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Chair: Mr. Krapp (Vice-Chair) (Germany)

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In the absence of Mr. Logar (Slovenia), Mr. Krapp (Germany), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 24: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (continued)

(a) Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) (continued) (A/70/281)

(b) Women in development (continued) (A/69/156 and A/70/256)

(c) Human resources development (continued) (A/70/293)

1. **Mr. Erdman** (United States of America) said that the scourge of poverty was wider and deeper than any disease or conflict. As President Obama had said at the Leaders' Summit on Countering Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Violent Extremism, poverty did not cause terrorism, but when people were impoverished and felt humiliated by injustice and corruption, that could fuel resentments that terrorists exploited. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognized that the eradication of extreme poverty was indispensable for achieving sustainable development, which was in turn key to countering violent extremism. For the first time ever, the tools, technologies, political will and resources were available to end poverty while ensuring the sustainable use of the Earth's resources.

2. Significant progress had been made since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was now known that inclusive economic growth, effective governance, accountable institutions and greater gender equality led to improvements in the lives of individuals, families, communities and entire societies. That required collecting data, measuring results, maximizing the range of financing options and thinking creatively about partnerships. At the third International Conference on Financing for Development, the world had agreed on principles including the mobilization of domestic resources through tax reform, access to financial services, official development assistance (ODA) for countries that needed it most, quality education for women and girls, scientific and technological innovation, the creation of environments in which investment could flow to productive enterprises, and the promotion of

good governance and the rule of law. The financial mechanisms agreed upon were the key to progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Each country had the primary responsibility for its own economic, social and environmental development. However, the United States would continue to be a willing and effective partner investing in dozens of programmes that helped millions of people worldwide every day. The United States was consistently the largest bilateral provider of ODA. Furthermore, it was committed to ensuring that those resources reached the neediest first. The share of total bilateral net ODA from the United States to low-income countries had more than doubled between 2005 and 2014. President Obama had put to rest the myth that efforts to combat disease and poverty could not work and that some places and peoples were beyond hope and condemned to an endless cycle of suffering. That message would continue to inspire the efforts of the United States to end poverty.

4. **Mr. M. Osman Sid Ahmed Mohammed Ali** (Sudan) said that because of their role in the family, women were responsible for raising future generations, and poverty eradication could only succeed if women were accorded their rightful place in decision-making. The success of the 2030 Agenda would also depend on investment in education, training and capacity-building for young people of both sexes. His country's poverty eradication strategy stressed the responsibility of the private sector to provide education, health care and job opportunities to young people. The Sudan's economic plan for 2015-2019 included measures to develop agriculture, increase foreign direct investment, diversify exports, improve rural infrastructure and increase spending on education and scientific research. Under his Government's microfinance programme, 12 per cent of banks' portfolios went to small businesses, with priority given to poor people and women.

5. The Sudan not only faced the same resource and capacity limitations as other least developed countries, but it was also suffering from unilateral sanctions that constrained its capacity to invest in development and to obtain loans. His country's President had called for a national dialogue that would include at least 30 per cent participation by women. Women also made up 30 per cent of the Sudan's most recently elected parliament. Global partnerships to eradicate poverty should give priority to least developed countries and countries in special situations, as well as ensure the continued flow

of ODA. He also hoped that adequate measures for climate change adaptation and mitigation would emerge from the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

6. **Mr. Achergui** (Morocco) said that in spite of significant global progress, around 10 per cent of the world's population continued to suffer from chronic malnutrition and many developing countries had not achieved the goal of halving poverty and hunger. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should therefore act as a catalyst helping developing countries to rise to that challenge and mobilize sufficient resources. Poverty was a multidimensional issue that required a holistic long-term approach involving measurement and evaluation tools. In Morocco, the authorities had always been committed to reducing poverty and social exclusion. More than half of Government spending was devoted to social sectors and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sectors in particular. Institutional reform and strategic plans had enabled his country to make progress, especially through a national human development initiative which had led to significant drops in poverty and vulnerability between 2001 and 2011. Public policies had used geographical targeting of State resources to provide decision-makers with a comprehensive set of indicators on poverty, vulnerability and disparities.

7. Given that poverty was primarily a rural issue, his Government had prioritized rural development and improvements in living conditions, in particular through a proactive approach to boosting food self-sufficiency, family agriculture and income-generating activities, especially for rural women. The authorities were also improving rural infrastructure and investing in a modern power supply. As a result, 98.4 per cent of rural areas had electricity by the end of 2013. Access to drinking water had similarly improved. His Government had also strengthened health insurance coverage and extended it to the most disadvantaged while reducing the cost of drugs sold in Morocco by 30 per cent. Another programme had reduced the share of the urban population living in slums from 8.2 per cent in 2004 to 3.9 per cent in 2010.

8. South-South and triangular cooperation were priorities for the foreign policy of Morocco, which had stepped up efforts to combat poverty and food insecurity by sharing its experience with various

countries in the areas of irrigation and soil fertility, cloud seeding and locust control.

9. **Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique) said that although the number of people living in extreme poverty had been almost halved, poverty and inequality remained the main concern in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It was also a matter for concern that, in comparison with other regions, there had been less poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa, where only 13 countries had met the relevant MDGs. Further efforts were therefore needed to bring about structural transformation through partnerships and capacity-building support. The MDGs had created momentum behind efforts to reduce poverty and other threats to development, but 1.3 billion people still lived in poverty. Experience had shown that the desired results could be achieved only if global targets were mainstreamed into national targets and all global, national and regional actors were mobilized in coordinated actions. The progress made at each implementation stage also needed to be monitored and evaluated.

10. In Mozambique, the implementation of the MDGs had expanded access to education; achieved gender balance in access to primary education through awareness-raising, especially in rural areas; reduced child mortality; promoted sexual and reproductive health and the sexual rights of teenagers and young people, resulting in increased life expectancy; and improved access to education, health care and other human rights. As a result of the programmes implemented by the Government with the support of development partners, Mozambique was among the countries that had achieved significant progress in most of the MDGs.

11. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would capitalize on the momentum and achievements of the MDGs and take into account the lessons learned. The priorities of his country's plan for 2015-2019 were to consolidate national unity, peace and sovereignty; develop human and social capital; promote employment and competitiveness; develop economic and social infrastructure; and ensure the sustainable and transparent management of natural resources and the environment. That approach reflected the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals. The main challenge for his country would be the mobilization of resources and domestic resources in particular.

12. **Mr. Benamadi** (Algeria) said that poverty eradication was the greatest global challenge and was indispensable for sustainable development. Different countries faced specific challenges in their pursuit of sustainable development, and a “one-size-fits-all” approach would not suffice. Therefore his country welcomed the inclusion and recognition, in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, of the challenges facing the most vulnerable groups of countries.

13. His delegation called on the international community to support the implementation of the established strategies and plans aimed at eradicating poverty, including the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and New Partnership for Africa’s Development, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. While the importance of such collective undertakings could not be overstated, it was equally important to reaffirm that such efforts must be made in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and should not impose policy space constraints on developing countries.

14. Conflicts, pandemics, volatile commodity prices and the effects of climate change had seriously dampened the progress achieved thus far, the pace of which was already very slow. In that context, an enabling international environment based on a revitalized global partnership was required in order for Africa to achieve sustainable economic growth, financial stability, full employment and strengthened resilience. To that end, his delegation urged international partners to fulfil their commitments to the timely disbursement of ODA, which was the main source of financing for development for many African countries.

15. The participation and empowerment of women in all aspects of society was undeniably important and had contributed greatly to poverty eradication. Women had become more empowered in his country in the context of several relevant reforms, as was evidenced by the facts that currently girls constituted a majority in primary, secondary and tertiary education; more women served as judges; there were several literacy, income-generation and microcredit training programmes available to women; and there were four times more

women serving in parliament than there had been in the previous legislature.

16. **Mr. Yusuf** (Nigeria) said that the task of uplifting the bottom billion still living in extreme poverty should be the focus of the Sustainable Development Goals, as indicated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The situation in sub-Saharan Africa deserved particular attention since that was where the bulk of people living in extreme poverty were found. Measurable indicators, including multidimensional and cross-cutting elements such as health care, nutrition, education and income, would therefore be an important part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

17. Social protection was a powerful instrument for poverty reduction and social cohesion, and countries with social protection systems had coped better with the global economic crisis. The commendable crisis response initiatives of the International Labour Organization, in particular the Global Jobs Pact, would lead to greater coherence in economic, social and environment policies. Gender equality was key to achieving economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, and stronger labour market regulation was needed to ensure a level playing field for women. The national poverty eradication programme of Nigeria included women-centred programmes to promote financial empowerment through the acquisition of skills, and microcredit projects geared towards women and young people. Similarly, the Nigerian agency for small and medium-sized enterprises had increased employment opportunities in rural areas. The United Nations system had helped Member States to build their macroeconomic policy capacity and their national development strategies but it should do even more to eradicate extreme poverty and support the efforts of developing countries in that area.

18. **Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia) said that although much progress had been made, hunger remained the most critical development challenge. Smallholder agriculture was key to ensuring food security and raising incomes. Expanded social protection was also key to rural development as a means of poverty reduction. In his country, absolute poverty had decreased from 44 per cent in 2000 to 22 per cent in 2015. Ethiopia had therefore reached the target of halving poverty by 2015. His country’s development policy was based on comprehensive rural development. The successful implementation of an agricultural development-led industrialization strategy had led to increased

production and productivity in the agricultural sector; lower rural poverty; and an improved social and physical infrastructure in rural areas. However, household food security had yet to be ensured. The productive safety net programme of Ethiopia provided direct support to chronically food-insecure households and 7 million people had received assistance from the programme. In the last five years, 3.8 million people had graduated from the programme, which had also mitigated the impact of drought. However, the diverse impacts of climate change threatened the poor and vulnerable, meaning that further disaster risk reduction mechanisms should be strengthened within the sustainable development framework.

19. Ethiopia had one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and its structural transformation was driven by a long-term, inclusive and unifying national vision centred on income growth and poverty reduction. However, as a least developed country, it still faced challenges in the fight against poverty and needed the continued support of development partners and the United Nations system. The Sustainable Development Goals would be integrated into the national development plan and his Government would continue to place a premium on disciplined and evidence-based decision-making and planning to sustain growth. Poverty eradication required revitalized global solidarity and a strengthened partnership between developed and developing countries, the United Nations and other international organizations.

20. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal) said that poverty was not only a source of socioeconomic problems, but also a root cause of conflict and political instability that ultimately threatened international peace, security and development. Eradication of poverty had been at the core of his country's development agenda for two decades, and employment generation programmes had led to a notable reduction in extreme poverty. Despite numerous adversities, including a decade-long conflict followed by a protracted peace process, Nepal had achieved satisfactory progress on most of the MDGs. As a result, it had set for itself the goal of graduating from the status of least developed country by 2022.

21. Unfortunately, the devastating earthquakes in April and May 2015 had claimed around 9,000 human lives and caused an estimated US\$ 7 billion in damage. That natural catastrophe was likely to push 2.5 to 3.5 per cent of the population into poverty, and had hampered poverty eradication activities. Nevertheless,

his country was very grateful for the spontaneous support, solidarity and goodwill received from neighbouring and other countries during the relief operations phase, and his delegation was confident that the country would be able to rebuild better and smarter in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

22. Poor people had limited access to resources and opportunities, while efforts to eradicate poverty had been constrained by structural barriers, such as landlockedness, a lack of connectivity, infrastructural bottlenecks and resource, technological and other capacity gaps. Clearly, poverty was still a significant challenge. In that context, he stressed the need for the developed countries to fulfil their ODA commitments so that, *inter alia*, substantive progress could be made in the development of infrastructure and productive capacity.

23. Nepal was committed to upholding human rights, including such aspects as empowering women and eliminating the feminization of poverty. Accordingly, his country was a State party to international human rights instruments and actively encouraged women to participate in all spheres of the decision-making process, including leadership positions. The Constitution of Nepal, promulgated on 20 September 2015, had ambitiously broadened women's rights, and a variety of institutional and legal arrangements, targeted funds and programmes furthered the goal of empowering women and providing support to them.

24. **Ms. Zahir** (Maldives) said that the central objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was the eradication of poverty. The MDGs had made significant progress, including through an acknowledgement of the multidimensionality of poverty, which cut across all the Sustainable Development Goals. Her Government had embarked on a people-centred approach to development by investing in health care, infrastructure, employment and other key human development indicators, with good results. It had also invested in social protection sectors to provide seniors with a safety net after retirement from both the public and private sectors.

25. Since more than 44 per cent of the population of the Maldives was under 25 years of age, her Government had policies in place to promote youth employment and provided education opportunities and health care for young people. Several new higher education institutions had expanded access to education

and loan schemes had enabled more students to study abroad. Vocational training programmes had found internships for students in private sector companies and a youth city near the capital provided opportunities for decent work and recreation for young people.

26. Income inequality was a growing problem and one reason why financial indicators needed to move beyond traditional economic measurements of development such as gross domestic product, which failed to take into account aspects such as inequalities, economic risks, environmental degradation and the overexploitation of resources. In the Maldives, for example, absolute poverty had sharply declined but the wealth gap had increased between atolls.

27. The economy of the Maldives was largely dependent on tourism and fisheries, both of which were volatile sectors because of unpredictable and extreme weather patterns. Sustainable development for small island developing States required economic diversification and a climate-resilient infrastructure. Hard-won development gains could be swept away in minutes in island nations, and high indebtedness and a lack of access to concessionary financing limited investment in poverty alleviation measures. Poverty eradication through sustainable development required the momentum achieved in 2015 to be sustained until 2030.

28. **Mr. Madisa** (Botswana) said that although humankind had the resources, institutions and capability to respond effectively to many global challenges, it was regrettable that the majority of people around the world still had to contend with a lack of basic necessities such as food, shelter, sanitation and clean water. In developing countries, poverty threatened the prospect of achieving all internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

29. In Africa in particular, the numerous impediments to the eradication of poverty included: unfavourable terms of trade and trade barriers; loss of competitiveness in world markets for products emanating from Africa; a lack of financial resources for development; declining levels of investment in transportation and communications; and a high unemployment rate, especially among youth. Against the backdrop of global crises in food, energy, finance and the economy, developing countries that were net importers of food, such as his own, faced an uphill

battle to safeguard their social infrastructure and the welfare of their people. Nevertheless, the problems were not insurmountable, as long as national sustainable development priorities were met with fulfilled international commitments. Enhanced international cooperation in support of agricultural and rural development, access to quality education, gender equality and women's empowerment would help in the fight against poverty.

30. Social safety nets in Botswana protected the most vulnerable sections of the population, including older persons and persons with disabilities. Since the Government had meagre resources, the international community's continued support and goodwill was deeply appreciated and would be critical for further progress.

31. **Mr. Emvula** (Namibia) said that poverty eradication must remain the central and overarching objective of the 2030 Agenda. Global trade and investment rules must be designed to meet the constraints faced by developing countries, and efforts to reform international financial institutions must be strengthened so that the concerns of those countries were taken into consideration.

32. In his country, poverty and its accompanying ills manifested themselves in such a heart-breaking way that it was easy to overlook the significant achievements the Government had made since the country attained independence. Livelihoods had been improved, and 400,000 people had been lifted out of poverty. Extraordinary progress had been made, as revealed by the reduction in the proportion of the population living below the poverty line, from 69 per cent in 1993 to 29 per cent in 2010. However, that did not mean that the work was finished. As poverty was a structural legacy of apartheid and necessitated detailed research, monitoring and evaluation, the Government had established a Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, which coordinated, implemented and evaluated governmental programmes aimed at eradicating poverty.

33. The disparity between the academic and financial success of children from high-income families and that of their counterparts from low-income families was an entrenched problem. The Government recognized the need to ensure poor children's equal access to education and skills development in order to escape from the circumstances into which they had been born.

Sustainable income-generating activities were essential to ensure that the people of Namibia enjoyed dignified livelihoods. He recalled that a truly developed man earned enough to provide decent conditions for himself and his family, without needing to be sustained by others, and that a dignified existence was more important to the human spirit than wealth.

34. **Mr. Edou** (Togo) said that his country had initiated a large-scale development programme, the National Programme for Investment in Agriculture and Food Security, which aimed at reaching approximately half of the Togolese population, particularly those who were disadvantaged. Women, who accounted for 51.2 per cent of the rural population, played a critical role in the development of the nation in general and of the agricultural sector in particular. A number of actions had been taken to address the needs of men and women on an equal footing, including mainstreaming a gender perspective into the follow-up and review process of a three-year action plan; establishing a gender unit within the Department of Agriculture; gender-related capacity-building; and financing campaigns to raise awareness in the rural and agricultural world about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

35. Thanks to the efforts of his Government, access to agricultural inputs had improved for the most vulnerable sectors of the population, resulting in dramatic increases in corn and rice production and corresponding revenues. Not only had surplus yields been produced, but the prevalence rate of undernourishment had been halved, earning the recognition of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In addition, a “right to food” project funded by FAO had strengthened food security outreach, serving as an important tool for hunger eradication. Another area of particular focus had been on the dissemination of improved and innovative technologies for use by women.

36. To ensure access to land, a national committee had been set up by the Government to study the issue of land tenure. It aimed to cooperate with local communities to provide a secure framework for land management. Various financial instruments had also been developed and were now accessible to anyone working in the agricultural sector.

37. Lastly, he noted that reforms implemented in the water and sanitation sector had improved rates of

access to water, which afforded women more time to engage in economic and empowering activities.

38. **Mr. Eleyatt** (Mauritania) said that all of society’s human resources must be engaged in addressing the challenges facing the world. His country had prioritized young people as the recipients of education, training, job opportunities, facilitated loans and adequate agricultural land, and its recently established National Solidarity Agency focused on income-generating projects for the poorest and most vulnerable classes. His Government also sought to integrate persons with special needs into public and private sector employment.

39. Recent years had seen great progress in empowering women and combating violence against them. His country’s personal status code was being reviewed in order to take into account changes in the Mauritanian family and the new realities of globalization. Mauritania was working to fulfil its commitments under international conventions relating to women in a manner consistent with its cultural heritage and the Islamic sharia. It had instituted positive discrimination so that women had access to decision-making positions in Government and other sectors. The Government had also undertaken to make microfinance available to women small business owners, especially in rural areas. Mauritania would continue to ensure that women were included in efforts to realize the Sustainable Development Goals.

40. **Mr. Narang** (India) said that up to one third of all human deaths each year, nearly 18 million, were attributable to poverty-related causes. The stark discrepancy between life expectancy and child mortality rates in low- and high-income countries was alarming and inequitable. As the experience of the MDGs had demonstrated, poverty would be reduced when there was robust, sustained and inclusive economic growth in developing countries embracing the key areas of infrastructure, industrialization and innovation.

41. The problems of climate change and environmental degradation should be addressed in accordance with the principle of equity. In other words, the urgent imperative of “going green” should not cause hundreds of millions to go hungry and millions to go homeless or be condemned to lifelong poverty. The poor deserved access to their fair share of the world’s resources, and the burden of finding a solution

to the climate change problem must not fall on those who had contributed the least to it.

42. **Mr. González Franco** (Paraguay) said that his Government had prioritized the fight against poverty in all its dimensions alongside full compliance with human rights: since adopting the MDGs in 2000, Paraguay had reduced poverty from 49.7 per cent to 24.4 per cent, and extreme poverty from 22.6 per cent to 10.5 per cent, respectively. His Government still faced challenges in the country's rural areas, however, where poverty rates remained higher.

43. In view of the scale of the challenges to be addressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries and other relevant international instruments, all nations must work together to achieve harmonious, peaceful, respectful, fair and inclusive coexistence.

44. Paraguay was implementing a 2030 national development plan, the result of broad consultations among the Government, local authorities, civil society, the private sector and academia, which would be mandatory for the public sector and recommended for the private sector.

45. The nation of Paraguay existed thanks to its women, who had laid the groundwork for the homeland with dignity, abnegation and solidarity. His Government promoted policies to include women in all spheres of public life and sought to honour their role as pioneers of sustainable development through their empowerment. Women were the primary recipients of conditional transfer programmes and health-care services.

46. As one out of every four Paraguayans was under 40 years of age, his Government was committed to creating inclusive economic growth that would reach the whole population, including young people. In that regard, 98 per cent youth literacy had already been attained and universal primary school education coverage would soon be achieved. The country was just one step away from universal literacy, without discrimination based on gender, poverty or area of residence. In addition, recent protests for greater transparency in public management and for higher quality education had sparked a number of reforms, including new scholarships for youth.

47. Data collection, analysis and dissemination were necessary to produce official, reliable and comparable

information with a view to effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action. That would only be possible if national capacities were complemented and supported by all stakeholders in the global partnership for sustainable development.

48. **Mr. Anshor** (Indonesia) said that it was important to harness cross-sectoral action and integrated policy approaches at all levels in order to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, while also catalysing economic growth.

49. There must also be a strong push to improve the quality of human resources and enhance productivity. His country had understood that growth was the primary driving force behind poverty reduction. In order to build an educated, skilled and healthy workforce, the quantity and quality of education and health-care services must be strengthened. Laudable progress had been made in gender equality in primary level education, but better access to higher education was needed. More investment in infrastructure, such as roads and telecommunications, would not only connect poor people to markets, but also reduce transaction costs and raise productivity.

50. Strengthened global partnerships, financing for development and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism were all important for sustainable development and should be supported by South-South cooperation as a complement to North-South cooperation, taking into account the specific needs of individual countries.

51. **Ms. Thammavong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that poverty, in particular extreme poverty, needed to be tackled in a holistic manner and was a problem that concerned the entire international community, not just one country or a group of countries.

52. Her country, which was eager to graduate from the status of least developed country, had given top priority to poverty eradication and rural development in its five-year national socioeconomic development plans. In the context of those plans, the Poverty Reduction Fund and other relevant initiatives, the Government had set 2020 as the target date for poverty eradication, particularly in rural areas. Her country's National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy and the MDGs had been incorporated into the five-year plans, thereby ensuring coherence, aligned assistance from development partners and improved aid

effectiveness. As a result, the poverty rate had declined from around 28 per cent in 2002 to around 17 per cent in 2014.

53. Her Government was also pursuing sustainable development through a “three-level” initiative in which the provinces were responsible for strategic planning, the districts dealt with comprehensive development and the villages were in charge of local development.

54. Lastly, in the context of the current debate, she noted that her country was hosting the Ninth Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ministers’ Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication in October.

55. **Mr. Bunnag** (Thailand) said that inequality must be addressed as the root cause of poverty. His Government, which sought to tackle inequality by placing people at the centre of development, had adopted a life-long cycle approach to human development that was guided by the King’s sufficiency economy philosophy.

56. In order to move forward with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the gap between urban and rural poverty must be closed by empowering the rural poor. Sustainable rural and agricultural development should therefore be supported by strengthening predictable and equitable access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises, farmers and smallholder producers, so that they could increase their capacity, productivity and efficiency.

57. Furthermore, a rights-based approach to development must be upheld in the interest of moving towards a fairer, more inclusive and equitable society. Since 2002, his country had increased access to quality and affordable health-care services, reducing the disparity between urban and rural areas and improving livelihoods. Legislation on gender equality had been improved, since investing in women and in the future of society would also help to reduce poverty. As more frequent and more intense climate-related disasters made escaping from poverty increasingly difficult, greater efforts at disaster risk reduction would empower communities to adapt better to climate change. Bridging inequality among countries would require better access to science, technology and innovation by all stakeholders, as well as financial assistance to the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

58. **Mr. Moussa** (Côte d’Ivoire) recalled that in 2011 his Government had begun implementing a national development plan whose main goal was poverty reduction. To date, there had been a 9 per cent increase in economic growth, an average increase of 27 per cent in per capita income, significant progress in health care and education, and a major reduction in unemployment. Given that the poverty rate had fallen from 48.9 per cent in 2008 to 46.3 per cent in 2015, the 2030 Agenda constituted an appropriate framework for pursuing the national development plan further.

59. Women were essential for economic activity, and their empowerment was the key to combating poverty and inequality. The Government had supported policies that had led to more women participating in decision-making governmental bodies, as well as the establishment of national institutions focusing on gender equality, women’s political representation and countering discrimination against women. Naturally, development was impossible without ample and high-quality human resources. To that end, the Government had embarked upon a bold range of training and capacity-building policies that included constructing and renovating universities, offering more places for pupils in primary and secondary schools, and providing free and compulsory schooling for children aged 6 to 16 years, beginning in 2015.

60. To make the most of its relatively young population, his country was also committed to working alongside the specialized agencies of the United Nations to harness the demographic dividend in Africa.

61. Since national resources alone would not suffice to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, his delegation looked forward to the swift mobilization of the means of implementation stipulated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as well as the measures to be adopted at the Paris Climate Change Conference.

62. **Ms. Ordoñez Solano** (Honduras) said that poverty eradication policies must be properly coordinated and involve all levels of government and relevant stakeholders, including people living in poverty. Policy coherence and the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development should be strengthened so that social, economic and environmental policies were more effective at reducing poverty and inequality. Special emphasis should be placed on inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth that generated employment, was people-centred and

was accompanied by investment in health, education, training and social protection. Countries and the organizations supporting them must also have access to mechanisms allowing them to evaluate short-, medium- and long-term results, and to tools enabling them to make the necessary adjustments along the way.

63. In 2014, Honduras had eliminated gender inequality in primary and secondary education. Gender parity in Government and leadership positions would be achieved by 2016. Starting in 2013, 10 per cent of each political party's political debt had been allocated to training and career advancement for women, so that they could achieve parity in decision-making at the national level and rise to leadership positions. The "Vida Mejor" platform had been created to improve living conditions, promote capacity-building and provide microfinancing and technical assistance to a new generation of businesses through women-oriented conditional cash transfer programmes.

64. **Mr. do Carmo Vieira** (Timor-Leste) said that his Government had introduced a number of programmes to provide a safety net for vulnerable members of society and reduce poverty, including subsidies for older persons and persons with disabilities, and cash transfers to vulnerable mothers conditional on their children attending school. Child malnutrition was also being addressed through free school meals, thus improving children's short-term concentration and their long-term educational outcomes. Timor-Leste had recently become the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to launch a national Zero Hunger Challenge initiative, which aimed to create a future in which Timorese people enjoyed the fundamental right to food and where their livelihoods and food systems were resilient enough to withstand multiple shocks, including the impacts of global climate change.

65. Timor-Leste was committed to achieving Goal 1 of the Sustainable Development Goals and ending poverty in all its forms. As poor access to water and sanitation contributed to the spread of communicable diseases and malnutrition, his Government was also committed to improving access to clean water and effective sanitation. In addition, it was investing in increased agricultural production by establishing schools that taught young people best practices in farming techniques; by building irrigation systems to increase output; and by working with the Seeds of Life project to provide farmers with higher-yielding seeds.

His Government was also transforming vocational training to promote youth capacity.

66. **Ms. Kasese-Bota** (Zambia) said that although her country was unlikely to meet the MDG target of a 29 per cent reduction in poverty by the end of 2015, progress had been made by reducing poverty from 58 per cent in 1991 to 42.3 per cent in 2010. Her delegation called for the harmonization of data collection mechanisms in that regard, in order to avoid unnecessary discrepancies. While considerable advances had also been made in global poverty reduction, with extreme poverty dropping from 36.4 per cent in 1990 to 11.5 per cent by 2015, the rate of extreme poverty was still unacceptably high, especially in developing countries where it stood at 13.4 per cent. Poverty eradication therefore remained an important global challenge requiring a holistic, equitable and far-sighted approach, as well as global partnerships, appropriate policies and legal frameworks, as agreed at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

67. Practical measures to achieve the internationally agreed poverty-related goals and targets must integrate environmental, economic and social policies and support structural economic transformation, industrialization, value addition and diversification. Her Government would continue to implement policies that focused on creating jobs and reducing poverty and inequality, especially in rural areas, in line with the country's five-year development plans and Vision 2030 programme. In order to increase market access and reduce business costs, her Government had increased investments in road infrastructure, including through the Link Zambia 4,000 and 8,000 projects and the Pave Zambia project.

68. Zambia was also addressing poverty in rural areas, where it was three times higher than in urban areas, through interventions such as the Social Cash Transfer Scale-up project that aimed to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty among the most vulnerable groups of rural dwellers.

69. Recognizing the important role and positive impact that women played in the fight against poverty, her Government had enhanced their participation in national development by creating mechanisms that supported women entrepreneurs and provided access to affordable financing. Further progress had been made in integrating gender-responsive policies, strategies

and programmes into national development plans, including by appointing women to key decision-making positions.

70. **Mr. Calvo Calvo** (Costa Rica) said that his delegation recognized the importance of General Assembly resolution 68/227, in particular how it linked gender equality, human rights for women, poverty eradication and the MDGs. His country welcomed Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as gender mainstreaming throughout the 2030 Agenda. The rights of women and girls, including sexual and reproductive rights, must be truly integrated into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Women and girls were drivers of change and must consequently be endowed with the necessary political, financial and social tools to participate fully in all public and private sector decision-making processes at the national and international levels.

71. Costa Rica was proud to spearhead efforts to elect the first woman as Secretary-General of the United Nations, including by calling on Member States to present women as candidates, as stated in General Assembly resolution 69/321. It was time to recognize the great ability, skill and commitment of women in all spheres and to send an unmistakable political signal that, on the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the United Nations practised what it preached with regard to equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

72. The international community must create an enabling environment for the economic empowerment of women: one that overcame macroeconomic gender prejudice, focused on creating jobs for women and raised awareness about the impact of restrictive fiscal policies on the rights of women and girls, including their right to quality education. Women must also have access to the necessary productive resources to be effectively engaged in welfare creation, including access to decent work and adequate social protection. Efforts must also be made to recognize, reduce and redistribute the burden of unpaid domestic work done primarily by women. Moreover, care networks must be promoted and negative stereotypes of domestic work overcome so that men shared responsibility for such work.

73. Finally, in combating the unjustified marginalization of women and girls, he stressed that

measurement tools were needed to provide disaggregated statistical data that could be integrated into national development strategies and United Nations programmes and policies alike.

74. **Mr. Andanje** (Kenya) said that gender discrimination negatively affected the role played by women in development, denying them equal access to education, health care, decent work and political and economic representation. As women constituted 51 per cent of the global population, they must be central to the realization of the 2030 Agenda. However, an unacceptably high number of women continued to face discrimination, poverty, unemployment, violence, HIV/AIDS and inadequate access to education. It was therefore imperative for women and girls to have access to education, health and decent work, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals. Governments must implement clear legislative measures so that women had the necessary tools for effective participation, equal access to financial services and the right to own factors of production.

75. His country had worked to make women active partners in the development process by mainstreaming programmes that increased both gender equality and the economic productivity of women. More than 70 per cent of Kenyans in rural areas derived their income from agriculture, a sector where women bore the largest burden, balancing childcare and family responsibilities at the same time.

76. While Kenyan women depended on the land for income, they only owned 1 per cent of all agricultural land. His Government had therefore enacted a number of laws which recognized and safeguarded women's right to own property, including following their divorce and remarriage.

77. Thanks to the 2003 introduction of free primary education, gender parity in education at the primary level had been attained. Gender equality had likewise been prioritized in the country's development blueprint, Vision 2030. Medium term national plans also emphasized gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women. At least 30 per cent of all public procurement was reserved for women, youth and persons with disabilities. His Government had also set up the Women Enterprise Fund to provide access to development funds for women without collateral wishing to start or grow their businesses. Furthermore, Kenya had passed a number of laws targeting crimes

against women and girls, including human trafficking, female genital mutilation, sexual violence and other gender-based crimes.

78. The Constitution of Kenya stipulated that no more than two thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies could be of the same gender; as a result, women accounted for more than 30 per cent of the Kenyan Cabinet, more than 40 per cent of the judiciary and more than 25 per cent of the national parliament.

79. As the primary water collectors, food producers and wood gatherers, women were the most affected when resources such as land, water, trees and pasture were degraded. It was therefore important to involve more women in the debate on climate change.

80. **Ms. Özgür** (Turkey) said that thanks to the MDGs, extreme poverty had been eradicated in a number of countries, including Turkey. However, poverty remained a dramatic problem all over the world, including in the wealthiest nations; its eradication was thus the greatest global challenge and an essential requirement for sustainable development.

81. Poverty was a product of structural imbalances in development processes, and its root causes were complex. In that context, Turkey supported the inclusion of a global multidimensional poverty index, as suggested by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, as one of the main indicators to follow-up and review poverty in the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

82. As unemployment remained one of the key drivers of poverty, poverty eradication required sustained economic growth to generate productive employment and decent work for all. It was also necessary to address inequalities by promoting equitable development and wealth distribution, and by creating social protection measures for vulnerable groups.

83. Financial policies should create inclusive economies, thus increasing the economic participation of women. The empowerment of women was crucial not just from a social perspective, but also because it would have a positive impact on economic growth. Her delegation had therefore supported the establishment in Istanbul of the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

84. Success in eradicating poverty would depend on properly integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into national plans and strategies. It was necessary to create the conditions for well-being and prosperity nationally, so that people did not have to seek them elsewhere.

85. **Ms. Beekma Reis** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the economic crisis created by capitalism and lifestyles based on unlimited consumption, in a world of finite resources, had contributed towards poverty worldwide. In order to eradicate poverty by 2030, it was necessary to abandon the values of the capitalist system: selfishness, individualism and consumerism. Capitalism was a system that ravaged natural resources and caused environmental degradation, placing the economy in the service of politics and instating the dictatorship of financial institutions. Neoliberalism, privatization and market economics had done nothing but create poverty, exclusion, hunger and marginalization. Therefore, eradicating poverty, hunger and all forms of inequality was an ethical, social, political and economic imperative for all of humanity.

86. Patterns of consumption and production must be changed. Sustainable development must be holistic and in harmony with nature, while promoting the protection of human rights and fulfilling the material, spiritual, individual and collective needs of all people, including women, youth, indigenous peoples and rural communities. Her delegation understood that its vision of development, which came from the wisdom of indigenous peoples and was based on the principles of solidarity and living well, was profoundly different from the Western principles of competition and living better. Living well meant living in harmony with all of humankind as well as the planet. Consequently, her delegation was pleased to note that the 2030 Agenda recognized that countries had different visions of the future and would use different instruments to achieve sustainable development.

87. While her country had achieved an almost 20 per cent reduction in extreme poverty from 2005 to 2013, its total eradication remained a major challenge. In order to achieve the 2030 Agenda, developing countries must be supported by an enabling international framework that did not play favourites. It was necessary to build a new paradigm that did not repeat the mistakes of old development models. Development was a means, not an end: the end was living well in harmony with Mother Earth.

88. **Archbishop Auza** (Observer for the Holy See) said that his delegation was encouraged that, for the first time, the number of people living in extreme poverty was expected to fall below 10 per cent of the global population by the end of 2015. Yet the more than 700 million extremely poor were a reminder of the magnitude of the challenge to eliminate extreme poverty by 2030. That challenge was even more daunting given that progress had been slower at higher poverty lines; that those remaining in extreme poverty were the most difficult cases; and that, for many of those who had escaped extreme poverty, progress had been temporary and regression back to extreme poverty was even more painful and debilitating.

89. There had only been a slight decline, from 2.59 billion to 2.2 billion, in the number of people living below the average poverty line of two dollars a day, thus indicating that poverty resistance was stronger as the economic ladder climbed upwards. It was especially challenging to reach those in extreme poverty, who were usually in remote areas: without roads and electricity, access remained uncertain to education, health care, safe water and other critical services. In addition, many shocks could easily prevent individuals from maintaining an economic level above that of extreme poverty, even once they had defeated it.

90. The 2030 Agenda established poverty eradication as the absolute international priority, while placing that problem in the context of a global environmental crisis for which past unsustainable models of development must share the blame. For too long, development had been understood solely in terms of ever greater economic growth and wealth accumulation. However, that was not a model that valued human life or one that could eradicate poverty.

91. A truly new paradigm must start with the core principle of the dignity of each human person, recognizing that extreme poverty was a denial of that dignity. The new paradigm for the 2030 Agenda must be guided by a perennial concept of justice, since the lives of real women and men were at stake, and the poor must be allowed to shape their own development. Exclusion was a denial of human dignity and the main cause of extreme poverty, one of its most damaging forms being the exclusion of women and girls from education.

92. Social inclusion policies must promote the active participation of all segments of society in the labour

market, particularly women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and indigenous groups. Active inclusion should encompass access to quality education and health care, water and energy, and adequate material, social and cultural resources.

93. **Mr. Shawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that eradicating poverty meant living with dignity and providing a better future for generations to come. Unfortunately, global reports indicated that poverty rates were increasing, and the Gini coefficient of inequality was much higher than zero. The more than 1.5 billion people living in poverty required the concerted efforts of the international community, as outlined in the 2030 Agenda.

94. Poverty in Palestine was worsening, due largely to the Israeli occupation and the terrorism exercised by settlers, who targeted both the Palestinian people and their lands. Referencing the report prepared by the Economic and Social Council and presented as a note by the Secretary-General ([A/70/82-E/2015/13](#)), he said that the ongoing construction of the West Bank barrier wall had swallowed close to 10 per cent of the West Bank and Occupied East Jerusalem, isolating more than 10,000 Palestinian farmers in the region, only half of whom had been granted special authorization to access their farmlands in the seam zone, with the rest deprived of their livelihoods.

95. Poverty was also caused by ongoing and systematic attacks by settlers on agriculture, which was the lifeline of the Palestinian economy. Israeli settlers targeted fruit-bearing crops, mainly olive trees. During 2014, 10,596 trees had been uprooted, burned or sprayed with toxic chemicals. In addition, Israel's aggressive war against Gaza had completely destroyed 1,035 hectares of fruit trees, 2,415 hectares of harvestable open field vegetables and 185 hectares of greenhouse vegetables. The daily share per capita of water consumption for Israelis was seven times that for Palestinians. The final cost of Israeli aggression against Gaza amounted to somewhere between US\$ 450 million and US\$ 550 million.

96. The representative of Israel had said that after 68 years, his country had transformed a desert into a productive and civilized country. It was necessary to refute that huge lie. That desert was the historic land of Palestine, which had contained many ancient cities older than the entire history of the tribes of Israel. The desert that his delegation had been forced to part with

used to contain airports, cinemas, colleges, schools, railways, ports and hotels, and had possessed its own government, currency, tax system and even a football team. Evoking the many generations of his family, he said that the land of Palestine had never been a desert and would never become a desert.

97. **Mr. de Looz Karageorgiades** (Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) said that the elimination of poverty was key to the elimination of many other ills. The fight against poverty and exclusion, and the recognition and affirmation of human dignity, were at the heart of the activities of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Its mission was to provide assistance to those in distress without distinction of race, origin or religion, and it was active in over 120 countries, aided by its diplomatic relations with 104 States. Some of the most recent projects were related to the eradication of poverty in all its aspects. Many ongoing projects were also devoted to providing medical assistance to refugees fleeing wars, violence and poverty. At a recent meeting, Pope Francis and the Grand Master of the Order had expressed their deep concern over human trafficking in the Mediterranean, of which many victims were unaccompanied children.

98. **Ms. Mucavi** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that the link between poverty and hunger could be felt most acutely in the rural areas of developing countries, where the poor relied on agriculture for their livelihoods. Poor farmers were vulnerable to crises and social, economic and environmental shocks, and social protection was therefore a key component of successful strategies to fight poverty and promote food and nutrition security, as reflected in the report entitled “The State of Food and Agriculture” recently published by FAO. The report highlighted that social protection could be combined with agricultural support, including local sourcing from family farmers to supply school meals. Cash and in-kind transfers could also contribute to higher incomes and food security by increasing access to food in times of need and enabling rural households to purchase the tools and inputs needed to produce food. Gender-sensitive programming could further bolster social protection by empowering women to manage household incomes, thereby improving family welfare and nutrition.

99. However, social protection programmes could not break the cycle of rural poverty on their own. They must be part of a wider strategy including productive

support for rural families. Overall, the link between social protection and agriculture could promote sustainable rural development and the empowerment of communities.

100. **Mr. Amer** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation was forced to respond to the shameful statements made by the representative of the State of Palestine, which were blatant lies and slander used to incite violence by poisoning the minds of Palestinians and injecting hatred. Tens of Palestinians had been involved in 20 different terror attacks in the previous week, attacks that had been inspired by slanderous remarks and the irresponsible behaviour of the Palestinian leadership. Repeating lies did not make them true. The Palestinian authorities should be de-escalating the situation on the ground rather than pouring more oil onto the fire. Such behaviour was counterproductive to the work of the Second Committee, to which Israel was highly dedicated.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.