaccinated against measles had increased from 66 per cent in 1990 to 97.4 per cent in 2012. His Government funded research on childhood diseases that were widespread in the country and took preventive measures to reduce their prevalence. Health-care officials were also paying particular attention to promoting programmes aimed at eradicating measles. While no significant challenges remained with regard to achieving Goal 4, further efforts, additional investments and future scientific advances would be needed to reduce rates below the low levels reached thus far.

43. Turning to MDG 5, he noted that easy access to low-cost health-care services and facilities had brought about a decline in maternal mortality rates, from 11 per 100 thousand live births in 1990 to only 1.7 deaths per 100 thousand live births in 2012, and had resulted in nearly 100 per cent of births being attended by skilled health personnel by 2012. Kuwait was committed to providing all its citizens with high-quality health care, including primary health-care services, free of charge. The 2010/2011-2013/2014 medium-term development plan included a programme to upgrade primary health-care services. Receiving medical care during pregnancy and following childbirth was critically important to keeping maternal mortality rates low. Kuwait was committed to continuing to raise awareness among women regarding general health, nutrition and reproductive health, in collaboration with health-care statisticians.

44. With regard to MDG 6, Kuwait had adopted a national strategy to combat HIV/AIDS that provided for voluntary and confidential HIV/AIDS testing, to

encourage at-risk individuals to be tested. Medical screening, in particular of individuals planning to marry, had indicated that HIV/AIDS infection rates were close to zero, and AIDS was not a significant problem in Kuwait. The Government provided support, care and treatment free of charge, in accordance with the most recent World Health Organization protocols. Persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS or tuberculosis were also entitled to take early retirement on medical grounds.

45. Government efforts to combat tuberculosis had significantly reduced the incidence and mortality rates for the disease, and in 2011, some 93 per cent of diagnosed cases had been treated successfully.

46. The Government provided comprehensive health-care coverage for all citizens and migrant workers. Upon detection of any contagious disease, the Government sought to identify the source of that disease, screened individuals who had been exposed to ascertain whether they had been infected, provided preventive treatment to those who required it and implemented supervised short-term treatment regimens.

47. With regard to MDG 7, Kuwait had reduced the consumption of ozone-depleting substances by 27.1 per cent between 1993 and 2012 and had completely eliminated CFC emissions by 2010. Between 1990 and 2012, the areas designated as terrestrial and marine nature reserves had grown to 21.7 per cent of the country's total area. All Kuwaiti citizens enjoyed access to safe and healthy drinking water, produced through desalination processes in line with international quality standards. Kuwait's average annual water consumption per capita was among the highest in the world. Energy consumption in Kuwait had risen by roughly 45 per cent between 1995 and 2009, as had fuel costs associated with water production and energy generation. Kuwait's commitment to environmental sustainability was especially important in the light of its dependence on oil production and its harsh climate. His Government endeavoured to comply with international environmental conventions and agreements and had enacted a comprehensive environmental protection law.

48. In order to address the problem of carbon dioxide emissions per capita and per \$1 gross domestic product (PPP), Kuwait was developing a comprehensive national environmental plan that included projects to

ensure safe waste disposal and carbon dioxide capture, as a type of clean development mechanism project. To that end, his Government would request international assistance for the revision and correction of emissions data and preparation of a carbon dioxide capture project. Public-private partnerships and civil society efforts to prevent environmental pollution and damage and raise environmental awareness among the population would be supported.

49. High water and energy consumption also constituted a major challenge, given that water and energy use greatly enhanced quality of life in his country. In that connection, his Government had adopted a plan to develop future policies and strategies to establish water distillation plants, in order to meet demand through 2020. Moreover, the water transmission and distribution network was being enhanced to prevent water loss.

50. With regard to MDG 8, Kuwait had provided grants, loans and technical assistance for development to several countries and regional and international development institutions through its own national institutions, acting through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development. In 2011-2012, Kuwaiti official development assistance stood at 1.32 per cent of GNI, exceeding the 0.7 per cent threshold established by Goal 8. The amount awarded in grants through the Kuwait Fund had risen from \$734 million in 2008-2009 to \$3.4 billion in 2012-2013, a 358.2 per cent increase. Kuwait also supported Gulf Cooperation Council initiatives, especially those relating to energy generation, use and consumption. Over the previous four years, Kuwait had hosted several regional meetings on economic and social development cooperation.

51. On the basis of its unique development experience, Kuwait stressed the importance of a flexible post-2015 development agenda in line with States' aspirations, priorities and strategies. Reconciling international goals more effectively with national plans in order to allow countries to select goals that suited their circumstances would ensure that those goals enjoyed greater national legitimacy and political support. Lastly, the post-2015 development agenda must include development models that promoted socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth.

52. **Mr. Al Nabit** (Qatar), reviewer, commended Kuwait on its development path towards achieving the MDGs, three of which had already been attained. Kuwait and Qatar faced a similar challenge with regard to the dominance of oil in the economy. Further reforms were required to diversify sources of revenue and promote the role of the local private sector in that regard. He would welcome more information on measures taken by Kuwait to promote the contribution of the private sector to government development and infrastructure projects, and to expand the scope of private sector participation in economic life more broadly.

53. **Mr. Shank** (Associate Director, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Adjunct Professor and Board Member, George Mason University School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution) said that he would welcome examples of specific case studies that exemplified best practices in the areas of inclusivity, transparency and accountability, improving access and opportunity for disenfranchised populations, and environmental sustainability.

54. **Mr. Al Nabit** (Qatar) said that he realized that sustainability required sectoral progress and changes in the institutional culture and behaviours in any given society. In Qatar, the oil and gas sector was implementing a number of initiatives to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. All companies working in that sector were asked to submit a yearly report on their progress in reducing emissions. Strenuous efforts were also being made to report on damage resulting from solid waste.

55. Environmental issues had been integrated at the institutional level in all sectors, as well as into policy. With regard to human development, his Government had been working to diversify educational options for the population, improve the quality of health insurance and make it available to the entire population. Qatar had also striven to guarantee continuous learning in an effort to build skills.

56. **Mr. Smith** (United Kingdom) thanked the Government of Ethiopia for agreeing to host the International Conference on Financing for Development as it was critical to discuss what resources were needed to implement the sustainable development agenda. Fruitful discussions would provide important input and reveal how the international community could implement that agenda.

An entire range of resources and policy actions in addition to official development assistance would be required. The critical action agreed upon at the International Conference on Financing for Development would be linked to the United Kingdom's own bilateral programmes. The international community, including the Group of 20 and OECD, should also intervene.

57. The United Kingdom had made transparency a priority, making available online all relevant information, including transactions and expenditures, across all Government departments, thereby inducing the Department for International Development to improve the quality of the information it circulated and to be more accountable to taxpayers and citizens in the United Kingdom and partner countries.

58. **Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) said that owing to the persistent economic dependence of Kuwait's economy on oil, the Government was taking action to reform its economic structure and diversify and expand the productive base in its development plans, programmes and policies. It had also adopted decisions to establish anti-corruption entities and enacted privatization laws and other relevant legislation. A national fund for small and medium-sized enterprises had been established to encourage youth and promote competition.

59. **Ms. Ntyam-Ehya** (Observer for Gabon) asked the representative of Qatar to elaborate on how the Government promoted road security. Gabon commended the United Kingdom, with which it had had extensive experience with respect to environment-related development aid.

60. **Ms. Kage** (Germany) asked the presenters to comment on the Millennium Development Goals, and to specify to what extent the Goals had guided the formulation of domestic policies. Qatar, notably, had focused more heavily on the human development index than the Millennium Development Goals. She wished to know whether there was an implicit criticism in that preference. Finally, she requested the United Kingdom to clarify its position with respect to development aid and the direction the post-2015 development should follow.

61. **Mr. Al Nabit** (Qatar) said that his Government's efforts to promote road safety had focused on expanding infrastructure and enforcing safety requirements, in addition to raising awareness on how to reduce, avoid and respond promptly to traffic

accidents. However, the number of road accidents had not dropped because of rapid population growth and the attendant increase in vehicles. With regard to human development, his Government's strategy had been put in place after the adoption of the MDGs, which had been adopted as the fundamental focus of development. Since then, significant progress had been made towards achieving the goals.

62. **Mr. Smith** (United Kingdom) said that his Government had reorganized both its development strategy and the Department for International Development around the Millennium Development Goals, which had had a profound impact on its approach and priorities for the implementation of development assistance. Over time, it had become clear that a number of issues such as conflict, gender and effective governance and institutions had not been adequately addressed by the Goals, necessitating an adjustment of the country's priorities.

63. The post-2015 development agenda should be universally applicable. The United Kingdom had already begun to reflect on the implications of a number of domestic policies, and was examining relevant issues and appropriate responses. The post-2015 development agenda was extremely important, and would help to bring about the positive engagement of a number of domestic departments with the international agenda.

64. **Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) said that the post-2015 development agenda must complement the MDGs. While the debate over the content of the new agenda would be a long and complicated one, he hoped that an agreement on the sustainable development goals would be reached in September 2014. As a small country and a member of the Group of 77 and China, Kuwait's priorities were poverty eradication and strengthening the global partnership for development as crucial elements in the forthcoming agenda. However unlikely the attainment of MDG 8 by 2015 appeared, ODA must be increased. Moreover, international institutions working on trade and environmental issues must coordinate their work more effectively in order to achieve progress on the current development goals.

65. **Mr. Shank** (Associate Director, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Adjunct Professor and Board Member, George Mason University School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution) said that eight indicators, namely a well-functioning government, a

sound business environment, equitable distribution of resources, acceptance of others' rights, good relations with neighbours, the free flow of information, high levels of education and low levels of corruption, were strongly correlated with more peaceful societies. Every country had a measure of work to be done in at least one of those areas.

66. In moving forward with the post-2015 development agenda, the international community should consider a number of issues, such as investment in human capital for the building of a more peaceful environment and the need to take high population growth into account in the sustainable development strategy. The representatives of Kuwait and Qatar had both commented on their large ecological footprint, which should lead to some reflection on how to reduce it. The optimism expressed by the United Kingdom with respect to the Millennium Development Goals was important to maintain in moving forward.

67. A number of questions had arisen, such as whether there would be a stand-alone goal on gender and whether the sustainable development goals would be as inspiring as the Millennium Development Goals. It was also important to consider whether peace and stability would be core tenets of the sustainable development goals, if a strong monitoring and evaluation framework would be implemented, and whether countries would contribute to climate funds.

68. The remarks by the representative of Ethiopia should prompt reflection on how to untie aid from political agendas. The representative of Pakistan had also raised a crucial issue that would hopefully encourage the international community to evaluate how the sustainable development goals could ensure that no one was left behind.

69. Economic growth could not resolve all global challenges. It had failed to eradicate poverty and inequalities in countries such as the United States where, for example, strong economic growth had benefited only a small portion of the population. In terms of education, Kuwait had recorded a 97 per cent enrolment rate for primary school; the moment had therefore arrived to evaluate how that success could be extended to secondary and tertiary education. The fact that women occupied 8 per cent of parliamentary seats should encourage further action to increase women's participation in the political sphere. In view of the increasing levels of carbon dioxide emissions,

solutions must be found to reduce emissions with a view to achieving sustainability. Water scarcity, which played a major role in serious conflicts, was another critical issue. Finally, United Kingdom efforts to increase accountability and transparency encouraged reflection on how relevant information could be made accessible to those without Internet access.

70. The Millennium Development Goals were indeed beneficial; however, more efforts were needed. The excitement surrounding the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda should be maintained, with the international community ensuring that those goals remained at the centre of its work.

The meeting was suspended at 5.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.42 p.m.

Mr. Sajdik (Austria) resumed the chair.

National voluntary presentations: Plurinational State of Bolivia (E/2014/56), the Gambia (E/2014/82), the Sudan (E/2014/58) and the State of Palestine (E/2014/60)

71. **The President** invited Ms. Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, to act as moderator for the national voluntary presentations.

72. **Ms. Clark** (Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme), moderator, said that the challenge for the meeting was to determine the future sustainable development goals. The Secretary-General's progress report on the Millennium Development Goals showed that progress had been uneven but that much had been learned in the context of national consultations around the agenda. The United Nations Development Programme had produced 450 national reports since 2000, including seven reports on the Plurinational State of Bolivia that had highlighted that country's holistic approach to development. The Gambia had been the subject of four reports focusing on the practical obstacles to development at the grassroots level and highlighting lessons learned ahead of the post-2015 era. Reports on the Sudan had analysed the effects of conflict on planning for development and on different types of development partnerships. They had also highlighted improved human resources and institutional capacities. Reports on the State of Palestine had emphasized the importance of a human-rights-based approach to development and the capacity-building needs of

specific sectors of society, especially young people and women.

Plurinational State of Bolivia (E/2014/56)

73. **Ms. Caro Hinojosa** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), Minister of Development Planning, accompanying her presentation with a series of electronic slides, said that the country's comprehensive development model that integrated the economic, social and environmental aspects of the Millennium Development Goals and emphasized long-term economic and social advances by 2025. Bolivia had introduced major changes in the last nine years, including a new constitution and a new economic model.

74. The Bolivian economy was one of the two strongest in the region, partly because of external factors but also because of the impact of the new economic policy on employment and income distribution. Growth had risen from 3.6 per cent in the 1991-2005 period to 5 per cent in 2006-2013, and the target was for growth to exceed 7 per cent by 2030. Net foreign exchange reserves had risen 742 per cent since 2005 and, far from being a coincidence, that increase was the result of changes in property laws and the distribution of the resources of the gas and mining sectors. Mean per capita gross domestic product was \$1,899 in the period from 2006 to 2013, placing Bolivia in the ranks of middle-income countries. Since 2005, unemployment had been halved and the national minimum wage had nearly tripled, partly because of increased public investment but also as a result of increased foreign direct investment, including in small and medium-sized enterprises.

75. Only 16.5 per cent of households had access to social benefits in 2005, but by 2012 that figure had risen to 60.4 per cent. Moderate and extreme poverty had been drastically reduced in the same period. Two million people had emerged from poverty and the hope was that by 2020 the rate of extreme poverty would be below the population growth rate. Bolivia had always been a country of inequality. In 2006, the richest 10 per cent had earned 97 times more than the poorest 10 per cent, but by 2013 that figure had been reduced to 36 times nationwide. There had been a steady decrease in hunger and malnutrition, and a steady rise in the Human Development Index. Women, in particular, were better represented in the executive

branch, the legislative branch and the judiciary, and gender equity had been enshrined in the constitution.

76. The development agenda for the period up to 2025 would more clearly incorporate a harmonious relationship with the environment. Efforts to reduce unemployment and inequality should be based on a new approach to growth, in which natural resources, as a shared asset, were not an external factor but an integral part of the equation. In future, greater participation of civil society, namely the people who lived in and managed natural resources would be needed to promote growth and reduce inequality.

77. **Ms. Rodríguez** (Cuba), reviewer, said that the report presented a comprehensive development model that clarified the existing achievements and future challenges of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in the run-up to the bicentenary of independence in 2025, within the framework of living well and the rights of Mother Earth, and its vision of the post-2015 development agenda. The economic, social, communitarian and productive model of living well, as implemented by Bolivia since 2006, had made it possible to reduce inequality and poverty, achieve a more equitable distribution of income, and transfer surpluses from strategic sectors such as energy and mining to income-generating and job-creating sectors such as manufacturing, tourism and housing. That pluralistic economic model incorporated other actors, such as cooperatives and communities, but the State was the main actor that intervened in the economy as planner, investor, regulator, banker and promoter.

78. Bolivia had greatly reduced extreme poverty as a result of the Government's policy of stabilizing the prices of staple foods and transferring resources to the most vulnerable sectors of the population. Advances in the area of universal primary education had increased literacy and the "Juancito Pinto" benefit paid to primary school students had increased net enrolment and reduced the drop-out rate. There had also been advances in the area of gender equity, women's empowerment, child and infant mortality, and maternal health. Efforts to control HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases had borne fruit from 2007 onwards. Environmental sustainability had been enhanced, the use of ozone-depleting materials had been reduced, and imports of such substances had been banned.

79. Bolivia had made efforts to promote a global development alliance with a view to the post-2015

development agenda based on a new paradigm of life in which nature was not treated as a source of raw materials to feed endless private capital accumulation, but as a sustainable resource within the framework of a visionary new approach to harmony with nature instead of unlimited consumption of natural resources.

80. She commended Bolivia for its efforts and achievements related to the Millennium Development Goals, but further efforts would be needed to secure a better future for the Bolivian people. It would be interesting to know more about the bases of the 2025 patriotic bicentenary agenda constituting a comprehensive development programme. It would also be interesting to hear about how organized civil society had contributed to sustainable development, and what the remaining challenges were. The vision adopted by Bolivia required the creation of a favourable climate for the implementation of development policies leading to sustained economic growth in harmony with nature. Information on the key principles that Bolivia considered would enable a country to achieve the Millennium Development Goals would be welcome.

81. **Mr. Mukerji** (India), reviewer, said that the Bolivia had a unique vision for achieving comprehensive development for living well, and had made great strides towards achieving its own development goals as well as the Millennium Development Goals. Poverty and unemployment had been reduced and sustained inclusive economic growth had been achieved. Child malnutrition had dropped sharply and the literacy rate among young people aged 15 to 24 was 99.5 per cent, even though the net enrolment ratio was 82.2 per cent. Gender equity had improved and in fact more girls were enrolled in primary education than boys. However, remaining geographical disparities required the government's attention.

82. Indian civilization shared the Bolivian vision of living well in harmony with nature. Nature was a living partner in the development process, not a resource to be exploited. That culture of frugality, in which the bare minimum was taken from nature and nothing was wasted, was part of the wisdom handed down over thousands of years in India. The Bolivian 2025 patriotic agenda, with its comprehensive template spread over 13 pillars, was notable in particular because it preceded the post-2015 development agenda.

83. India's experience had shown that information and communication technology could play a transformative role in development policy, especially in the area of women's empowerment. The Government of Bolivia should therefore harness that technology to promote comprehensive development.

84. **Mr. Mamabolo** (South Africa), reviewer, said that the presentation reflected the need for the post-2015 development agenda to build on the Millennium Development Goals to ensure that the benefits of growth and development would be shared by all. The most important factor was good governance, which was key to per capita gross domestic product growth, foreign direct investment and other economic factors.

85. The emphasis on respect for Mother Earth and the complementarity between ecological justice and social justice was welcome and should be included in the post-2015 development agenda. South Africa had also addressed similar issues in its policies on development and the redistribution of resources, and was seeking to build a solidarity-based society that pursued the eradication of poverty and inequality by moving away from a purely extractive economy that benefited only international corporations. The redistributive model that aimed to use resources to assist low-income people, for example through cash transfers, was also in line with South Africa's policies. It was heartening that Bolivia had adopted a radical ecological strategy so different from the dominant economic models. Much had been achieved in only eight years, although many challenges remained in the areas of inequality, child mortality and maternal health. It would be interesting to know what Bolivia planned to do to address those issues, which were also areas of concern for South Africa.

The Gambia (E/2014/82)

86. **Mr. Touray** (Gambia), Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, accompanying his presentation with a series of electronic slides, said that the Gambia had a surface area of only 10,690 square kilometres and a population of 1.9 million. It was classified as one of the least developed countries by the United Nations. It had significant fisheries and a tourist industry, but agriculture was the largest contributor to the gross domestic product and employed the bulk of the labour force. The economy had grown steadily until 2010, but a drought had caused crop failure and a recession in 2011. Growth had returned in 2012-2013. The Gambia

was among the front runners in West Africa in the improvement of human welfare during the period of the Millennium Development Goals, but poverty remained widespread in rural areas and among young people. In the global hunger index, the Gambia was thirty-third out of 78 countries ranked, but natural hazards, crop failures and high food prices kept certain vulnerable groups in hunger over long periods.

87. Under-five mortality had improved from 141 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to only 54 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, and infant mortality had declined from 98 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 34 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013. The corresponding Millennium Development Goals had therefore been achieved. However, the results in the area of gender equity had been mixed. The number of women in decision-making roles had increased slightly, while the number of women in senior civil service positions had significantly increased.

88. The Government of the Gambia was committed to an institutional framework that integrated the three pillars of sustainable development. Approaches included natural resource management and sustainable resource utilization. The Gambia was on track to achieve, at least partially, its goals in the areas of education, gender equity, child mortality, HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, the environment; and global partnerships. However, formidable obstacles remained to achieving Goal 1 on poverty and Goal 5 on maternal health. In particular, the goal of universal primary education had been achieved, as had the goal of gender parity in primary education. There remained non-fee costs such as uniforms and school materials, and cultural factors such as marriages of teenage girls. Some children, especially girls, were required to perform household chores and work to support their families. The goal of 100 per cent enrolment of boys and girls at age 7 faced obstacles such as alternative Islam-only schools and late registration of home births.

89. The Government of the Gambia sought to achieve universal primary education by ensuring that no child had to walk more than two kilometres to school and subsidizing girls' education. The merits of education for girls were given prominent coverage in the media and official government pronouncements. The Government had understood that educating girls could yield greater development dividends than educating boys, but poverty and traditional practices impeded the

enrolment and retention of girls in school. The fact that the Vice-President of the Gambia was a woman had had a positive demonstrative effect on girls.

90. Poverty in the Gambia was largely a rural phenomenon, resulting from inadequate power supplies, telecommunications and sanitation. Many heads of household were women employed in agriculture who had little or no schooling and large families. The decline in the number of people living under the poverty line was matched by an increase in income inequality, in line with global trends. In 2013, food insecurity affected 18 per cent of the people, for whom food prices were high and diets were monotonous. Inclusive growth was needed to reduce the gap between rural and urban areas, and the dependence on rain-fed agriculture meant that climate change could hinder the fight against poverty, as had happened in 2011. Meanwhile, higher prices for imported fuel and food destabilized public and private finances, eroding earnings and hindering economic growth.

91. In spite of the Government's enabling initiatives, there had been little addition of value to primary products, especially groundnuts. Remittances had boosted growth and poverty alleviation, but intermittent drought, inadequate funding and a shortage of technical capacity had forestalled the achievement of projected growth rates and Millennium Development Goal 1. There was also a lack of reliable statistics to measure and monitor poverty.

92. Even those living above the poverty line were suffering from new health problems, such as diabetes and high blood pressure, as a result of changes in eating habits and behaviour. In 2000, the Government had enacted the Food Act and established the National Nutrition Agency tasked with improving the nutritional status of children.

93. The lessons learned in the fight against poverty were that stronger growth led to higher employment and shared prosperity extending to agricultural workers, young people and women, fewer people living in extreme poverty and smaller income disparities. The agricultural sector afforded the country some resilience to external vulnerabilities, as demonstrated by the robust growth recorded during the global economic crisis in 2008-2009. However, rain-fed agriculture was vulnerable to the vagaries of weather. The solution was irrigation. The Government of the Gambia was seeking

international assistance to turn the country into a dependable breadbasket.

94. Depressed incomes in the agricultural sector pointed to the need for value addition to primary products, sustainable agriculture, alternative livelihoods and the development of rural infrastructure.

95. **Mr. Çevik** (Observer for Turkey), reviewer, said that the improvements in the Gambia's growth rate, capacity for trade and Human Development Index were such that the country could aspire to graduate from least developed country status. The Gambia had a strong policy framework for tackling poverty and hunger. The remaining challenges were poverty, debt and shortages of the kind of human resources needed to diversify the economy. The Gambia still had to deal with food insecurity as a result of the after-effects of the 2011 drought.

96. Turkey looked forward to the Gambia's meeting its target of universal primary education, and hoped that it would meet even more challenging sustainable development goals. Much progress had been made in the area of child and maternal health, but more progress was needed, in particular in the area of contraceptive use. Safe drinking water was available to 91 per cent of the people but budgetary constraints prevented access to essential drugs and equipment. Global partnerships were needed to improve access to health care for all. Malaria was still the leading cause of death among children under five. A priority for donors was to direct funding and support to efforts to combat malaria and tuberculosis. It would also be interesting to know what strategies and programmes had been put in place to tackle the debt burden, since 22.5 per cent of public revenues in 2012 were devoted to debt servicing.

97. **Mr. Sarki** (Nigeria), reviewer, said that Nigeria and the Gambia had various cultural, religious, economic and historical features in common. The Gambia had not succeeded in halving extreme poverty by 2015, but that was not surprising since other countries blessed with more natural resources had likewise failed to achieve that goal. The Gambia had, however, reduced overall poverty from 58 per cent in 2003-2004 to 48.4 per cent in 2010.

98. The report acknowledged that more needed to be done to achieve gender equality, but some progress had been made in that area. The Gambia had limited resources and the Government had had to give priority

to certain areas and focus its efforts, for example, on meeting Goals 3, 6, 7 and 8. Significant challenges remained in meeting Goals 1 and 5. The Gambia was on track to be one of the countries that would achieve some of the Millennium Development Goals ahead of the 2015 deadline. Other least developed countries would do well to replicate the Gambia's successes.

99. Regarding Goal 1, the Gambia had made progress in reducing extreme poverty, although there was still a great disparity between rural and urban areas. The Gambia was expected to achieve Goal 2 and reduce the gender gap in education. Regarding Goal 3, more women held political office and more women were in secondary and tertiary education. The Gambia was one of the few countries in the region that had achieved Goal 4 and reduced the under-five mortality rate to 42 deaths per 1,000 live births. The Gambia's efforts to provide affordable health services should be supported by the United Nations system and other international partners.

100. With regard to Goal 5, the maternal mortality rate had declined from 730 per 100,000 in 2003 to 360 per 100,000 in 2013, thanks to skilled birth attendants and safer delivery practices. As for Goal 6, HIV infection rates were comparatively low, while malaria remained the leading cause of death. The spread of tuberculosis was a cause for concern.

101. Results were mixed with regard to Goal 7. Forests covered only 48 per cent of the country's land area, and surface water resources were threatened by drought and climate change. Nevertheless, the percentage of households with access to safe drinking water had increased from 69 per cent in 1990 to 91 per cent in 2013, a figure that exceeded the Millennium Development Goals target of 85 per cent of households by 2015.

102. Over-reliance on foreign aid could adversely affect the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in the Gambia because of uncertainties in the global financial system and potential reductions in assistance from donor countries. The Gambia could concentrate resources stemming from debt relief on targeted interventions that would benefit vulnerable groups such as women and girls, and further reduce extreme poverty.

103. Nigeria had carried out many such interventions and the federal Government had established the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the

Millennium Development Goals to act as the Secretariat to the Presidential Committee on Assessment and Monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals.

104. Peer reviews such as the current one were important for the functioning of the international multilateral system and the attainment of globally agreed goals. In the Human Rights Council, Member States assessed each other's performance in the context of the Universal Periodic Review. The States Members of the African Union had established the African Peer Review Mechanism to assess the achievement of agreed economic, social, cultural and human rights objectives. The review in the Economic and Social Council was of no lesser relevance. The Gambia had demonstrated its commitment to meeting international standards and best practices by submitting its report to public scrutiny.

The Sudan (E/2014/58)

105. **Ms. Abdallah** (Sudan), Minister of Welfare and Social Security, accompanying her presentation with a series of electronic slides, said that the Sudan had adopted the Millennium Development Goals as an important point of reference for national development planning for the period from 2007 to 2031. There had been important constitutional developments, including the adoption of the 2005 constitution and the holding of elections in 2010. A comprehensive peace agreement signed in 2005 had led to the end of the war and the self-determination of the southern part of the country.

106. Economic reforms had had a positive impact on economic performance, with steady growth unprecedented since independence. Inflation and exchange rates had also steadily improved. The Sudan had implemented social support and microfinance programmes, and had built partnerships with the private sector and civil society. The mobilization of political will and financial resources had made it possible to reduce poverty, and accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the areas of primary health care, education and employment. It was difficult to track trends in poverty and hunger in the Sudan because of the lack of statistics before the baseline survey of households in 2009. There was a need to review data and statistics following the separation of the southern part of the country since there were disparities between the two States. Nominal enrolment in primary education had

been 82.5 per cent in 2011. Actual enrolment in secondary education was 22 per cent, but the figures were 37 per cent in urban areas, as against only 14 per cent in rural areas. The gender gap had been reduced in primary and secondary education. The share of women in paid employment outside the agricultural sector had risen from 18 per cent to 30 per cent. The number of female members of parliament had risen from 10 per cent in 2004 to 25 per cent in 2010, when a quota had been applied. In the amended electoral law adopted in 2014, the quota for women had been increased to 30 per cent.

107. Infant mortality had decreased from 80 to 60 per 1,000 live births. The under-five mortality rate had been reduced from 123 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 83 per 1,000 live births in 2010. Maternal mortality had decreased to 216 per 100,000 live births in the same period. Deliveries taking place under the supervision of birth attendants had increased, but there were disparities between urban and rural areas.

108. The Sudan had a low prevalence of HIV. Malaria was the main cause of death and 75 per cent of the population was at risk, but there had been a remarkable improvement in the incidence rate, which had been only 0.6 per cent in 2011. The percentage of households with access to clean water was 76 per cent in urban areas and 58 per cent in rural areas, while 27.1 per cent of all households had sanitation. Forest cover had shrunk to 29.4 per cent in 2010 and reforestation efforts would be made.

109. The Sudan was in sixth place in Africa with regard to Internet use, and over half the population used mobile telephones. Official development assistance to the Sudan made up 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product and 3 per cent of the State budget. However, official development assistance came with political and economic preconditions and 75 per cent of donor assistance was channelled through United Nations agencies and international cooperation agencies. That had led to a lack of ownership and an increased risk of unsustainability. The Sudan faced numerous challenges, in particular internal conflicts and the impact of the separation of South Sudan, in addition to unilateral economic sanctions and weak development partnerships.

110. The Sudan had implemented a package of domestic economic reforms in line with International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group policies and

would use its oil reserves to attract foreign direct investment. The current consistently high growth rates were unprecedented since independence. The gross national income had increased five-fold between 1999 and 2009. All macroeconomic indicators had improved, inflation was low and the Sudanese pound had a stable exchange rate.

111. Negative aspects were the high costs of conflict and the loss of human and natural resources, including oil, with the separation of South Sudan. Economic sanctions had had a negative impact on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The international community should support the Sudan and ease unilateral economic sanctions. The foreign debt burden limited the Sudan's ability to benefit from development assistance. Support for peace and security was the shared responsibility of the Government, civil society and other stakeholders, and the Government had adopted macroeconomic policies that fostered sustainable growth, reduced poverty, managed immigration, and also promoted the private sector and supported the informal economy with a view to expanding employment. The Sudan would benefit from internationally approved initiatives such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative of IMF and enhanced bilateral links with donors.

112. **Mr. Mukherjee** (India), reviewer, said that the Government of the Sudan had faced persistent challenges in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Mounting external debt and decades of conflict with armed groups had reduced the ability of the Sudanese Government to improve its initiatives in the areas of poverty eradication, health care, education, rural development and gender equality, among others. Access to external funding was limited.

113. The national dialogue process had contributed to reducing tensions and the international community should refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of the Sudan. Sanctions should not be used as a political tool to discriminate against the Sudanese people. Solutions must be found for the external debt problems. The Sudan had met various technical benchmarks required to qualify for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. India had recently restructured its own lines of credit extended to the Sudan for infrastructure development and socioeconomic projects. The Sudan lacked capacity in the areas of human resources, infrastructure and industry, and India would contribute to the Sudan's

development through capacity-building, lines of credit, sharing of best practices and the provision of human and technical resources.

114. **Mr. Aguiar Patriota** (Brazil), reviewer, said that the Sudan had made progress since the financial crisis of 2008. A broad national dialogue had been launched and a three-year sustainability program had led to positive growth in spite of the loss of resources. The Government was committed to guaranteeing universal free access to basic and general education. Enrolment rates in primary education had increased and there were more higher education institutions. It was encouraging to see advances in the area of Millennium Development Goal 4, and especially in the neonatal and maternal mortality rates, as well as improved access by women to health and education services including reproductive health services. Progress in the empowerment of women was commendable; there were more female than male students in higher education. The number of women in paid non-agricultural activity had increased and women occupied more seats in parliament. For its part, Brazil had placed women at the centre of Government social programmes, such as cash transfers.

115. The modernization of agriculture could provide export revenue and an incentive for people to remain in rural areas, thereby reducing the demographic pressure on cities. Integration into the world economy was important and the Sudan should be allowed to join the World Trade Organization without political preconditions. The Sudan, with its fertile land and abundance of water, could become a regional breadbasket and Brazilian companies had invested in the production of sugar cane, in particular as a source for biofuels. In Brazil and elsewhere, school food programmes used produce from local smallholders and thus helped generate income, promote the growth of domestic markets and increase children's health and food security. Unilateral sanctions and external debt were a heavy burden. Consequently, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative should help the Sudan to divert its scarce resources to reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. As a country that did not apply unilateral sanctions, Brazil encouraged those countries that did to reconsider their positions with respect to the Sudan. All official development assistance commitments made under the Monterrey Consensus and at the United Nations Conference on

Sustainable Development (Rio+20) should be fulfilled. The Sudan should receive support to achieve long-term sustainable development, thereby ensuring peace and stability.

116. **Mr. Percaya** (Indonesia), reviewer, said that the Sudan had demonstrated a determination to improve the life of its people in spite of enormous obstacles. Progress had been made especially in the areas of health care and education. The Government had improved the delivery of public services, created jobs and established safety nets, in particular through legislation encouraging investment, expanded microfinance and social initiative programmes.

117. In 1998, Indonesia had experienced a severe economic crisis that had sparked a political crisis. The resulting political transition had turned Indonesia into one of the largest democratic nations in the world and it was reaping the rewards of that change. The Indonesian Government had followed a four-track development strategy that was pro-poor, pro-growth, pro-employment and pro-environment. It also allocated 20 per cent of the national budget to education.

118. Peace and stability played a vital role in creating an enabling environment for development. The Sudan was on the right path but needed international support to strengthen its capacity to resolve and prevent conflict. Durable solutions to the debt burden would enable the Sudan to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Transfers of technology would also be needed to build human and institutional capacities for development policy planning and implementation. Regarding Millennium Development Goal 8, which was referred to as the weakest link in the report, it would be interesting to know what the Sudan would like to see reflected in the post-2015 development agenda with regard to partnerships.

State of Palestine (E/2014/60)

119. **Mr. Awwad** (State of Palestine), Minister of Health, said that there had been progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in spite of a lack of security and political stability as a result of the Israeli occupation. Gaza had just been bombed and 65 people had been killed and hundreds more wounded. Families were isolated and health services could not reach them. On many fronts, including the

political front, the State of Palestine was dependent on support from neighbours and other foreign support.

120. **Ms. Erekat** (State of Palestine), Special Adviser to the Minister, Head of Aid Management and Coordination, Ministry of Planning and Administration Development, accompanying her presentation with a series of electronic slides, said that Israel was currently seeking to undo development by bombing Gaza. The report on the Millennium Development Goals in the State of Palestine was the result of a social dialogue between the Government, civil society and the private sector, as well as development partners and international agencies, and had been compiled in parallel with the national development plan for 2014-2016. It also drew on, inter alia, sectoral reviews, the national development plan for 2011 to 2013, and the national report on sustainable development under occupation submitted to the Rio+20 Conference.

121. International reports had often described Palestine's development as miraculous, but superficial evaluations covered only a few basic indicators, and progress remained fragile and dependent on external assistance and the Israeli occupation's decision to dismantle what the Palestinian Government had built.

122. Development in Palestine could not be evaluated in the same way as in any other country since it was the only country that languished under occupation and the Palestinian people were denied their right to self-determination within a viable sovereign State. In spite of its limited powers and resources, the Palestinian Government had achieved specific successes in the areas of education, health care and women's empowerment.

123. Poverty was persistently high and, in spite of poverty eradication efforts, no genuine improvement had been recorded since 1996. The national average unemployment rate was 23 per cent, but in Gaza it was 43 per cent overall, and 50 per cent for young people, who made up almost half of the total population. The unemployment rate was 35 per cent for men and 74.8 per cent for women. Agriculture had the greatest potential for job creation but almost all agricultural land was in Area C, where Palestinians had limited access and Israeli restrictions were in force. There was no water scarcity in Palestine since rainfall was plentiful, but Israel controlled all water resources and hindered the construction of water infrastructure by requiring that services be provided not only to

Palestinians but also to illegal settlements. Israel had just bombed the sewage plant and the main drinking water line in Gaza.

124. Access to proper sanitation services had increased to 99.6 per cent in 2012, but per capita water consumption by Palestinians was only 135 litres per day, compared with 353 litres per day for Israelis and 900 litres per day for illegal West Bank settlers. Israel controlled the water resources in Palestinian areas, extracted them and sold the water back to the Palestinian Government.

125. The goal of universal primary education was close to being achieved for both genders. More females than males were enrolled in both secondary and higher education. The goal of gender equity had therefore been achieved. However, women's participation in the workforce remained low. The percentage of women in paid employment in the non-agricultural sector had risen slightly in 2012, to 16.7 per cent. Child mortality had declined, but the reduction fell short of the target of 66 per cent. The decline in infant mortality had similarly fallen short of the target. Of the under-one population in 2010, 93.2 per cent had been vaccinated against measles.

126. Israeli occupation remained the primary obstacle to sustainable development and eroded achievements on the ground. Israel controlled Palestine's borders, airspace and underground resources. Taxes on Palestine's imports were collected by Israel and returned to the Palestinian Government minus a 3-per-cent handling fee. All trade with the outside world had to be approved by Israel. The international community was responsible for ensuring Israeli respect for international law and international resolutions calling for an end to colonialism, and the protection of the right of peoples to self-determination and to development.

127. Meanwhile, the Government would continue building rights-based social protection systems, shift the focus of poverty eradication from relief programmes to development initiatives, promote gender parity and women's participation in the workforce, and enhance access to health care. The establishment of a sovereign State in all the Palestinian lands occupied by Israel since 1967 would promote development and build on existing achievements. Palestine was highly dependent on foreign assistance, which had constituted 31 per cent of its gross domestic

product in 2010. The international community should protect Palestinian resources and enable the Palestinian people to use them to promote prosperity. In the longer term, obstacles to the establishment of an independent State should be removed. Further diplomatic efforts would be needed for Palestine's accession to membership in a range of international organizations.

128. The State of Palestine aspired to combat poverty and unemployment through development rather than humanitarian aid. The potential for equitable income generation should be strengthened. Small-scale development projects might be the best way to create jobs since over 90 per cent of businesses in Palestine were small and medium-sized enterprises. The needs of specific sectors of society, in particular women, young people and marginalized communities in Area C, East Jerusalem and Gaza, should be addressed. Palestinians should be allowed to exercise their legitimate national, economic and social rights within the framework of a just and comprehensive peace, thereby promoting stability and strengthening a culture of justice in the region and beyond. The year 2014 was, after all, the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

129. **Mr. Percaya** (Indonesia), reviewer, said that the State of Palestine was to be commended for its achievements in a challenging environment, which included the Israeli occupation, restrictions on movement, and a lack of control over areas such as Area C in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The territory was also fragmented and the lack of access to its resources restricted the State's ability to plan and finance development. The goal of alleviating extreme poverty was difficult to achieve because of limitations on employment generation and improvements in food security. The private sector needed external support and policies needed to encourage the participation of qualified women in the workforce, improve social cohesion and enhance the redistribution of wealth through social security measures and fair taxation. In the meantime, cash and in-kind assistance remained a necessity. The education infrastructure needed greater protection from the Israeli occupation, especially in Area C. Environmental protection was curtailed, and there were shortages of clean water and waste water treatment facilities. The Palestinian Government needed to be able to lead the distribution of international assistance according to national priorities and plans, and move from

humanitarian interventions to development assistance. Palestinian institutions needed support especially at a time of national reconciliation for which institutional integration would determine the capacity of the State to defend the rule of law and provide services. Recent events had demonstrated the importance of moving the Millennium Development Goals agenda forward and highlighted the constraints on sustainable development in a context of occupation. The example of the State of Palestine could provide insights into development measures in special contexts, and the objectives that global partnerships should pursue.

130. **Ms. Luna** (Observer for Mexico) said that the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the context of Palestine matched the experience of Mexico, which also took a flexible approach. Poverty needed to be addressed as a multidimensional issue. Development could not reduce poverty sustainably without addressing its underlying causes. Like the State of Palestine, Mexico favoured a cross-cutting and universal approach to promoting the involvement of women, young people, persons with disabilities and the elderly in the post-2015 development agenda.

131. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that it was clear from the experience of Bolivia that a comprehensive approach to sustainable development yielded positive results. Governments had a clear-cut role in the achievement of holistic sustainable development and specifically in linking human activity and the environment. The presentation had not focused solely on social and economic factors and had demonstrated that there was a need to preserve and understand the environment as an inalienable part of human society. The Russian Federation supported the African Union position that the excessive foreign debt of the Sudan should be written off. Sanctions imposed by the United States should be lifted because they circumvented the United Nations Security Council, and the Sudan had not opposed the independence of South Sudan and had cooperated with the international community in countering international terrorism. The reasons for imposing the counterproductive sanctions had disappeared.

132. **Mr. Mamabolo** (South Africa) said that all the presentations showed that the situations in the countries in question were very different but all abnormal. Palestine, in particular, could not be evaluated in the same way as other countries since some of the progress made was being reversed, for

example, when water infrastructure was bombed. People would not think of vaccinating their children if they needed to defend themselves against an enemy in wartime. The international community needed to ensure that Israel did not act with impunity. Non-partisan brokers should enforce internationally agreed norms and bring about a two-State solution. It would be interesting to know how the State of Palestine was nevertheless providing services to marginalized communities, in Area C, for example.

133. **Mr. Meron** (Observer for Israel) said that the people of Israel had been under fire with hundreds of rockets being launched indiscriminately from Gaza into Israel. For its part, Israel had shown restraint and had repeatedly offered a cease-fire. Israel had the right to defend itself. The State of Palestine did not meet the criteria for statehood under international law and lacked the legal capacity to make a national voluntary presentation. He referred the Council to the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations to the General Assembly in November 2012 (A/67/PV.44). The presentation painted a distorted and inaccurate picture, and was characterized by glaring omissions, since it ignored the positive cooperation between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority in the area of development. Education was described as being a major challenge. It was surprising that the terrorist organization Hamas, which had become an integral part of the Palestinian Government, had not been mentioned. UNRWA had recently distributed textbooks on human rights in Gaza, but Hamas had rejected them on the grounds that they would brainwash Palestinian students and foster negative feelings towards armed resistance. Anything that referred to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would contaminate children's minds. A recently discovered terror tunnel into Israel had been built with cement that should have been used to build classrooms. The Palestinian blame game maintained that Israel had exacerbated a culture that was hostile to women and their rights, but in 2013, 26 women in the West Bank and Gaza had been the victims of so-called honour killings, while divorced women in Gaza who remarried lost custody of their children. Moreover, women were not allowed to sing in public. None of those facts had anything to do with Israel. The report was more honest about the Palestinian Authority's policy of devoting resources to murderers and their families. It devoted 6 per cent of its budget to paying terrorists' salaries in the form of payments to prisoners in Israeli jails.

Instead of investing in their children's future, their priority was to invest in future terrorists. Israel desired serious and meaningful negotiations towards a two-State solution and desired peaceful coexistence. That outcome would not be possible unless the Palestinians chose negotiations with Israel over unity with the Hamas terrorist organization.

134. **Ms. Rodriguez** (Observer for Cuba) said that Cuba was in favour of a dignified life for Palestinians under Israel's illegal occupation that contravened Security Council resolutions and violated the human rights of an entire people. It would be interesting to know more about the impact on the Sudan of unilateral economic sanctions, which Cuba opposed in all their forms.

135. **Mr. Çevik** (Observer for Turkey) said that it was important for the State of Palestine, which had a well-educated and highly skilled population, to sustain education services. More information on the challenges faced in the area of education, which was a prerequisite for development, would be welcome.

136. **Ms. Caro Hinojosa** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), Minister of Development Planning, said that the Bolivian constitution had a rights-based focus. Experience had revealed constraints in the areas of infrastructure and human resources in particular. The State had a role to play insofar as public services should be uniformly available and underpin productive development. The State should also provide incentives to eliminate the existing inequalities between regions. In the current transition from a consumer to a productive society, the State and the economy must be productive, generating a knowledge-based structure in which State institutions, e-Government and administrative reform would be central to the new manner of administering the State.

137. **Mr. Touray** (Gambia), Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, said that the Gambia's heavy debt burden deprived the country of resources that were being spent on debt servicing instead of investment in development programmes. Debt service absorbed 22 to 25 per cent of revenues. The Government had introduced reforms to tackle those problems. The newly established national debt management committee had a mandate to ensure sustainable debt management, and monetary and fiscal reforms included the introduction of a value-added tax with a view to broadening the tax base and improving tax compliance.

The medium-term expenditure framework was intended to ensure better medium- to long-term planning rather than annual budgeting. Concessionary financing had also been introduced. The Government, working with the International Monetary Fund, had set a target of bringing domestic borrowing down to 2.5 per cent of gross domestic product by 2014, and to zero by 2015. The fuel subsidy was a burden on the budget and would be eliminated. A comprehensive national resource mobilization strategy targeting grants, trust funds, and bilateral assistance was also in place as a means of sustainable debt management.

138. **Ms. Abdallah** (Sudan), Minister of Welfare and Social Security, said that the State of Palestine deserved international support for its development efforts. The reviewers of the Sudanese presentation had focused on the need to reduce the debt burden and lift sanctions, since the Sudan had fulfilled all of its commitments and required international assistance. Political reform and political dialogue were among the pillars of good governance and would have an impact on the economy and social development. India had rightly highlighted the importance of capacity-building and the Sudan had a plan to introduce rapid social and economic reforms, of which the cornerstone was the strengthening of productive capacity and investment in agricultural production in particular, with a view to poverty eradication and food security. The Sudan hoped that the post-2015 development agenda would be based on economic and social development as well as environmental sustainability. Trade should be fair and include transfers of technology.

139. **Ms. Erekat** (State of Palestine) Special Adviser to the Minister, Head of Aid Management and Coordination, Ministry of Planning and Administration Development, said that the State of Palestine was committed to working beyond the 2015 agenda and would integrate the Millennium Development Goals into its national development process. The national development plan had been prepared and implemented by Palestinians with little interference from the international community and a strong sense of ownership by the Government, the private sector and civil society. Various scenarios were adaptable to the political climate at any given time. The plan presupposed the resilience of the Palestinian people in the face of occupation.

140. In areas where it had little access, the Palestinian Government worked with civil society and the

international community to implement projects, including a joint project on resilience and development with the United Nations Development Programme. That project promoted short-term relief in Area C, involving the provision of temporary educational facilities, transportation to schools, rehabilitation of water resources, and power generation using solar panels. Israel did not allow the Palestinian Government to set up any permanent infrastructure and had dismantled a number of internationally funded projects such as water pipes. One aspect of the educational challenges was access to marginalized communities in Area C, where the Palestinian Government was not allowed to build schools. Nevertheless, enrolment rates were very high. Where necessary, transportation to nearby schools was provided. A UNICEF bus used to transport Bedouin students to school had recently been expropriated by Israel. Another challenge was how to align the education provided with the needs of the labour market. The Palestinian Government had invested in vocational training programmes that took into consideration the needs of the private sector.

141. Ten years previously, to the day, the International Court of Justice had deemed the wall illegal. Israel had a track record of theft of Palestinian land. Israel had bombed family homes and killed many people, yet it was not clear how any country could bomb the homes of suspects before or even after they had been brought to trial. Such acts constituted collective punishment, not self-defence. The finance ministries of the State of Palestine and Israel had cooperated on a database to enhance revenues, but the issue was that the revenues were levied on Palestinian imports. The handling fee of 3 per cent amounted to 210 million shekels per year. Cooperation with the Government of Israel was welcome, but did not constitute sustainable development cooperation.

The meeting rose at 8.45 p.m.