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**Second Committee****Summary record of the 12th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 15 October 2014, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Francis (Vice-Chair). . . . . (Bahamas)**Contents**Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (*continued*)
- (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)
- (c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*)
- (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*)
- (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)
- (f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)
- (g) Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (*continued*)
- (h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*)
- (i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*)

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*In the absence of Mr. Cardi (Italy), Ms. Francis (Bahamas), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

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

**Agenda item 19: Sustainable development** (*continued*)  
(A/69/76, A/69/257, A/69/313 and A/69/320)

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development** (*continued*) (A/68/970, A/69/79, A/69/312, A/69/315, A/69/326, A/69/379 and A/69/395)
- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** (*continued*) (A/CONF.223/10; A/69/314 and A/69/319)
- (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction** (*continued*) (A/69/364)
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind** (*continued*) (A/69/317)
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** (*continued*) (A/69/311 and A/69/317)
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** (*continued*) (A/69/317)
- (g) **Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme** (*continued*) (A/69/25)
- (h) **Harmony with Nature** (*continued*) (A/69/322)
- (i) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy** (*continued*) (A/69/323 and A/69/395)

1. **Ms. Ganjanarintr** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that under the agenda item of sustainable development, the post-2015 development agenda, the new climate agreement and the new framework for disaster risk reduction would converge in

2015. ASEAN was also working on its post-2015 vision, to be aligned with the post-2015 development agenda.

2. The report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals should serve as the main basis for integrating the sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda. ASEAN looked forward to the Secretary-General's synthesis report. The post-2015 development agenda must have people and sustainability at its core and build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) while continuing to address the overarching goals of eradicating poverty and filling in gaps where the MDGs had not been able to do so. Universality, equality, equity and accessibility must be part of the new agenda.

3. The new framework must provide leeway for individual countries' national efforts and priorities, as there was no one-size-fits-all approach. Ways and means of enhancing national capacities to implement the sustainable development goals should be explored, especially from the standpoint of good governance, accountability, rule of law and strong institutions.

4. The high-level political forum on sustainable development was an important platform for setting the agenda for sustainable development and its implementation, including thorough follow-up and review of progress, as well as addressing new and emerging challenges in the context of sustainable development. ASEAN supported the important role of the regional commissions. There should be greater coherence and synergy between the forum and the broader United Nations system in the future implementation of the new agenda. The positive outcomes of the forum in July were encouraging.

5. Strong and reliable means of implementation, such as science, technology and innovation, finance, capacity-building and trade, should be part and parcel of the post-2015 development agenda. The third International Conference on Financing for Development would be key to supporting implementation of the new development agenda. The moment was right to assess progress made in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration, address new and emerging issues and strengthen financing for development follow-up. ASEAN welcomed the recent initiation of the structured dialogues on possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote

the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies.

6. The ASEAN Community, which would be realized in 2015, would be an important step towards the advancement of inclusive, sustained and equitable economic growth in the region. The integration of ASEAN was an outstanding example of how South-South cooperation — which should remain complementary to traditional North-South cooperation, — had gained in importance. One element of such cooperation was the establishment of an open, rules-based, inclusive and market-driven economy under the ASEAN Economic Community, which would provide gains towards poverty eradication. ASEAN was also committed to the conclusion of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

7. Climate change and disaster reduction were priorities for ASEAN, as it represented one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. High-level representatives of all ASEAN member States had attended the United Nations Climate Summit 2014. Through the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative and Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change, ASEAN aimed to strengthen the region's resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change. Work was ongoing to improve prevention, preparedness, response, relief and recovery from disasters through the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response and the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Centre.

8. **Ms. Kalamula** (Malawi), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the reports of the Secretary-General on sustainable development provided a clear picture of the achievements registered since the past session of the Committee and a useful synopsis of other important processes, including the outcome of the high-level political forum on sustainable development held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and the dialogues on options for facilitating the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies. Those processes, along with the outcomes of the major conferences on sustainable development, would offer valuable contributions to the post-2015 development agenda. The synthesis report of the Secretary-General would serve as a launching pad for negotiations on the post-2015 agenda.

9. The proposals of the Open Working Group should be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda. The new agenda should build upon the foundation laid by the MDGs and complete unfinished business in a more sustainable manner. Poverty eradication, especially in developing countries, and particularly in those in Africa, remained a central goal. As reaffirmed in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), poverty eradication was a prerequisite for attaining sustainable development. The post-2015 development agenda should reaffirm the principles of Rio+20, especially regarding equity and common but differentiated responsibilities, and the inclusive process used to formulate the agenda should respond to emerging issues and implementation gaps. International partners had a key responsibility to meet their commitments and support country-led strategies.

10. The allocation of resources for implementation of the post-2015 framework should take into consideration the needs of countries in special situations, African countries, countries emerging from conflict and countries in post-conflict situations, and reflect Africa's priorities. The development agenda provided a unique opportunity for Africa to reach consensus on common challenges, priorities and aspirations.

11. The African Group underscored the need for international partners to further support Africa's development aspirations by meeting all commitments, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the 2008 political declaration on Africa's development needs and the Istanbul Programme of Action. Africa insisted on strengthened and enhanced partnership for development in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

12. Africa was already contributing to solutions to climate change at all levels. The legally binding climate change agreement to be adopted in 2015 should reinforce a multilateral, rules-based climate regime that responded to the science and fairness provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The developed countries should take the lead in a global response to climate change. Climate change

continued to pose a serious threat to developing countries in Africa and elsewhere that were without the capacity to adapt to and mitigate its effects. The developed countries must therefore fulfil their commitment to mobilize \$100 billion per year for the Green Climate Fund by 2020.

13. Africa was one of the continents most vulnerable to climate change, a situation that was further worsened by its poor state of economic development and low adaptive capacity. Desertification, drought, land degradation, soil erosion and flooding were serious challenges and threats facing sustainable development in Africa that had significant adverse impacts on economic activity, food security, human health, infrastructure, national and global security, natural resources and the environment. Much of the economy of Africa depended on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture. Poor infrastructure, heavy disease burdens, high dependence on and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and conflicts made the continent especially vulnerable to the impact of drought and desertification.

14. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, Africa's population would reach 2 billion by 2050 — twice its current size — and would continue to depend largely on agriculture to make a living. The future impacts of climate change, including increased droughts, flooding and a rise in sea levels might reduce crop yields in some parts of Africa by 15 to 20 per cent. That could have grave implications for Africa's most vulnerable States. Africa had already lost more than 60 per cent of its agricultural land to land degradation since 1950. There was a risk that desertification would force 135 million people off their land by 2020.

15. Strengthening Africa's resilience to natural disaster was a top priority for the continent, given that many African countries were not prepared to respond to unexpected disaster events. Africa needed the support of the international community to develop early warning systems to reduce and manage the impact of disasters.

16. In conclusion, she said that the African Group attached great importance to technology transfer in the promotion of industrialization and structural economic transformations. It looked forward to the conclusion of a mechanism for the transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies.

17. **Mr. Momen** (Bangladesh), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that although many issues had been captured in the reports of the Open Working Group and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, many other issues must be further strengthened in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

18. Experience with the MDGs had shown that efforts to reduce poverty and improve social conditions could not be sustained over the long term without rapid and inclusive economic growth. Building productive capacity was essential to achieve lasting social progress. That would help to address underemployment, increase productivity and capital formation to set the stage for structural transformation, and enable countries to mobilize more resources domestically, reducing their reliance on external sources of financing. It would also serve as an important cushion against external shocks. The focus of development efforts in the post-2015 period should therefore be on building productive capacity, funding social services and providing a sustainable engine of growth.

19. Means of implementation required greater attention. While many sources were available to meet the funding gap for sustainable development, there should be specific provisions to ensure easy and affordable access to them. A robust mutual accountability framework should constitute an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda.

20. Disasters had begun occurring frequently, with the resultant economic losses exceeding \$100 billion. Evidence showed that climate change was affecting many natural and human systems. The least developed countries were bearing the brunt of those disasters, as lack of adaptation capacity made them more exposed to the shocks. Reduction of disaster risk contributed to sustainable development. The post-2015 development agenda should focus attention on disaster risk and the need to strengthen resilience. The post-2015 framework must build on the successes of the Hyogo Framework for Action and contain a mechanism to address new and emerging challenges.

21. There was growing evidence to indicate that climate impacts were disproportionately affecting the least developed countries. During the period from 1980 to 2013, 51 per cent of the deaths caused by climate-related disasters had occurred in the least developed

countries, nearly five times the global average. The figure had recently risen to 67 per cent. Without additional efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, emissions growth would persist. It was vitally important to hold down the increase in global average temperature. The commitment of developed countries under the Climate Convention to mobilize jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund was vitally important to address the adaptation needs of least developed countries. The interconnectedness of risks posed by climate change and disasters justified the need for a comprehensive approach to building development that was climate- and disaster-resilient.

22. Desertification, drought and land degradation had continued to hamper the sustainable development efforts of least developed countries. A billion hectares were affected by desertification in least developed countries in Africa alone, leading to estimated losses of some \$9 billion annually, not to mention that many least developed countries were heavily dependent on a fragile natural resource base for their growth. In 2010, 25 per cent of the population of least developed countries had been living on severely and very severely degraded land. With its biotic functions largely destroyed, such land was non-reclaimable either at the farm level or at all. Land degradation and desertification also carried a high human cost, placing the livelihoods of some 900 million people in least developed countries at risk. Millions had already been uprooted from their traditional lands as a result of desertification, and desertification had also played a role in sparking several armed conflicts currently under way. It contributed in many cases to political instability, starvation and social breakdown. The post-2015 development agenda must include a target on achieving a land-degradation-neutral world. The Group of Least Developed Countries hoped that its partners would support such a move.

23. Access to affordable energy had been a fundamental challenge to most of the least developed countries. More than half of the 1.3 billion people who did not have access to electricity lived in the least developed countries. In 2009, 77 per cent of people in least developed countries had lacked access to electricity, and 91 per cent had lacked access to modern fuels, making it impossible to carry out structural economic transformations. Infrastructure related to supply, transmission, distribution and

technology to supply modern and sustainable energy services for all would need to be significantly upgraded.

24. **Ms. Deije** (Nauru), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that the implementation of Agenda 21 was important for the Alliance, given the recognition by Agenda 21 that small island developing States, with their particular and unique vulnerabilities, were a special case for sustainable development. It set the course for follow-up to the outcomes of the United Nations conferences on sustainable development and for more coherent follow-up in the post-2015 development agenda through the high-level political forum.

25. The high-level political forum should be a dedicated platform for the implementation of sustainable development commitments, with adequate time devoted to reviewing implementation of the priorities of small island developing States. More coordinated United Nations support to small island developing States should be ensured by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum. The international community was urged to implement the commitments set out in the Samoa Pathway and retain its focus on key issues for the small island developing States, including in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. International strategies for disaster risk reduction, combating desertification, biological diversity and renewable energy were of interest to the small island developing States.

26. Loss of territory caused by climate change was a grave threat to the survival of small island developing States. The outcome of the process under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action should be a protocol under the Climate Convention that would be legally binding and applicable to all parties, to be adopted no later than 2015. It should strengthen the multilateral, rules-based, legally binding regime, be based on science and the principles of the Climate Convention, and ensure the survival of all small island developing States.

27. **Mr. Thiebault** (Observer for the European Union) said that efforts should be made to ensure that no discussions in the Second Committee duplicated or pre-empted the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. Many of the resolutions on sustainable development should therefore focus not on

substance, but rather on relevant operational issues having to do with implementation of and follow-up to Rio+20 and modalities that needed guidance from the General Assembly. That would allow the Committee to concentrate its limited time and resources on preparations for the forthcoming negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, including sustainable development financing.

28. In particular, there should be no substantive discussions on disaster risk reduction, renewable energies, biodiversity, desertification or land degradation, all of which were discussed in dedicated intergovernmental forums or processes and would be addressed as part of the post-2015 development agenda. The relevant resolutions should discuss operational aspects and updates.

29. However, the resolution on small island developing States should reflect discussion of the proper follow-up to and implementation of the recently agreed Samoa Pathway, and the resolution on the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) should address the remaining modalities for the Conference and its preparatory process in a highly inclusive, efficient and cost-effective manner. Sustainable urban development would be considered as an integral part of the discussions on poverty eradication and sustainable development rather than under a separate agenda item.

30. As a sub-item under the agenda item on sustainable development, climate change was not sufficiently highlighted. The Climate Summit, attended by an unprecedented number of world leaders, had shown that climate change was one of the most important challenges of the day and provided a unique political momentum. The international community should build upon that momentum, en route to the adoption in Paris in 2015 of a global, comprehensive and legally binding agreement applicable to all parties. Discussions in the Second Committee should contribute to that objective but avoid duplicating or pre-empting the Climate Convention process.

31. **Mr. Ngculu** (South Africa) said that the post-2015 development agenda should build upon existing development programmes and agendas, including the MDGs, and be closely aligned with and complement national and regional priorities, including NEPAD. In that context, it would be important to acknowledge that countries had different starting

points, national priorities and regional circumstances, and to achieve integration of all three dimensions of sustainable development without emphasizing one over the other.

32. South Africa was pleased that the General Assembly had decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals would be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs would also be considered in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Those other inputs would include the progress made in the structured dialogues on possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies, the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (A/69/315) and *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014*.

33. However, issues that had been difficult to resolve during the Open Working Group process must not be reopened for unnecessary debate. That could potentially divert attention from the main focus of uplifting people living in deprivation caused by poverty and underdevelopment. South Africa considered development to be a continuum, with existing commitments and lessons learned from implementation the MDGs serving as the foundation. Efforts to realize the MDGs should therefore continue.

34. Climate change threatened development gains. At the heart of the debate was the need to balance environmental integrity and socioeconomic development. Efforts must be stepped up to reach a collective response that achieved a balance between climate stability and development needs while ensuring the fair participation of all countries. An urgent response was needed to the demands of science so starkly described in the most recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, enabling a transition to a low-emission, climate-resilient pathway based on what each was able to contribute. Adaptation and mitigation must receive equal priority with balanced and strengthened means of implementation to support climate action.

35. The Green Climate Fund had the potential to serve as a paradigm-shifting mechanism to support such pathways in developing countries. A financial

mechanism that could mobilize, catalyse and leverage resources in the range of US\$700 billion to \$1 trillion per annum were needed to realize that transition.

36. Ratification of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity was a positive step. States parties which had not yet done so were encouraged to ratify the Protocol, as ratifications represented a major step towards achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 16, which required that the Nagoya Protocol be in force and operational, consistent with national legislation. It was encouraging that the report of the Open Working Group contained a goal that sought to address biodiversity loss by the year 2020.

37. **Mr. de Aguiar Patriota** (Brazil) said that while the high-level political forum was operating successfully, its *raison d'être* would be completely fulfilled only once the development agenda was adopted. The General Assembly should ensure an effective role for the forum when devising the post-2015 development agenda. The forum would review implementation of the agenda starting in 2016.

38. He commended the regional commissions that had organized regional forums on sustainable development in preparation for the high-level political forum. All regional commissions were encouraged to convene consultations in preparation for future meetings of the high-level political forum.

39. The forum was mandated to consider the scope and methodology of a global sustainable development report, but it had only been possible to circulate the prototype in July, when the forum had already begun its deliberations. Member States should further consider measures to strengthen the science-policy interface based on the Prototype Global Sustainable Development Report produced by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and taking into account relevant decisions related to the post-2015 development agenda. The General Assembly should review the existing provisional arrangement, which designated the Economic and Social Council as the *ad interim* body to receive reports from the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns.

40. Brazil was pleased to have taken part in the first United Nations Environment Assembly. As early as 2007, Brazil had expressed support for strengthening

the United Nations Environment Programme through the establishment of universal membership in its Governing Council. Brazil looked forward to the outcome of the ongoing twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Republic of Korea. The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which had entered into force just a few days earlier, would provide greater legal certainty to the providers and users of genetic resources. However, access to and benefit-sharing of genetic resources must be made effective. The relationship between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (the TRIPS Agreement) was crucial in that regard, and was also an integral part of the Doha Round mandate. A group of countries that included Brazil had presented a proposal to amend article 29 of the TRIPS Agreement to establish the obligation to disclose the origin of genetic resources and/or associated traditional knowledge when applying for patents.

41. At the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, Brazil had announced a voluntary commitment to reduce projected emissions by 36 to 39 per cent in the coming decade, a commitment subsequently enshrined in national legislation. Deforestation in Brazil had been reduced by 79 per cent over the past 10 years. Brazil also reaffirmed its commitment to strengthen the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and implement the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance its implementation (2008-2018).

42. **Ms. Ben-Dor** (Israel) said that her country attached great importance to the engagement of major groups and other stakeholders as partners and participants in the high-level political forum and also welcomed the work of the Open Working Group, which was a strong and successful model for an open and inclusive process with multiple channels of input for stakeholders.

43. Israel was proud to submit a resolution on entrepreneurship for development under the sustainable development agenda item. The resolution highlighted the power of entrepreneurship to create jobs and generate economic growth, improve social conditions and help confront environmental challenges. The current

version of the resolution had been updated to focus more closely on the importance of identifying indicators and enhancing data collection to ensure the successful implementation, not only of entrepreneurship policies, but also of the broader post-2015 development agenda.

44. The issue of desertification was a high priority for Israel. Nearly 47 per cent of the earth's land surface was covered by drylands, and that percentage was growing, exacerbated by unsustainable farming practices, deforestation and the effects of climate change. Desertification had become a global issue, and, if not remedied soon, it would continue to spread, having a severe impact on the world's ability to feed its population.

45. Israel was 60 per cent desert, and had always had to contend with the challenges of desertification and soil degradation. In recent years, Israel had hosted the International Conference on Drylands, Deserts and Desertification. It attached great importance to cooperating with partners to tackle the issue in a multifaceted manner.

46. Sustainability began with a foundation of gender and women's empowerment. It was necessary to create an alternate reality, in which women and girls no longer faced profound inequalities in every area of life, but rather participated on an equal footing with men and boys. Her delegation advocated a people-centred approach to sustainable development. Sustainable development deliberations could benefit from meaningful participation by civil society, which had valuable experience in setting policy priorities, monitoring implementation and demanding redress when abuses occurred.

47. **Ms. Stener** (Norway) said that the sustainable development goals must build on the success of the MDGs. They must be realistic and ambitious, and, like the MDGs, they should be few in number, concrete and measurable. However, the scope of the future development agenda must go beyond that of the MDGs, integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

48. A response to global warming was essential to achieving sustainability. The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was alarming. It demonstrated the urgent need for stronger efforts to speed up the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future even before the adoption of a new climate agreement. Such efforts would entail an

unprecedented level of interplay between Governments, business, civil society and other key stakeholders, including the private sector. Public resources should be used to facilitate and leverage private sector investments.

49. Delivering on the pledge of mobilizing US\$100 billion dollars per year by 2020 was crucial to build trust and achieve an agreement in Paris in 2015. Norway would continue to be a large contributor to climate finance in developing countries and was committed to making a substantial contribution to the Green Climate Fund.

50. The post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction should be a simple and operational framework that could guide Member States in implementing a hands-on approach to disaster risk reduction. The new framework should be as closely aligned as possible with the outcome of the sustainable development goals, climate change processes and the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Sendai, Japan in 2015. Its focus should be to reduce existing risks and avoid creating new ones. The unique vulnerabilities of small island developing States, especially risks related to climate change and economic development, should be recognized.

51. Solving energy poverty and combating climate change were key priorities of her Government. Norway would continue to be a key supporter of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative and welcomed the inclusion of a separate goal on energy in the Open Working Group's proposal.

52. **Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that political will on the part of the developed countries was needed to elaborate and implement poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies. Some achievements of the Rio+20 process included support for strengthening the institutional sustainable development accountability-based framework and increasing the political visibility and capacities of such bodies as the high-level political forum. For Venezuela, the primacy of the intergovernmental component in determining international development policy and the post-2015 development agenda were essential outcomes. Venezuela was of the view that the report of the Open Working Group should be maintained in full and not renegotiated.



53. The post-2015 development agenda should provide for appropriate and adequate implementation mechanisms, including, for example, official development assistance, cooperation of all kinds, special and differential treatment for developing countries and favourable conditions for access to technologies, all in order to mitigate the adverse effects of an unequal and unjust international economic structure.

54. In keeping with that concern, Venezuela was involved in the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, whose report was a significant input for the International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in July 2015. That Conference would require a thorough preparation process in order to achieve an outcome of sufficiently broad reach. As part of the negotiation process, Venezuela called for the establishment of a mechanism to promote development and transfer of clean, green technologies.

55. Climate change, biodiversity loss and desertification were continuing at an accelerated rate, representing a grave danger for humanity, especially for poorer people. Climate change was an obstacle to sustainable development, poverty eradication and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It was therefore necessary to ensure the broadest possible cooperation and an appropriate international response, taking into account the historical responsibilities of the developed countries and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities, as well as economic and social conditions.

56. To that end and with a view to the upcoming twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Convention to be held in Lima, Peru, Venezuela was organizing the first Social PreCOP on Climate Change, set for early November in Caracas. The conference would provide a space for dialogue and joint action by Governments and civil society organizations from around the world to forge a necessary alliance to address the threat of climate change. The preparatory meeting for the Caracas conference had taken place in July, with very positive results.

57. The development model to which Venezuela adhered maintained the human being at the centre of action, in a position of solidarity, justice, social inclusion and equality, and supported the promotion

and protection of human rights, values that were inherent to peace and development. How sustainable development for every country would be achieved must now be the focus of attention.

58. **Mr. Estreme** (Argentina) said that poverty eradication was an urgent matter and should guide discussions and development of the post-2015 development agenda, with the various levels of development of each country, their priorities and capacities and respect for the sovereignty of State over their resources kept constantly in mind. The balanced proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals should be the centrepiece of negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

59. Climate change was one of the most relevant global challenges facing humanity. Its consequences not only affected the growth perspectives of developing countries but, in many cases, threatened their very existence and the survival of their inhabitants. Climate change could not be considered separately from development priorities and poverty eradication.

60. The Lima Climate Change Conference should produce an initial draft of the elements of a new agreement. Climate change negotiations should take place within the context of the Convention; the process should be transparent, inclusive and consensus-based. The historical responsibilities of the developed countries and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities should be firmly kept in mind. Prompt, significant funding of the Green Climate Fund would help to create a climate of trust in the negotiations on the future agreement. Moreover, the means of implementation for global management of risk and vulnerability in the context of natural disasters, including strengthened capacities for developing countries, should be ensured.

61. During the current session, Second Committee discussions should support efforts of all States to promote the use of new, renewable sources of energy. Argentina was working to diversify its energy grid, increase energy efficiency and promote rational energy use. The Government had proposed to increase the share of renewable sources in energy production and was promoting the production and sustainable use of biofuels. There were national energy efficiency standards and incentives had been established to reduce household electric and natural gas consumption.

62. It was no secret that the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, an outgrowth of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, had at times lacked appropriate funding and support. Argentina was strongly committed to the goals of the Convention, owing to the fact that 75 per cent of its territory was arid or semi-arid. Argentina was very aware of what arid ecosystems had to offer, as those lands, which were highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, were the source of 50 per cent of the country's wealth. It urged the international community to scale up its efforts to combat desertification. With regard to biodiversity, he stressed the importance of ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits derived from the use of genetic resources.

63. Sustainable development must be strengthened through greater international cooperation, while respecting the sovereign rights of States over their natural resources. Appropriate and predictable means of implementation were a requisite condition for progress in meeting goals. In that context, he called for the speedy establishment of a mechanism to facilitate technology transfer. Technology was a powerful tool for empowering the people of the world in all aspects of human activity.

64. **Ms. Camacho** (Mexico) said that the report of the Open Working Group was a major step towards integration of the three dimensions of development. While the report of the Secretary-General provided interesting recommendations, it lacked a comprehensive institutional vision. It was important to avoid creating bureaucratic structures for the new development agenda that duplicated each other's efforts and rendered the discussions of the Organization irrelevant.

65. It was time to discontinue the compartmentalized approach to follow-up to the major conferences. Change should occur at all levels, including in policy discussion, through an integrated and transformative agenda; in institutional arrangements, creating synergies between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council through the high-level political forum; and in the support for discussions through a secretariat designed to meet the needs of the new agenda. The maximum benefit should be derived from the existing system, and by adapting the Second Committee's programme of work to the structure of the new development agenda.

66. The United Nations Environment Programme must focus its efforts on effective implementation of the decisions reached in the United Nations Environment Assembly, with broader application of its work at the regional and national levels. The guidance of the United Nations Environment Assembly must be a fundamental part of the comprehensive follow-up she had mentioned earlier.

67. The new disaster risk reduction framework must retain the pragmatic approach that characterized the Hyogo Framework for Action. A new framework for disaster risk prevention and reduction was a major undertaking. Scientific evidence on the incidence and severity of climate events made it necessary to ensure that the outcome of the 2015 World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai was equal to the challenges to be addressed.

68. Mexico supported multilateral negotiations to promote sustainable, resilient and low-emission development in the short term, with a view to reaching a binding agreement in 2015. It also supported adaptation to climate change that involved technology transfer, and was working to strengthen the linkages between the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the post-2015 development agenda.

69. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia) said that his country fully subscribed to the notion that the new development agenda must complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals and also address new challenges. It must address the underlying causes of poverty, and also address environmental degradation and unsustainable consumption and production patterns. It must be universal, involve all the relevant actors in its implementation, and have a special focus on least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

70. The forthcoming synthesis report of the Secretary-General would serve as a basis for the intergovernmental negotiations that were getting under way during the current session of the General Assembly. It would provide a consolidated analysis of the inputs of the many processes contributing to the post-2015 development agenda. Malaysia supported the call by the Group of 77 and China to make poverty eradication the overarching objective of the post-2015 development agenda. There were 1.2 billion people, 22 per cent of the world's population, still living below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day. Despite the progress

achieved, the number of people living in poverty in sub-Saharan Africa had continued to grow.

71. Malaysia was on track to become a developed nation by 2020. His Government had drafted a framework consisting of four pillars designed to propel Malaysia into the ranks of the advanced nations, with an emphasis on sustainability, inclusivity and high income.

72. Malaysia upheld the principles of the Climate Convention and the Kyoto Protocol and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Developed countries had a historical responsibility to lead efforts to address climate change. There should be continued calls for Annex I parties to make deeper emission cuts to keep the average global temperature from increasing by more than 2°C over pre-industrial levels.

73. The developed countries should fulfil their commitments on technology transfer and capacity-building and further enhance action on adaption and transparent and accessible climate finance to help the developing small States. At the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in 2009, Malaysia had pledged to voluntarily reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 40 per cent by 2020 as compared to 2005 levels, conditional on receiving financing and technology from developed countries. Although the developed countries had not met the conditions, Malaysia had already reduced emissions by more than 33 per cent and was well on track to reach its target by 2020.

74. As one of the countries with the greatest biodiversity in the world, Malaysia had been actively involved in the negotiations on the Convention on Biological Diversity and had introduced a national policy on the matter in 1998. Malaysia supported the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, which would improve cooperation and collaboration among parties in ensuring the conservation and protection of biodiversity. Malaysia was currently bringing national policy into line with the recently adopted strategic plan.

75. The overall poverty rate in Malaysia had dropped to 1.7 per cent in 2012, compared to 3.8 per cent in 2009; the rate was lower in both urban and rural areas. Annual household income had increased by 7.2 per cent from 2009 to 2012. The federal rural development scheme had improved quality of life and brought social and economic benefits to 177,000 rural families in Malaysia.

76. **Ms. Onishi** (Japan) said that climate change was one of the greatest threats facing mankind. Without measures to address the issue, development would never be sustainable, nor would poverty eradication be possible. At the Climate Summit, the Prime Minister of Japan had introduced his country's recent actions to tackle climate change. They included a promise of some \$16 billion to developing countries over three years, which had, in fact, been delivered over the course of a year and a half; human resources development in the field of climate change that would assist 14,000 people over the coming three years; and an adaptation initiative for developing countries.

77. Japan would continue to promote the sorts of technological innovations that had made its energy efficiency the highest in the world. It had hosted the first Innovation for Cool Earth Forum in Tokyo to assemble the collective wisdom and expertise of the private, public and academic sectors. In light of the decision taken at the Warsaw Climate Change Conference, Japan planned to submit its intended nationally determined contribution as early as possible and was considering the possibility of making an appropriate contribution to the Green Climate Fund when the necessary environment was in place.

78. A disaster could wipe out the hard-won achievements of years of development in an instant. Japan had experienced numerous massive disasters and, wishing to share its experiences and disaster risk reduction technologies, would host the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 in the city of Sendai. The outcome was expected to serve as a significant contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

79. Japan, a longstanding partner of the small island developing States, renewed its commitment to support them. It also hoped that a road map toward achieving the Aichi targets could be drawn up at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

80. In November, Japan would host the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in the cities of Nagoya and Okayama. The global action programme launched at that conference would serve as an important platform to promote the role of education in achieving sustainable development.

81. **Mr. Narang** (India) said that over 1.6 billion people were still denied a life of dignity, and food and energy security remained a distant dream for millions on many continents. At the same time, reckless consumption and the fossil fuel-intensive model of development had pushed the planet to the edge. Sustainable development was a necessity, not an option. Sustainability was not merely about minimizing the environmental impacts of development. It was also about ensuring that development itself could be sustained in all its dimensions, especially for developing countries.

82. The current moment was a transformational one for multilateralism. The international community had deliberated on sustainable development for the better part of the past two decades, at least. The sustainable development goals represented the first time that the global discourse of ideas on the topic was being translated into actionable commitments in the form of goals and targets. The objective during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly should be to focus on the best way of integrating the sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda and not to reopen or renegotiate the carefully balanced outcome of the Open Working Group.

83. At the heart of sustainable development was the obligation to end poverty and eradicate want. A global commons approach demanded that developed countries take the lead in moving their economies towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production, which would create the demand and necessary conditions for environmentally friendly technologies to become mainstream and allow the necessary ecological space for developing countries to grow and provide basic human development to their people. The eradication of poverty and hunger through rapid, inclusive growth was the overriding objective for developing countries. The burden of global sustainability could not be placed on the poor.

84. The lack of universal access to energy was a critical impediment in developing countries, exacting a high social and health-related cost. There was a clear link between the per capita energy consumption of a country and its ranking in the human development index; rankings of 0.9 or more were correlated with a per capita energy consumption of at the equivalent of least 2.5 tons of oil equivalent per year.

85. The current per capita energy consumption in India was about 0.6 tons of oil equivalent per year, a mere one third of the global average. The average per capita energy consumption in countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was 4.28 tons, and in North America it was close to 7 tons. For the human development index of India to increase from its current value of 0.5 to 0.9, energy consumption would have to increase by a factor of four. The key factor was therefore rapid enhancement of access to affordable energy, implementation of strategies for the cost-effective use of energy and a constant increase in the proportion of sustainable and renewable energy. Independent studies had shown that as the result of several government initiatives, energy equivalent to 791 million tons of oil equivalent or 98 million tons of coal had been saved between the year 2000 and 2011.

86. **Mr. Kohona** (Sri Lanka) said that climate change called for drastic, immediate remedial measures. Scientists overwhelmingly agreed that human actions had been the catalyst for climate change. The Climate Summit had been a critical milestone, focusing attention on the issue. The impact of climate change was particularly severe in developing countries. At the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Convention in Lima, a road map for the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties in Paris must be prepared so as to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement based on equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries must deliver on their commitments to the developing world through financial support, technology transfer and capacity-building. Developing country contributions to the solution would depend substantially on assistance from the developed countries.

87. According to Gautama the Buddha, to whose philosophy the people of Sri Lanka subscribed, rulers were only temporary custodians entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the earth and its fauna and flora for unborn generations. In accordance with that principle, Sri Lankans believed that the climate must also be protected for future generations. His Government's policy agenda had included such strategies as increasing the natural forest cover from 23 per cent of the land mass to 35 per cent; expanding the share of renewable energy as part of the national grid; rehabilitating and restoring estuaries, lagoons,

mangroves, salt marshes, sand dunes and beaches to preserve the coastline; implementing a green transport system and a fuel quality road map; and multi-resource watershed management to improve water availability and retention.

88. National policy sought to promote sustainable consumption and production, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, take adaptive measures to avoid or minimize the adverse impacts of climate change on people, their livelihoods and ecosystems and develop the country's capacity to address the impacts of climate change effectively. Raising awareness through school programmes was a major part of that initiative.

89. Sri Lanka was a negligible contributor to global warming. However, the country was highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It had been seriously affected by erratic rainfall, resulting in long droughts that had had an adverse impact on the country's irrigation system. Reservoirs had dried up, leading to crop failures, which posed a grave threat to food security and had necessitated increased expenditures on food imports.

90. Sri Lanka had identified adaptation as the most suitable response to climate change and had developed a comprehensive national climate change adaptation strategy to ensure that economic development could continue without disruption and investments in poverty reduction, food and water security and public health would not be affected.

91. **Ms. Hua Ye** (People's Republic of China) said that developing countries were still faced with insufficient funding, technology and capacity-building for sustainable development. The international community should be guided by the spirit of cooperation and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in its efforts to translate into concrete actions the common understanding reached at Rio+20.

92. The eradication of poverty was the central goal of sustainable development, taking into consideration national circumstances and stages of development. The international community should keep poverty eradication and development as the core, maintaining the spirit of mutual benefit and cooperation to achieve the post-2015 development goals.

93. The high-level political forum had been fulfilling its mandate to strengthen sustainable development

mechanisms and partnerships and enhance the leading role of the United Nations by providing guidance for the global sustainable goals process and monitoring the implementation of commitments. The forum should further promote international cooperation by enhancing the Organization's role of policy guidance and coordination in the sustainable development goals process and promoting synergies between the relevant international organizations and multilateral mechanisms. The forum should take into consideration the special concerns of developing countries and maintain North-South cooperation as the main channel of funding. The developed countries must fulfil in a timely manner their commitment of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for official development assistance (ODA).

94. China firmly supported the plan to reach a new climate agreement at the Paris Climate Change Conference in 2015, based on common but differentiated responsibilities, equity and individual capacity. All countries were urged to demonstrate political will and balance actions and goals. Developed countries should make greater efforts to reduce emissions and implement their commitments to provide financing, technology and capacity-building.

95. In its efforts to achieve economic and social development, her Government had adopted sustainable development as its basic national policy. It also focused on environmental protection, promoting energy efficiency, emissions reduction and low-carbon development. It regarded those principles as requisites for its national development as well as international obligations.

96. China, a developing country, had consistently met the challenges of climate change in a proactive way. China had announced at the Climate Summit that it would double its annual contribution to South-South climate change assistance. The country had donated \$6 million and would make the data public for international use.

97. Her Government attached great importance to disaster prevention and reduction and played an active role in international cooperation for disaster reduction and relief. China had always devoted particular attention to protection of biodiversity and the fight against desertification. The country was implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification, and would join efforts to implement the Samoa Pathway.

98. China had provided assistance to the least developed countries, African countries and other developing countries, within its capacities.

99. **Mr. Hassen** (Ethiopia) said that his delegation welcomed the decision adopted by the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly to make the outcome of the Open Working Group the main basis for integrating the sustainable development goals into the future development agenda.

100. His delegation took note of the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and was convinced that the establishment of the high-level political forum was one of the critical outcomes of Rio+20. The forum would best serve its purpose if designed as a platform to review and follow up on the implementation of the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda and particularly the commitments made, including those related to means of implementation.

101. Efforts to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 should begin in those countries where the challenges were most pronounced. Deliberations on the development agenda should therefore ensure that the needs of least developed countries and the countries of Africa were met.

102. Ethiopia welcomed the emerging consensus that the new agenda must finish the unfinished business of the MDGs and simultaneously address new challenges. It must build on the foundations laid and experience gained in the work towards achieving the Goals, focus on all three dimensions of sustainable development, address the underlying causes of poverty and address environmental degradation and unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

103. The effects of climate change threatened to wipe out the hard-won development gains of many developing countries. Implementing the three dimensions of sustainable development hinged on a commitment to reach a legally binding climate agreement in 2015. Immediate and substantial capitalization of the Green Fund was also crucial.

104. In Ethiopia, various environmental policies and laws had been put in place to ensure that natural resource bases were not affected by efforts at economic development. The Government had begun implementing a climate strategy with the objective of

reducing projected carbon dioxide emissions of 400 million metric tons by 65 per cent over the next 15 years. That would reduce per capita emissions from 1.8 tons per year in 2010 to 1.1 tons by 2030. The strategy was well in line with the overall national development plan.

105. Ethiopia had scaled up its efforts to conserve biological diversity and combat land degradation. Physical infrastructure was being built locally to minimize soil erosion. Tree seedlings were produced in nurseries. The expanded vegetation cover and improved soil structure were greatly contributing to the increase in carbon sequestration, which helped in climate change adaptation and mitigation. The report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification made reference to Ethiopia's successful, large-scale restoration and the remarkable transformation taking place in degraded highland areas through sustainable land management interventions ([A/69/311](#), para. 51).

106. A revised disaster risk management policy had been endorsed by the People's House of Representatives the previous year. A strategic programme and investment framework now being finalized would serve as a tool for implementing the policy. The support of development partners was critical to achieving overall development objectives.

107. **Mr. Zdorov** (Belarus) said that while progress on the sustainable development goals was generally positive, issues related to the provision of funding were not receiving sufficient attention. In order to avoid adopting an agenda that lacked real resources for implementation, funding must become a priority. His delegation hoped that the high-level political forum would provide additional opportunities for Member States to participate fully in the discussion on strategic development issues.

108. All States recognized the need to adopt a new climate agreement at the Paris Climate Change Conference in 2015. The foundation for negotiations must be created without delay, before the upcoming Lima Climate Change Conference. The new mechanism must contain serious incentives to lower harmful emissions and invest in climate technologies and energy, transport and industrial infrastructure, with access to those incentives open to all. Linking climate arrangements with sustainable development commitments could focus increased attention on issues

of energy and universal access to environmentally friendly technologies.

109. The decisions on energy taken at Rio+20 must be implemented rapidly. That included, first and foremost, transfer of environmentally safe energy technologies to all interested States, including middle-income countries. Belarus supported further technological cooperation under the aegis of the United Nations with a view to involving the largest possible number of countries in scientific research on transitioning to a green economy by means of technology.

110. Belarus consistently supported comprehensive intellectual algorithms for specific sectors, including the energy sector. One such example would be the elaboration of an integrated energy agenda for the United Nations, based on the requirement to take into account the interests of all Member States. The Organization should play a greater role in efforts to increase the energy efficiency of national economies, including middle-income countries. The report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy encouraged such measures and cited reduced investments as one reason for low renewable energy use worldwide. The United Nations Development Programme should include the promotion of renewable energy sources in its work in programme countries. That would, of course, require resources and mechanisms, including access to energy technologies for interested countries. That should be considered as part of the new sustainable development agenda.

111. **Mr. Ali** (Sudan) said that his country renewed its commitment to cooperate at all levels to face the challenges of climate change within the context of the Climate Convention and all other agreements emanating from it. The Sudan had been among the first countries to implement the commitments made at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Convention, held in Durban in 2011. Implementation of its national programme for adaptation, however, was hampered by lack of financing.

112. The countries that were historically responsible must meet their commitments and adopt the necessary policies to reduce emissions. They must also provide technical support for emissions reduction, in accordance with article 4.7 of the Climate Convention.

113. The poor in developing countries would be the first victims of climate change and the food insecurity

it caused. Water shortages brought on by climate change had caused conflict between farmers and shepherds in the Sudan. Policies and programmes to address climate change must therefore complement sustainable food security programmes. All countries must establish specialized bodies to manage climate change risks. International and national support for mitigation and adaptation strategies and pre-emptive measures to protect those living on islands would also be vital.

114. Desertification threatened development and led to scarcity of water, deforestation and other phenomena related to the decrease in rainfall. Global warming had affected the movement of winds, diminishing the quantity of arable land and affecting agricultural productivity. The Sudan was working with other countries through the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to reverse that destructive phenomenon.

115. **Mr. Grant** (Canada) said that an integrated and holistic approach with accountability and transparency at its core should guide discussions on attaining sustainable development. Fully recognizing the links between the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development, Canada believed that for development to be sustainable, no single pillar could be considered in isolation. If taken together, the three pillars had the power to facilitate sustained economic growth, increased social development and environmental sustainability in a manner that was appropriate to the national circumstances of each State.

116. To develop sustainably meant improving the standard of living of the poor and the most vulnerable by addressing the protection of human health and the health of the natural environment, the efficient use and responsible development of natural resources and the promotion of economic progress. Canada was also of the view that momentum on the unfinished business of the MDGs should be maintained, especially those that pertained to maternal, newborn and child health. Empowerment of women and girls could play a key role in helping to ensure that maternal, newborn and child health were central to the sustainable development agenda and in combating harmful practices and human rights violations such as child, early and forced marriage. The empowerment of women and girls was a prerequisite for poverty reduction, peace and sustainable development, and any discussion of sustainable development must be

grounded in the principle of equality between men and women and girls and boys. Job creation and sustainable economic growth led by the private sector were the key driving forces behind poverty reduction and must also be a central theme of the deliberations on sustainable development.

117. **Mr. Al-Thani** (Qatar) said that the Constitution of Qatar reconfirmed the preservation of the environment. In recent years, his country had formulated many strategies aimed at including the principles of sustainable development in national policy. Environmental preservation was a cornerstone of national plans to maintain the balance between economic growth, social development and environmental management. Qatar was also renewing its commitment to fulfil Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

118. Qatar and the Dominican Republic had advanced an initiative to use civil and military defence for effective disaster response. The initiative involved developing training, improving operative capabilities and activating a network of experts. The plan stressed the importance of exchanging lessons learned and training military forces to respond to catastrophes.

119. Qatar wished to support developing countries that had difficulties realizing national development strategies as a result of soil degradation and drought. At home, his Government hoped to implement measures to address unemployment and an agricultural sector that was insufficiently developed. Qatar had signed many climate and biological diversity treaties and had made efforts to reduce emissions. Certain regions of Qatar had gone beyond international requirements for protecting the environment.

120. Doha had hosted the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, which had confirmed the importance of new and renewable energy sources in the post-2015 agenda. Sustainable energy would eliminate poverty, improve and save lives, reduce environmental risks and help to meet human needs.

121. **Mr. Jawhara** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that serious commitments had been assumed to achieve comprehensive sustainable development for everyone in the world. The importance of fulfilling previous obligations must be stressed. The high-level political forum would have an important role to play in directing international sustainable development.

122. While the Syrian Arab Republic, its Government and people had made considerable achievements in the field of sustainable development, ISIS and other terrorist groups were currently targeting Syrian economic structures and development plans, as well as the rights, safety, environment and national resources of Syrians. Oil was being extracted and refined in the country's eastern provinces using primitive, unsafe methods. The oil was then sold through Turkish middlemen to countries of the European Union. Processing methods not in compliance with safety protocols and environmental norms led to toxic emissions that placed Syrian people and the soil and air at risk.

123. The Syrian Arab Republic was awaiting support from the so-called international community to confront terrorism. It was difficult to trust Governments that turned a blind eye to terrorism that deliberately targeted the Syrian Arab Republic and now Iraq. And it was difficult to trust Governments professing concern for the rights of Syrians when those same Governments were imposing unilateral coercive economic sanctions upon the most vital sectors of the economy, such as energy, health, trade and banking, in ways that severely affected the rights of Syrians to food, work, education, health and energy. Some donor countries set conditions or raised impediments to the financing of United Nations programmes, such as the World Food Programme, which had recently reduced its programmes in the Syrian Arab Republic owing to inadequate financing. The world needed a serious political commitment to implement the legal, moral and humanitarian imperatives set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, resolutions and relevant international law.

124. The report of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores ([A/69/313](#)) reaffirmed that Israel had disregarded General Assembly resolutions calling upon it to assume responsibility and provide compensation for the oil slick it had caused in the summer of 2006 during its barbaric aggression against Lebanon. The Syrian Arab Republic had attempted, without any international assistance, to clean up its polluted coastline. The costs of repairing the damage caused to the Syrian Arab Republic as a result of the spread of the oil slick would be hard to estimate. The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirmed its support for General Assembly resolution 68/206, which emphasized the responsibility of Israel for the act of



aggression leading to the oil slick and the need to pay damages for the resultant economic losses suffered by Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

125. The Second Committee must bring pressure to bear on Israel to implement its obligations and the relevant resolutions, including the resolutions on the oil slicks, and to ensure that questions relating to sustainable development were addressed.

126. **Ms. Najib** (Iraq) said that the adoption of principles for a disaster reduction strategy limited danger and helped with the shift from relief to development to climate change adaptation. Such principles also contributed to the implementation of disaster management programmes at the local level and helped developing countries reinforce prevention and adaptation capabilities.

127. Iraq had enacted a civil defence law and drafted a disaster response project. Legal mechanisms on disaster-related issues were being discussed. The country's general framework for a strategy to combat risks was in line with international strategy and took into consideration the priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

128. New civil defence bodies and search and rescue groups had been set up to help the civil defence centres. A police directorate for environmental protection would help with implementation of environmental systems; however, various types of training workshops were still needed.

129. **Mr. Sareer** (Maldives) said that sustainable development was of the utmost importance to Maldives and to other small island developing States. The recent conference in Samoa had renewed momentum to address the priorities of those States. Now a concrete action plan was needed for the full implementation of the Samoa Pathway, the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation.

130. The consequences of irreversible climate change endangered the development gains that Maldives had achieved so far and increasingly hindered future progress. The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had clearly confirmed that projections about the future of countries such as Maldives were growing bleak. The international community was failing to keep its commitments. By even the most conservative estimates, a rise of 40 to 63 centimetres in sea level

was expected by the end of the century. That was a grave threat to the Maldives, an archipelago of 1,190 islands with over 80 per cent of its land area just above a metre from mean sea level. Coastal erosion, exacerbated by sea level rise, large-scale coral bleaching and ocean acidification severely decreased the resilience of coral reefs, which not only served as the physical foundation of the country, but were also the basis for the two main industries, tourism and fisheries. Another major concern was the growing pressure on water resources owing to saltwater intrusion.

131. The story of Maldives proved that the environment need not be compromised for economic development to occur. Maldives had traditionally adopted the most sustainable fishing method, which employed a pole and line. Trade in shark fins and poaching of turtles had been banned since the 1970s, and endangered species were protected. Sustainable tourism was a major driver for growth and development. Strict environmental assessment preceded any construction, and there was an emphasis on renewable energy and the use of environmentally friendly materials and technologies and the sustainable management of waste. Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction had been effectively integrated into national development planning. The island nation was in the process of transformation into a biosphere reserve, with one atoll already declared a UNESCO biosphere reserve. His Government had recently launched a conservation fund in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility, the first of its kind in the country, and a recent programme was phasing out the use of elements that depleted the ozone layer.

132. However, there was a limit to what Maldives could do on its own. Maldives called on the international community to redouble its efforts to combat climate change, taking prudent policy measures based on science and predictable and reliable sustainable financing modalities for low-emission development, climate change adaptation and capacity-building. The window of opportunity to secure the common future was closing fast.

133. The sustainable development goals should take into account lessons learned from the MDGs. His delegation agreed with those who believed that the proposed sustainable development goals should not be reopened or renegotiated. Maldives welcomed the creation of a stand-alone goal focused on the protection

of oceans, which would allow the sustainable development and protection of coasts, exclusive economic zones and the high seas. For small island developing States, oceans were the centre and source of life, livelihood and identity. Oceans must be protected and preserved with prudent action and specific means of implementation.

134. Maldives, a small, middle-income country, was transitioning into a stable and mature democracy. Based on decades of sustained and stable economic growth, the country had embarked on an ambitious economic transformation and aimed to become a resilient and diversified economy. Yet there were inherent structural challenges in being an archipelago of small, low-lying and remote islands, in addition to climate vulnerabilities. The country could not achieve economies of scale, nor could it cover high transport costs, either internationally or domestically. A targeted support mechanism was called for, and a special category should be created within global governance regimes and multilateral and financial institutions, and the United Nations system.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*