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Chair: Mr. Cardi (Italy)
later: Ms. Francis (Vice-Chair) (Bahamas)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (A/69/76, A/69/257, A/69/309, A/69/313 and A/69/320)

(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) (A/68/970; A/69/79, A/69/312, A/69/315, A/69/326, A/69/379 and A/69/395)
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- (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. **Mr. Eshanta** (Libya) said that all efforts to promote sustainable development by the international community must be based on the principles enshrined in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. His delegation welcomed the ministerial declaration of the high-level political forum

on sustainable development on achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals, which would, inter alia, ensure that the three dimensions of sustainable development were addressed in a balanced manner. His delegation also commended the decision contained in General Assembly resolution 68/309 to make the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals the basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda.

2. To help bridge technology gaps between developed and developing countries and help all countries combat poverty and promote sustainable and inclusive growth, the international community must develop and implement mechanisms to spur innovation and promote technology transfer and dissemination. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change must remain the basis for efforts to reach a new climate change agreement in 2015, and the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund must be provided with adequate financial resources so that it could play an effective role in assisting developing countries to adapt to and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. States were urged to support efforts by Libya and other affected countries to combat desertification and land degradation and to implement all the provisions of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

3. Action must, moreover, be taken to safeguard biodiversity and prevent the overexploitation of natural resources, which threatened to undermine development in many countries. In particular, the international community should provide financial and technical assistance to developing States so that they could successfully meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

4. **Mr. El Achraoui** (Morocco) said that climate change was exacerbating the impact of natural disasters, threatening biodiversity and, by causing global sea levels to rise, even posed an existential threat to certain small island developing States (SIDS). Morocco was concerned that developed countries had reduced their official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries. Furthermore, the international financial crisis had led to a reduction in investment flows to developing countries and undermined their tourism sectors. Many countries were therefore finding it extremely difficult to achieve their development

goals. Without stronger political will and efforts to foster international solidarity on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities, it would prove impossible for many developing countries to promote sustainable development and attain prosperity for their peoples. In that connection, Morocco warmly welcomed the adoption of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway), which would help those States implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation.

5. Morocco had adopted a number of legal instruments to drive sustainable development. Furthermore, the National Charter for the Environment and Sustainable Development encouraged responsible production and consumption patterns, and the Constitution enshrined the right of Moroccan citizens to live in a healthy and peaceful environment. Morocco had adopted measures to improve domestic energy efficiency, and it was investing in wind and solar power generation, which would provide 20 per cent of the country's energy requirements by 2020. Morocco had also enacted policies to prevent agricultural land degradation and promote the sustainable management of its forests, fish stocks and water resources.

6. **Mr. Madisa** (Botswana) said that the world's natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity were critical to long-term human well-being, and must be protected from overexploitation. For the benefit of present and future generations, concerted action must be taken to halt and reverse the degradation and loss of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and to enhance societies' ability to adapt to climate change. Botswana was committed to protecting its natural environment and had designated 17 per cent of its territory as national parks, wildlife management areas and forest reserves. It was a party to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Okavango Delta had been designated as the country's first site under the Ramsar Convention.

7. Like other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Botswana was gravely threatened by climate change. Desertification and land degradation had the potential to undermine the social and economic progress that had been achieved in recent years and were impeding the country's efforts to meet the basic needs of its population and combat poverty. Botswana therefore recognized the importance of limiting the rise in global average temperatures to less than 2 degrees Celsius

and, to that end, was formulating a comprehensive national climate change policy and a national strategy for sustainable development, with a view to charting a low-carbon, climate-resilient development pathway for the country.

8. Botswana looked forward to successful outcomes for the twentieth and twenty-first sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Lima and Paris, respectively, and hoped that a legally binding agreement on climate change would be adopted in 2015.

9. The pervasive financial crisis and the asymmetries in the global trading system were preventing developing countries from fully implementing Agenda 21. The fulfilment of the commitments set out in the Monterrey Consensus would give the international community an opportunity to pursue sustainable development efforts and promote the implementation of that Agenda. It was imperative that the international community, in its deliberations on future development priorities, should address existing inequalities with a view to formulating a comprehensive, inclusive and transformative post-2015 development agenda.

10. **Ms. Raviola-Borovik** (Russian Federation) said that her country was pleased with the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals but was opposed to any broadening of the concept of sustainable development and attempts to politicize the future development agenda.

11. The Samoa Pathway provided the international community with a welcome reference point for the sustainable development of SIDS. Over the previous four years, the Russian Federation had given approximately \$20 million to those States, with a focus on such areas as education, energy security and resilience to natural disasters.

12. The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction would be an important event. The post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction would need to focus on ways of enhancing the capacities of States in the areas of disaster prevention and recovery, disaster monitoring and forecasting, improving security for populations and infrastructure, and establishing early warning systems.

13. The Russian Federation would make a constructive contribution to the work of the United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries and was committed to the priorities contained in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. It supported the Convention on Biological Diversity and the coordination of that Convention's interaction with other international legal provisions on the use of genetic resources.

14. The new climate agreement that would replace the Kyoto Protocol must be informed by the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including that of common but differentiated responsibilities. While requirements might differ, all States must be accorded the same status and be subject to accountability. Measures to strengthen the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) should be accompanied by improved cooperation with other United Nations bodies that were concerned with environmental protection.

15. **Mr. Maope** (Lesotho) said that the international community must formulate a concise set of sustainable development goals, together with robust mechanisms for their implementation. To meet global aspirations for development, the goals must respect the principle of national ownership. They must acknowledge and take advantage of each State's unique circumstances.

16. There was compelling scientific evidence that global warming was linked to human activity. In recent years, more frequent extreme weather events, early frosts, droughts and land degradation had caused significant economic losses in Lesotho, undermining its efforts to promote development. However, the resources made available to help developing countries implement climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, including those channelled through multilateral channels and international bodies, were often difficult to access. The international community and development partners must therefore simplify the process by which developing countries could access funds earmarked for initiatives to address the impact of climate change.

17. Land degradation, drought, desertification and climate change were inextricably intertwined, and it was imperative that the new sustainable development agenda should address the needs of countries facing particular climate-related challenges. Lesotho, a

landlocked and mountainous developing country, was highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Furthermore, poor land use and management and inadequate water harvesting techniques had reduced agricultural productivity. To complement the post-2015 development agenda, climate change negotiations must, inter alia, consider measures to promote sustainable land use and restore the productive capacity of degraded agricultural land, thereby strengthening countries' resilience to climatic shocks. Working with local communities, his Government was striving to reverse the effects of land degradation by encouraging, inter alia, the planting of trees and the restricted grazing of livestock. That policy had led to the successful restoration of some severely affected areas. Lesotho urged its development partners to continue to support its efforts to that end.

18. **Mr. Cabactulan** (Philippines) said that, although the developing world had achieved significant economic growth in recent years, insufficient ODA and other forms of financing for development was holding back the efforts of many countries, including the Philippines, to achieve all the Millennium Development Goals.

19. The Philippines made use of public-private partnerships to implement key infrastructure projects, thereby freeing up scarce public resources for programmes to help combat poverty and mitigate the adverse effects of natural disasters. It was also striving to promote good governance and combat tax avoidance. Nonetheless, the Philippines believed that, given economic and financial realities, ODA flows would remain crucial for developing countries, and particularly so for least developed countries. The Philippines therefore strongly supported the recommendations contained in the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (A/69/315), including that Member States should honour their ODA commitments in full and in a timely manner, and that countries should be able to choose from a menu of policy options.

20. The Philippines was one of the world's most disaster-prone countries and was particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change. It therefore looked forward to the mobilization of \$100 billion per year by 2020 to support mitigation and adaptation measures in developing countries, as had been agreed at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties

to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

21. His delegation welcomed the recent decision of the General Assembly in resolution 68/309 to make the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals the basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda. Implementing the goals and targets contained in the proposal would help promote just, equitable and inclusive societies. Sustainable development must be people-centred and based on input from a wide range of development actors. The Philippines delivered many public and social services through local government and believed that responsibility for implementing the post-2015 agenda should, as far as possible, be devolved to local stakeholders. Priorities for development should, moreover, be determined by domestic political considerations and other country-specific circumstances, and a country's progress towards attaining the sustainable development goals should be measured against its national, rather than global targets. In that connection, the international community must remain aware of the great challenges faced by many countries with limited resources and capacity to affect change.

22. The Philippines believed that particular attention must be given to the rights and well-being of migrants and their families and commended the proposal to include issues of concern to migrants, namely labour rights, mobility and remittances, in the sustainable development goals. Particular attention must also be given to strengthening the capacity of statistical agencies to ensure the availability of evidence-based, high-quality and internationally comparable data, and to enhancing global multi-stakeholder partnerships for development.

23. **Mr. Moussa** (Niger) said that sustainable development was the main focus of his Government's post-2015 development policy. The three dimensions of sustainable development were key to efforts to ensure the general well-being of the people of the Niger, and his Government therefore welcomed the adoption of resolution 68/309 on the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the cornerstone of the post-2015 development agenda. Environmental considerations had been decisively mainstreamed into the development policies stemming from international United Nations conferences, in particular Rio+20. The 17 goals, the 169 targets and the corresponding means of implementation provided a solid basis on which to

move towards the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda during the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

24. The Niger had an advanced institutional framework for sustainable development in which all sectors of the population, including civil-society organizations, were involved. Strategies designed to combat desertification, restore degraded land and develop agriculture had improved food security, increased the incomes of people in rural areas and boosted resilience. Other programmes had consolidated those gains by improving infrastructure, supporting education and other basic social services, and promoting adaptation to climate change and other external shocks.

25. However, the Niger faced immense challenges stemming from its status as a landlocked country, its limited resources, climate change and, worst of all, the instability prevailing in the Sahel-Sahara region. In spite of its best efforts, his Government believed that it would be unable to achieve all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the end of 2015. Attainment of the future sustainable development goals also seemed likely to be out of reach unless the necessary resources to implement them were increased. States such as the Niger could not transform their economies, develop their infrastructure, create jobs or acquire environmentally friendly technologies while relying on their own resources alone. More than ever, international cooperation would play a key role, and his delegation therefore emphasized the need for comprehensive implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, in parallel with the implementation of the agreed sustainable development goals. The forthcoming United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries should lead to outcomes tailored to the specific needs of those countries. Reinforced South-South and triangular cooperation, with the active involvement of the private sector, civil-society organizations and others, would be necessary.

26. **Ms. Jonsdottir** (Iceland) said that sustainable land management and preventing land degradation were crucial in efforts to promote sustainable development, achieve food security and help countries adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change. An area of approximately 1.2 million square hectares, equivalent to the size of South Africa, was lost to degradation and desertification each decade, lowering

food production and carbon sequestration rates. Meanwhile, global population continued to grow most rapidly in regions most affected by desertification. The outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals had identified combating land degradation and reclaiming degraded lands among the goals, and achieving land degradation neutrality as a target. Accordingly, the new climate change regime to be adopted in 2015 should underline the importance of measures to promote land-based adaptation and resilience.

27. Paradoxically, overfishing remained a widespread problem, although global marine capture fisheries severely underperformed. With improved infrastructure, better management, more effective monitoring, sustainable science-based harvesting and the elimination of subsidies, marine fisheries could generate an additional \$50 billion per year, or more than half the current value of the global seafood trade. Iceland supported the inclusion of a separate sustainable development goal on oceans in the post-2015 development agenda and emphasized that the means to implement it must be fully in line with existing legal instruments, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provided the legal basis for States to sustainably manage their marine resources. Iceland had therefore submitted reservations to the outcome document of the Open Working Group, which had not fully reflected the need to ensure that implementation must be firmly rooted in the existing legal framework.

28. Iceland relied almost entirely on hydropower and geothermal energy to heat homes and generate electricity. Globally, however, only 14 percent of geothermal potential had been harnessed. Iceland was therefore promoting the transfer of geothermal energy technology to developing countries. The Geothermal Compact, for example, which Iceland had launched in partnership with the World Bank, aimed to spur geothermal development in the African Rift Valley, where geothermal energy could be exploited to bring new, clean, sustainable energy to more than 150 million people. Iceland was also a founding member of the Global Geothermal Alliance, which sought to identify opportunities and support mechanisms to scale up geothermal production.

29. Sustainable development could be achieved only through progress on gender equality and the legal and economic empowerment of women, including ensuring

that their sexual and reproductive health and rights were respected. The stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment agreed on by the Open Working Group must be maintained, and gender equality must be further mainstreamed throughout the new framework. Without the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of society, including decision-making, it would prove impossible to make real and lasting progress in addressing sustainable development challenges.

30. Iceland would continue to share the extensive experience it had gained in the areas of sustainable land and ocean management, harnessing renewable energy resources and promoting gender equality, including through the Iceland-based United Nations University training programme.

31. **Ms. Enkhsetseg** (Mongolia) said that the high-level political forum on sustainable development must be the main platform for reviewing and monitoring the sustainable development goals, while the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals should serve as the basis for integrating the sustainable development goals into an innovative and transformative post-2015 development agenda. Effective mechanisms for the implementation of the agenda must also be established with a view to promoting technology transfer and capacity-building, enhancing global partnerships and strengthening financing for development. Mongolia welcomed the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, which suggested ways in which deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda could be linked with discussions conducted in the lead-up to the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in July 2015.

32. More frequent natural disasters, often exacerbated by extreme weather conditions, were threatening the livelihoods of communities around the world. Indeed, for four consecutive years, annual economic losses from disasters had exceeded \$100 billion worldwide. It was therefore imperative that the international community should take action to reduce risk levels and strengthen social, environmental and economic resilience. In particular, States must promote local- and community-level initiatives to strengthen disaster preparedness, inter alia by enhancing early-warning and risk-assessment mechanisms, providing adequate resources for the implementation of coordinated policies to prepare for

and mitigate disasters, and raising awareness of relevant issues. To that end, Mongolia, in collaboration with United Nations agencies, was implementing a project to decentralize disaster management, strengthen local-level disaster risk reduction and response mechanisms and mainstream disaster risk reduction into local development planning processes.

33. Mongolia had done little to exacerbate climate change but suffered disproportionately from its impact. Average temperatures in the country had risen by 2.1 degrees Celsius, three times more than the world average, and land degradation and melting permafrost were threatening the viability of nomadic pastoralism, on which almost half of the country's population depended. Parliament had recently adopted the Green Development Strategy, which promoted the adoption of low-emission and climate-resilient technologies with a view to spurring sustainable development and safeguarding the country's environmental and cultural heritage. Mongolia was also working with the Partnership for Action on Green Economy to accelerate its transition to a green economy and usher in a more sustainable future for its people.

34. **Mr. Šćepanović** (Montenegro) said that his country fully associated itself with the statement that had been delivered the previous day on behalf of the European Union and its member States. Crafting an ambitious post-2015 development framework and effective implementation and accountability mechanisms must remain a key priority of the international community. The framework must inter alia, ensure respect for human rights and promote sustainable prosperity for all. A final push must be made to achieve the outstanding MDGs, and the lessons learned from States' endeavours to attain those Goals must serve as input to the deliberations on new sustainable development goals for the post-2015 period.

35. Montenegro, which was close to achieving all the MDGs, would continue to participate actively in the process to draw up a balanced, truly transformative, people-centred and human-rights-based development framework. Montenegro believed that the sustainable development goals contained in the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals addressed the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner. The outcome document, while not perfect, marked a carefully crafted balance between many divergent

views and positions and should serve as the basis for intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. However, input from other key stakeholders, including the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, should also be taken into consideration. The post-2015 development agenda should, moreover, include a stand-alone goal on climate change, and an international legally binding agreement on climate change should be adopted in 2015.

36. Sustainable development was a key policy driver in Montenegro. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), his Government had recently established the Centre for Sustainable Development, which would endeavour to use the resources and expertise of UNDP and national institutions to find innovative solutions to sustainable development challenges in Montenegro and other West Balkan countries. The Centre would focus in particular on issues related to tourism, energy generation and conservation, resource and ecosystem management, environmental safety and climate change adaptation. It was hoped that the Centre would serve not only as a regional mechanism but also as part of an international post-Rio+20 network of such centres. Furthermore, to enhance coordination and promote efficiency, Montenegro had recently opened the United Nations eco-building in Podgorica, which brought together all United Nations system activities under one roof, with the aim of generating innovative ideas on how to encourage development in Montenegro and beyond.

37. **Ms. Hamilton** (United States of America) said that the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly came at a time of great dynamism in the global discussion on sustainable development. The work of the Second Committee was complemented by processes taking place around the world and involving a broad range of stakeholders. Ahead of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, the General Assembly had a unique role in articulating the political will of the global community. That agenda provided an opportunity to eradicate extreme poverty within a generation and to focus global attention on the known drivers of development progress such as inclusive economic growth, women's empowerment and peace and governance. Development gains would be short-lived if actions to address climate change, biodiversity

and conservation, desertification, sustainable energy for all, and oceans and seas were neglected.

38. Climate change was one of the highest of the shared priorities, as underscored by President Obama at the Secretary General's Climate Summit. Her delegation was encouraged by the commitments that Governments had already made prior to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Lima in December, and it hoped that national contributions to emissions reductions would be announced as early as possible in 2015. Adaptation to the effects of climate change was essential, and adaptation should therefore be emphasized in the 2015 agreement.

39. The call for collective action was also reflected in the inaugural United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, which had adopted important resolutions, *inter alia*, on air quality, chemicals and waste, wildlife trafficking and marine pollution, all of them issues that were fertile ground for collaboration between Governments, international organizations and other stakeholders. Her Government welcomed the Programme's focus on national capacity-building and scientific assessment, and supported the resolutions on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

40. The United States was committed to working with all stakeholders to achieve the sustainable development of SIDS through the post-2015 process and the Samoa Pathway. The success of efforts to promote sustainable development hinged on the quality of implementation, and mechanisms for monitoring implementation also needed to be devised. Discipline and perspective were especially important during the current session, since the work of the Committee needed to remain focused on essentials and to defer to other processes where appropriate.

41. **Mr. Lippwe** (Federated States of Micronesia) said that his country, as a remote, widely dispersed nation of mostly low-lying small islands, had a unique perspective. Ever since joining the United Nations, it had voiced concerns about the environment, in particular climate change and sea-level rise, since a rise of only a few metres would be catastrophic for its atolls. Micronesia, which had done little to cause global climate change, would be disproportionately affected by the adverse effects of such change on its

food and water security, the health of its people, ocean and coral reefs, and its biodiversity.

42. The world must take the climate crisis seriously. While it fell to the island nations to be the moral voice, only bold action by the major emitters would avert catastrophe. For life on small islands to continue, the rise in temperature must not exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. His country had therefore proposed that the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer should be amended in a way that would phase down the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons, thereby reducing the rate of sea-level rise by 25 per cent and giving atolls a chance to survive. Furthermore, the Green Climate Fund should be operationalized and capitalized to support adaptation and mitigation activities, and the Lima and Paris meetings should lead to a legally binding climate treaty.

43. As a SIDS, the Federated States of Micronesia needed sustainable development. The Samoa Pathway was intended to stimulate the growth of the economies of SIDS so that they could be self-sustaining, but that would require the formation of partnerships within the framework of development cooperation tailored to the people and culture of Micronesia, rather than indiscriminate handouts with strings attached. The Samoa Pathway and other outcome documents of conferences concerned with SIDS spelled out priorities that must be reflected in discussions on oceans and seas, sustainable energy for all, climate change, and means of implementation. Those priorities should also be part of the post-2015 development agenda. The adoption by the international community of blueprints for the development of SIDS would prove to be a hollow achievement unless all the commitments made in Samoa were fulfilled. A mechanism was needed to monitor the implementation of the partnerships announced in Samoa as well as future ones. As the end of the International Year of SIDS approached, the challenge was to ensure the survival of those States.

44. **Mr. Çubukcu** (Turkey) said that his country looked forward to contributing to the discussions on the new development agenda in the months to come.

45. The vulnerabilities and specific challenges of countries in special situations, whether least developed, landlocked or consisting of small islands, had to be addressed without delay. The Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency

was actively engaged in development work with such States. His country had hosted the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in 2011 and was willing to host the mid-term review conference. Enhancing cooperation on science, technology and innovation was highly beneficial for developing countries and was relevant to sustainable development. Turkey would therefore like to see the establishment of a technology bank and stood ready to host such a bank.

46. **Ms. Beck** (Solomon Islands) said that 89 per cent of the world's coral reefs were projected to experience severe bleaching by 2030. Such degradation would impact tourism, among other industries, potentially driving households in SIDS and least developed countries into poverty traps. Given the need to impart momentum to action on climate change, she suggested that New York City, where diplomats were located all the year round, should be the venue for negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

47. Solomon Islands was hoping for a comprehensive, flexible and inclusive climate change agreement that addressed mitigation, adaptation, finance and transfers of technology tailored to the needs of SIDS. Recent flooding in Solomon Islands had caused damage amounting to 9.2 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and had forced the Government to borrow from abroad. Disaster risk reduction partners should extend direct support to the State's disaster institutions, rather than providing funds to international non-governmental organizations, which had their own agenda.

48. International partnerships were needed to direct investment into renewable energy, which could close the mitigation gap and transform the lives of people everywhere. Sustainable development could be achieved only by tackling climate change at the global level and making renewable energy technology and resources available to all.

49. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that poverty eradication was both the biggest problem facing the world and a prerequisite for sustainable development. It was therefore essential that the international community should speed up the work of addressing any outstanding issues relating to the Millennium Development Goals.

50. The report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals should be preserved in its entirety, and no part of it should be renegotiated. Rather, it should act as the basis for incorporating the goals that the Group had proposed into the post-2015 development agenda. Furthermore, the high-level political forum on sustainable development was a platform for Governments to provide a sense of direction and monitor the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

51. With respect to climate change, it was time to secure verifiable commitments from all countries, especially those who were responsible for it. The Government of El Salvador was building an integrated transport system for the San Salvador metropolitan area, which, when complete, would significantly reduce emissions. It also intended to increase the proportion of electricity from renewable energy sources by 20 per cent by 2020. The country already had its first national climate change plan, which, following public consultation, had been completed the previous month. The effective implementation of the plan, however, would require substantial transfers of funding, technology and skills. The swift operationalization of the Green Climate Fund would enable it to counter losses resulting from climate change and contribute to global efforts to reduce emissions.

52. His Government supported the Government of Peru, which would be presiding over meetings at the forthcoming Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and at the social pre-conference on climate change to be held in Caracas, Venezuela. His Government also had a programme in place to continue the previous Government's policies while introducing new strategies to promote changes that benefited the people. Although ODA had a central role to play in the achievement of the internationally agreed sustainable development goals, those goals needed to be associated with a global development partnership with effective means of implementation. International cooperation should reflect the priorities and capacities of developing countries.

53. **Mr. Dayem** (Saudi Arabia) said that his Government, as a member of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, considered that collective efforts were needed to narrow the gap between developed and

developing countries. The post-2015 development agenda should be implementable, and its requirements should not be incompatible with the principles and legislation of individual countries. Saudi Arabia hoped that the sustainable development goals would focus on the basic priorities of developing countries, in particular the eradication of poverty, hunger, ignorance and disease.

54. Foreign assistance and aid were key aspects of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy. His Government had provided assistance to developing countries totalling some \$116 billion over the past forty years — a figure that exceeded the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GDP for donor countries. It had also provided soft loans to 80 developing countries, and a \$500 million energy initiative had been launched by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques during an energy conference in Jeddah. Furthermore, it had forgiven \$6 billion in loans to developing countries.

55. His Government believed in collective cooperation as a way of achieving the best for humankind and would continue to play a responsible and judicious role in the humanitarian, political and economic fields.

56. **Ms. Kasese-Bota** (Zambia) said that eradicating poverty and achieving related international goals and targets required practical measures that encompassed environmental, economic and social policies. One of the most critical challenges for Zambia was the creation of wealth and decent jobs that would support viable social safety nets. In its next poverty survey in 2015, Zambia expected to see notable progress in reducing poverty levels following a number of interventions by its Government. The post-2015 agenda should build on lessons learned from the MDGs.

57. Zambia was deeply concerned about the potential of climate change not only to reverse development gains but also to exert a growing catastrophic impact on livelihoods. The international community must ensure that any increase in global temperatures remained below 2 degrees Celsius. Developed States that were parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change needed to provide leadership by making ambitious and nationally determined contributions, in line with the provisions of the Convention and the conclusions of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

58. The country's capacity for food production and food security had been threatened by the degradation of land and natural resources but those issues were being addressed through the promotion of sustainable land-management strategies, including climate-smart agriculture. Its revised sixth National Development Plan provided a clear outline for sustainable development and improved service delivery. With regard to energy, Zambia was promoting renewable-energy sources and energy efficiency in order to increase access to clean-energy sources and climate-friendly technologies.

59. The post-2015 agenda should ensure equality for all, renewed and strengthened global partnerships, good governance and mutual accountability. The most vulnerable and marginalized groups must be a focus of equitable and sustainable development.

60. **Ms. Bubanja** (Serbia) said that the MDGs had been less successful in her country than had been expected. The economic crisis had led to increased poverty and unemployment rates, while the floods in May 2014 had caused extensive damage to infrastructure and industry. It was therefore imperative, in the interests of the recovery and stability of Serbia, to continue implementation of the MDGs as well as to pursue the new sustainable development goals.

61. Serbia was deeply concerned about the rise of inequality within and among countries. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth and full and productive employment for all were necessary if poverty was to be tackled successfully. A new United Nations development agenda framework was being devised for Serbia for the period 2016-2020.

62. As a country still recovering from unprecedented floods, Serbia was only too aware of the relevance of climate change and the need for mitigation and adaptation measures. In the interests of accountability, every State would have to measure the extent to which its commitment to the implementation of sustainable development goals was being carried out.

63. Serbia had been elected to participate in consultations on the subject of culture and development in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Culture was both a driver and an enabler of sustainable development, and it was therefore evident that culture should find an appropriate place in the sustainable development goals, where it should have a cross-cutting role.

64. **Mr. Coulibaly** (Burkina Faso) said that one fifth of the world's population was affected by desertification and drought, and thousands of hectares of fertile soil were being lost every year. Desertification, land degradation, drought and climate change were inextricably linked. In some regions, such as the Sahel, the situation was alarming, with natural resources and environmental endowment suffering degradation due to the combined effects of climate change, reduced rainfall and declining soil fertility. Certain practices, such as the overworking of farmland, the gathering of firewood, the burning of the undergrowth and uncontrolled grazing, had had negative repercussions on the land and the living conditions of people in rural areas. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicated that the Sahel would be more vulnerable to extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts.

65. In Burkina Faso, vulnerability studies conducted in the context of the national programme of action for adaptation to climate change had found that the country had a fragile ecosystem, insufficient or ill-distributed rainfall, and an economy that was overly dependent on agriculture. As a result, people in rural areas were trapped in a vicious cycle in which production methods were adversely affecting soil fertility and crop yields. Burkina Faso had put in place a national programme which aimed to build the capacities of local populations to combat desertification and drought. It included efforts to encourage reforestation, and environmental regulations governing the sale and use of non-biodegradable plastic bags and packaging.

66. Research and training were key to the fight against desertification, and technical and scientific cooperation between States therefore needed to be boosted. He was pleased that desertification, land degradation and drought were part of the Rio+20 outcome and were covered in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

67. *Ms. Francis (Bahamas), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

68. **Mr. Biya** (Cameroon) welcomed the ongoing implementation of the provisions in the Rio+20 outcome document but regretted that the establishment of a mechanism to develop, transfer and disseminate clean and environmentally sound technologies, in

conformity with paragraph 273 of that document, had not evolved as promptly.

69. Looking ahead to the upcoming sessions in Lima and Paris of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Cameroon remained committed to the Bali Action Plan. It believed that a future climate agreement must respect the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and take into consideration the level of development of each State. With regard to the Green Climate Fund, it noted with concern that only a fraction of the annual total needed to help developing countries respond to climate change had been raised. Any delay in deploying the funds would place a further burden on developing countries. Desertification, drought and the degradation of ecosystems were already grave threats to States, particularly in Africa, while rising temperatures and falling levels of rainfall and land fertility among other factors, were adversely affecting food security, health, economic activity and biodiversity.

70. Despite those challenges, the Government had successfully pursued policies that incorporated principles of sustainable development. For example, 20 per cent of Cameroonian territory was currently protected in the interests of conserving biological diversity. Since forests accounted for a large part of the national territory and economic value, the Government had introduced forestry policies that reflected the principles set forth in Agenda 21. It was committed, inter alia, to forest management, the creation of reserves, reforestation programmes and the preservation of traditional knowledge. Greater international support was called for in recognition of the forest conservation efforts that had been made in Cameroon with a view to benefiting others.

71. Another concern was poaching and the illegal trade in wildlife. Efforts by Cameroon and other nations that were victims of those crimes deserved greater support. In Cameroon, assistance was needed to strengthen anti-poaching efforts, to fund a national plan to secure protected areas and to shut down ivory markets.

72. **Reverend Grech** (Observer for the Holy See) shared the view of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals that the eradication of poverty and environmental sustainability were two of the most urgent challenges facing humankind. His

statement would deal with the second of those challenges.

73. Climate change was not only an environmental question; it was also a question of justice and raised a moral imperative. Given that the high levels of energy consumption and greenhouse-gas emissions that characterized highly industrial societies were among the primary factors of climate change, it was a matter of justice that the poor and vulnerable who suffered most from causes beyond their control should be helped. One step would be to make available to them the best in adaptation and mitigation technologies. Everyone would benefit if the international community could reach agreement on a post-2020 international regime.

74. His delegation believed that the term “responsibility to protect” was applicable not only to humanitarian and human rights areas but also to climate change. The world had become a village, and the mutual and common responsibility to protect it must belong to all. It was the duty of States, in particular, to devise policies and monitoring structures to ensure that the environment was safe and wholesome for present and future generations. In addition to the political and economic commitment that was required to protect the global climate, prudence and scientific honesty were also necessary if pride, excess and errors were to be avoided. The “moral covenant” with the environment meant that everyone must commit to working together in order to make it a healthy place to live.

75. **Mr. Corell** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that averting the destructive effects of climate change and delivering decent work to all, especially to unemployed youth and the working poor, were among the most pervasive of current challenges. The transition to a greener economy was not only critical from an environmental perspective, but also made perfect economic and social sense. A greener economy could lead to gains in terms of improved livelihoods, social inclusion and more and better jobs. Stressing that people must be placed at the core of policymaking, he said that the Decent Work Agenda of the ILO offered a coherent policy framework that integrated the macroeconomic, employment, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

76. The inclusion of social protection floors as a target in the post-2015 development agenda would

have a positive impact on multiple development objectives, including poverty eradication, inclusive growth, and the transition to more sustainable production and consumption patterns. The ILO was also committed to working with SIDS, donors and other partners to implement the Samoa Pathway.

77. **Mr. Madiwale** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that, as agreements were made on frameworks to guide development cooperation for years to come, his organization would continue to emphasize that the needs of the most vulnerable must be at their heart. One such framework was the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. Disasters could set back years of progress made towards sustainable development and, with urbanization and climate change, disaster risk was increasing for developed and developing countries alike. In 2013, disasters had affected over 96 million people, causing \$192 billion in economic losses and 23 million people to flee their homes. The International Federation believed that there were five elements that must be included in a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

78. First and foremost, the resilience of the poor must be increased. Vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples, migrants and displaced persons, among others, deserved recognition of their unique vulnerabilities in relation to disaster, since they were forced to live in exposed areas or informal settlements and lacked access to insurance or social protection. Secondly, emphasis must be placed on communities, with local leaders, knowledge and capacities all being engaged to help change attitudes towards disaster risk. Partnerships needed to be formed between local government and organizations that worked in communities. Thirdly, attention must be given to the development and implementation of laws concerning disaster risk management, which would help redress persistent gaps in the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). In addition, progress was needed in relation to preparedness and response, in order to avoid bottlenecks and quality gaps in relief efforts. Fourthly, disaster risk reduction had to be reflected in a coherent and complementary manner across the international frameworks that would be agreed on in 2015, namely the framework to replace HFA, the post-2015 development agenda and the climate change agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Without consistency, States would be

overwhelmed by monitoring and reporting requirements, which would threaten the implementation of the frameworks. Fifthly, the post-2015 framework must be supported by adequate, targeted and long-term funding. Thus far, the developed countries had failed to fulfil their commitment to allocate 1 per cent of official development assistance to disaster risk reduction, while financing rarely reached local government or organizations that operated at the community level, at which disaster impacts were felt. That situation was untenable.

79. **Mr. Kakar** (International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)) said that biodiversity and ecosystem services provided essential natural solutions to address global development challenges, and therefore their unique role in contributing to human well-being and in enhancing resilience to change needed to be recognized.

80. In that respect, the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity must become an integral part of the indicator framework to track the progress made towards the attainment of the sustainable development goals. In addition, the implementation of the sustainable development goals required investment in the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services and must be further coordinated with the review and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

81. His organization, while encouraged by the results of the Climate Summit held in September 2014, wanted to see further action in regard to not only climate change but also modern and renewable energy and its affordability, reliability, sustainability and efficiency.

82. The conservation, restoration and sustainable management of all natural ecosystems was essential, and in that context IUCN welcomed the New York Declaration on Forests, which called for the restoration of 350 million hectares of degraded landscapes and forestlands by 2030, thereby offering a widely endorsed target that could be readily included in the post-2015 development framework. Efforts to tackle desertification and to achieve land degradation neutrality also needed to be emphasized.

83. **Ms. Klein Solomon** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) was pleased that migration featured among the proposed sustainable development

goals and targets and that many references were made to migration in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. The target to disaggregate data, including by migration status, would ensure that migrants would be afforded their full human rights and have access to, inter alia, social safety nets, health care and education.

84. The inclusion of migration in the post-2015 agenda reflected an understanding of the fundamental nature of human mobility and its contribution to development. Migration was a powerful and immediate strategy for poverty reduction and offered the opportunity to escape conflict and natural disasters. It had economic and social benefits for households and nations and was a key factor in mediating the supply and demand for labour.

85. Associating IOM with the statement made by IFRC on the importance of disaster risk reduction, she called for the reinstatement of a target designed to reduce the numbers of displaced persons and refugees, whose situations negatively affected development outcomes and whose rights were too frequently ignored.

86. IOM was ideally placed to help States implement and monitor the migration-related aspects of the post-2015 agenda and to help ensure that that agenda contained robust, ambitious and transformative targets and indicators on migration.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.