



# General Assembly

Seventieth session

**74**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Friday, 11 December 2015, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Lykketoft . . . . . (Denmark)

*In the absence of the President, Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

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

## High-level meeting on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development

### Agenda item 28 (continued)

#### Social development

#### (a) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

##### Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/173)

**Mr. Tenya Hasegawa** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of South Africa, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of Ecuador, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/70/PV.73).

My country reaffirms the commitments and the Programme of Action that were agreed on at the World Summit for Social Development, which have been collected and recast in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), taking into consideration the current circumstances, in particular the three main pillars of Copenhagen: the eradication of poverty, the promotion of full employment and combating social exclusion.

The issue of social development obliges us as States to reaffirm our commitment to implementing the Copenhagen Declaration and to take measures to address the great challenge of working with an ambitious and transformative vision of the future in light of the 2030 Agenda to adopt a new approach that efficiently addresses the challenges and commitments made at past conferences, which now have new meaning. The social component of the new Agenda is an essential part of it and its implementation must be focused primarily on the need to empower people, in particular the most vulnerable social groups, and on developing social inclusion programmes that make it possible to build more inclusive, participatory and fair societies.

In the light of this new paradigm, Peru is convinced that the central remaining task for developing countries is to transform economic growth into substantive improvements in the quality of life of their populations. In that sense, the State is the institution responsible for paving the way for that transformation through public social-inclusion policies that meet the needs and legitimate aspirations of all citizens. That is why Peru is firmly committed to the promotion of joint actions aimed at reducing poverty, inequalities and vulnerabilities. It demonstrated that commitment by creating the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, which oversees social policies and has a mandate to design, coordinate and guide policies and strategies to reduce poverty and vulnerability. The Ministry has promoted a social-inclusion policy that seeks to include population groups that have not benefited from the country's growth.

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Under that framework, our national strategy for development and social inclusion, entitled “Inclusion for Growth”, is designed to implement our development and social-inclusion policy through concrete and effective processes and tools to coordinate the actions of administrative bodies at three levels of Government — national, regional and local — and to order and direct them towards priority development and social inclusion outcomes. In doing so, we recognize the competencies and processes in place aimed at bringing about results for the population, in particular those who have not yet been able to benefit from the growth of our country in recent years. Similarly, Peru has continued to increase its budget for social investment. The budget for this year has increased by 12 per cent over 2014, and about half of that increase will be allocated to education and health initiatives and to expanding social programmes to benefit the most vulnerable. Also, our country has set as a target for mid-2016 reducing the percentage of people living in poverty to less than one fifth of the population.

It is true that progress has been made since the World Summit in Copenhagen, but it has not been sufficient. The 2030 Agenda therefore gives us a new opportunity to build policies that prioritize the empowerment of people, reducing inequalities and eradicating poverty.

With regard to the achievements of Peru, there are still many goals that must be achieved. We will continue to work to coordinate them at the intersectoral and intergovernmental levels and to improve public management for future challenges. For now, we know that we are moving on the right path by means of a public administration that has become more professional with management tools that are focused on concrete, people-centred results. We believe that closing the existing gaps is the main task we are facing in the coming years and that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, which must be tackled from all sides.

**Mr. Minami (Japan):** At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to you, Madam President, for convening this meeting.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) was adopted in September, as we all know, and the Sustainable Development Goals have been defined. Sustainable development is recognized as the integration of three pillars or dimensions of development: the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Therefore, the achievement of the

Sustainable Development Goals will lead to the genuine advancement of social development.

We strongly support the fact that the 2030 Agenda is based on a human-centred approach, referred to in the document as leaving no one behind, which we align with the notion of human security. It is important to implement the protection and empowerment of people in vulnerable situations, so as to ensure that truly no one will be left behind. In this context, Japan has been emphasizing its support for the protection and empowerment of women, especially those in armed conflict, and other vulnerable groups, such as children, persons with disabilities and the elderly. We will also make efforts to encourage and increase the participation of these people and other stakeholders by including them in every phase of social development.

Japan has reformed its Official Development Assistance Charter for the first time in 12 years. In this Charter, Japan has inserted language on the importance of the promotion of women’s participation and the consideration of children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other socially vulnerable people in implementing development cooperation. In that connection, I am pleased to introduce some concrete examples of our development cooperation.

Over the next three years, Japan will implement assistance of over \$350 million in order to ensure the quality of education for all people and in particular for the empowerment of women and girls. In order to promote the independence and participation of persons with disabilities, we have dispatched persons with disabilities overseas as specialists for vocational training programmes. Japan, as the world’s most aged society, is already engaged in numerous efforts, such as improving the access of older persons to employment, improving their work environment and combating discriminatory dismissal. We are gladly sharing these experiences with other countries, particularly our neighbouring partners in the Asia and Pacific region.

In that connection, please allow me to mention that Japanese professor Mr. Kaoru Ishikawa, an expert in the field of assistive technology for persons with disabilities, is a candidate for the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2016. As engagement with the Committee is an important aspect of Japan’s contributions to the international community, I would like to take this opportunity to request the generous support of States Members of the

United Nations for Mr. Ishikawa's candidature in order to promote inclusive societies.

Many people in the world still face extreme poverty, inequality, discrimination and social alienation. We acknowledge the importance of an enabling environment for the empowerment of all individuals to advance social development. From that point of view, we feel it is useful to promote volunteerism, which is an important means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We expect all Member States to positively address the implementation of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.15/Rev.1, on integrating volunteering into peace and development, which was submitted by Brazil and Japan at this year's session of the Third Committee and adopted by consensus.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Japan will continue to address challenging issues to realize the 2030 Agenda and ensure that no one is left behind.

**Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of South Africa, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the representative of Ecuador, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/70/PV.73).

We believe that the vision and goals that were agreed on 20 years ago at the World Summit for Social Development remain valid; but we recognize that the fulfilment of the three pillars of Copenhagen has been unequal. The challenges of fighting poverty, bridging the gap between developed and developing countries, and eradicating social inequalities remain. To achieve sustainable development, the international community must address equality among countries and generations, while respecting the sovereignty and the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as the vulnerabilities and particular problems of the countries. The human being must be considered the crux and ultimate goal of development. In that sense, El Salvador renews its commitment to continue promoting social development in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

El Salvador recognizes the multiple dimensions of poverty and the need to address its structural causes. In El Salvador, the extent of poverty has historically been underestimated because the basic food basket has been the only basis for measurement, which does not reflect all the relevant dimensions of poverty. In that regard,

I am pleased to report that next year El Salvador will implement a new multidimensional methodology for measuring poverty. Our country will therefore be one of the first countries, together with the United Nations, to implement the new form of studying this phenomenon. That will help us highlight people's hardships and make progress in reducing the structural causes of poverty. This tool will allow us to improve the design, coordination and assessment of public policies to overcome the factors that affect the various dimensions of poverty and move forward towards sustainable and inclusive development, to which Salvadoran society aspires.

We believe that fighting poverty, inequality and exclusion in the framework of the new road maps established by the 2030 Agenda should be carried out with a universal approach that takes into consideration the specific needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups and people. Living in poverty is difficult at any age, and particularly for the elderly, whose chances of escaping poverty are even more limited. That is why Member States must ensure that people 60 years or older are taken into account in the framework of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In that connection, we reaffirm our commitment to promoting the human rights of the elderly and call for further discussions on a possible international legal instrument to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment without discrimination of human rights for the elderly.

Young people are also a priority group for my country. Our national youth policy considers youth in three areas: as a risk group, as rights-holders and as national development actors. It is important for us to promote social cohesion, social prevention and violence and to mitigate the risk factors of violence and juvenile delinquency, while working alongside young people. We appreciate the valuable support of the friendly countries that are cooperating with us to achieve these important objectives.

Finally, allow me to affirm that our Salvadoran legislation clearly establishes the existence of various forms of family: the family created by marriage, single-parent families and families in which the children are cared for by a relative. This represents an important step forward for us, as before there was absolute discrimination against children and youth in our family legislation simply due to the fact that their parents were not part of a nuclear family, which is legally recognized by the Code as a family composed of a man and a

woman. Various forms of family are recognized in our legislation, and we believe that the experience of the same realities of the world in which we live shows us that there is not just one type of family, but rather a rich diversity that is the result of diverse cultures, religions and historical conditions. That diversity is the only consensus that exists and is called humankind. For us, the United Nations, as an expression of that humankind, must welcome that diversity of forms and structures of the family and cannot give in to enshrining a single form of family and excluding millions of human beings of the benefits of development.

**Mr. Ndong Mba** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Republic of Equatorial Guinea associates itself with the statements made by Ambassador Mamabolo of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of South Sudan on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/70/PV.73).

For me, it is a great honour to speak at this important and relevant high-level meeting devoted to the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development and to represent the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and His Excellency President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo.

This high-level meeting, which is taking place 20 years after the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, is for us a great opportunity to reflect on achievements in the field of social development in general and in poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and social integration, in particular for the most disenfranchised groups, as the main objectives set out in that Summit, and to give new impetus to achieving those goals. To that end, I congratulate President Mogens Lykketoft on his excellent initiative of organizing this high-level meeting to commemorate this twentieth anniversary and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his comprehensive report (A/70/173) prepared in accordance with resolution 69/143, which clearly illustrates the path taken over the past 20 years, the path we should continue to follow and the efforts that we should continue to make in order to strengthen social development in the modern world by eradicating poverty, promoting employment and decent work for all, as well as social integration.

Like the other major global conferences held in the 1990s, the World Summit for Social Development was held in order to give more weight to the international programme and to promote greater awareness

of several important issues through cooperation among Member States and the involvement of other development actors. Indeed, the global situation half way through the last decade of the twentieth century was the backdrop against which the World Summit was held. Globalization, changes in the world's economy, poverty, unemployment and social disintegration were facts that drove the debate and promoted the idea of resizing the social aspects of development in order to emphasize the poorest countries.

Despite all the efforts undertaken over the past 20 years, the goals and objectives designed in the declarations and plans of action of these conferences have not been achieved as desired by all Member States. Indeed, the majority of the countries, especially the least advantaged, remain disenfranchised in the global economy and affected by extreme poverty. Achieving the objectives set forth at the conferences has been undermined by a series of negative factors, in addition to the decline in official development assistance and severe structural impediments; the falling prices of raw materials and, in some countries, violent conflicts, natural disasters, pandemics and piracy have added to the global problems of the severe financial crisis, terrorism, organized crime and the effects of climate change, among others.

These factors and phenomena, which have impeded the joint efforts of States to meet the goals established in the conferences, especially the World Summit for Social Development, whose twentieth anniversary we are celebrating, should lead to the revitalization of consensus among all countries. That consensus should then become a collective action to counter these evils, which are opposed to the development objectives that we have set for ourselves.

The Social Development Goals are for the Republic of Equatorial Guinea a serious and decisive commitment to sustainable development. That is why my country's Government has taken a series of economic, legislative, legal and administrative measures to help achieve these Goals by 2020. During the last 15 years, the economic results of Equatorial Guinea have been particularly exceptional, thanks to the discovery and exploitation of major oil fields. However, the current drastic fall in prices has seriously compromised the efforts the Government has already undertaken. To counter those effects, the Government has undertaken a plan for the strategic diversification of our income sources.



Indeed, the vision of sustainable development adopted by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is set for 2020 and involves multiplying our efforts, broadening our sources of production and strengthening human resources to achieve appropriate levels of growth for a competitive economy to eradicate poverty and hunger, as set forth in our current plan of action for the development of Equatorial Guinea by 2020, a plan which was established by our Government in 2007.

Like many other countries, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea was not spared the impact of the financial and economic crisis, which has had a severe impact on all economic activity in Africa. The cause of social development, and in particular the fight against poverty, hunger and unemployment, which plague the world today, can be advanced only by broad, deep and sustained international cooperation among States, with the firm commitment and support of the bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, including the private sector and civil society.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) adopted by all Member States in September and the consensus around the means for financing these goals should provide us the instruments that would serve as a basis for shared responsibility and accountability and an appeal to countries to strengthen their economic structures, counter corruption, promote economic growth driven by the private sector and maximize the availability of resources to finance development strategies. To achieve the goals of social development, it is absolutely necessary that there be greater solidarity within the diversity of all States and institutions that make up the great family of the international community.

**Mrs. Vives Balmaña** (Andorra) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to thank the President for convening this meeting.

The delegation of Andorra wishes to join in commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, and, as we did in Copenhagen, we want to contribute with our voice once again. Today we would also like to express our commitment to the work of the Commission for Social Development, which led to the identification of and concentration on the elements most likely to lead to a shift in the development paradigm.

Although it has been repeated throughout the day, I recall that, by placing the human person at the

centre of development, we have committed ourselves to eradicating poverty, developing jobs and work with decent conditions for all, as well as social integration, which are the priority goals we established 20 years ago. On that basis, we have formulated the Millennium Development Goals in order to protect and promote human rights and increase development while preserving the environment.

It is undeniable that, although considerable progress has been achieved, gaps and challenges remain. We were therefore compelled to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) so as to complete our work and ensure that people can live in dignity and safety and are able to fully exercise their inherent human rights. The experience of the past two decades has shown us all the potential of a true global compact for development. In addition to the political will of the public sector, it is vital that the private sector and civil society be included in the process. We must continue on this comprehensive path of analysis and action in order to achieve the common goals of a better world, the theme of the seventieth session of the General Assembly that we have the opportunity to share.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/70/173) clearly identifies the needs and the programmes of action that will allow us to support developing countries. It also recalls the guidelines to be followed in the spirit of social justice and a people-centred development. In addition, we see that vulnerabilities are universal; indeed, poverty, job insecurity, especially among the young and the elderly, and inequality are now affecting the most developed countries.

The Andorran Government is firmly committed to fulfilling its duty of international solidarity and to effectively contributing to development, as we have tried to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and as we are doing now to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The master plan of the Andorra Development Cooperation is a strategic planning tool of the Government of Andorra in the field of cooperation for development and humanitarian assistance. It prioritizes the protection of vulnerable people, especially women and children, and marginalized persons. Reducing child mortality, promoting universal primary education, improving maternal health, combating discrimination against women and strengthening their involvement in achieving equal conditions within society and the world of work are some of the goals of the projects supported by Andorra and implemented by our country's civil-

society organizations. Similarly, the master plan of my country provides an action plan for fighting climate change and protecting the environment, as well as promoting access to water and sanitation, as basic elements for development.

With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, Andorra will revise and adapt its master plan for assistance to development to participate in the international community's efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty in the world and thereby contribute to the development of our planet.

**Mrs. Smaila** (Nigeria): Nigeria associates itself with the statements made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, by the representative of South Sudan on behalf of the Group of African States, and by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Family (see A/70/PV.73).

As we commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, it is important to applaud the recent adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (resolution 70/1). We are pleased to note that the Sustainable Development Goals pay considerable attention to issues of social development. The vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for a world with equitable and universal access to social protection. It also calls for access by all people to a basic standard of living, including through social protection systems.

The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development; the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Goals contained therein; Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/18, on promoting full employment and decent work for all; the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing; and the Ministerial Declaration on Eradicating Poverty and Hunger, among other international instruments, have continued to be the springboards for the articulation, sensitization, advocacy and implementation of social development policies, programmes and initiatives in Nigeria.

Empowerment remains critical to addressing the problems of poverty and unemployment. It promotes inclusion and gives all members of society a sense of belonging. Empowerment, social integration and inclusiveness are among the fundamental objectives and directive principles of State policy in Nigeria. Chapter II of the Constitution of the Federal Republic

of Nigeria, entitled "Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy", includes, inter alia, issues of social justice, the protection of liberties and rights, and the guarantee of equitable development for all citizens.

Promoting social justice and the advancement of all elements that will facilitate this objective is a constitutional duty for the Nigerian Government. Such State policy involves the provision of social security for all Nigerian citizens, including vulnerable people. The Nigerian Government has well-articulated programmes that address specific social needs. We are also focusing on strengthening the capacities of our institutions so that all social groups, including vulnerable members, will be able to participate effectively in society.

The family is society's basic and fundamental instrument that unites all the dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. Greater attention must be paid to the cognitive skills and core contributions of the family and its members to social development. It is important that poverty, inequality, education, health, housing and sanitation, and gender equality have direct a linkage with the family; hence the importance of revolving the implementation of the 2030 Agenda around the family unit.

The young people of any society are its assets and its hope for the future. Early investment in them is imperative for meaningful national development. Their energy, if properly harnessed, could contribute in no small measure to today's success and tomorrow's hope. Youth development strategies, including through job creation, are an important aspect of our national development agenda.

Nigeria has incorporated the interest of persons with disabilities in all its national development plans and strategies and remains committed to the protection of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. An all-inclusive national social welfare policy that takes care of the developmental needs of persons with disabilities, orphans and vulnerable children, as well as the elderly, within society remains our top priority.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is a nation based on the principles of democracy and social justice and guided by the fundamental social objectives of the protection and advancement of the economic and social security of the citizenry and the strengthening of their capacities to function effectively. In pursuit of our own social development agenda and the goals enshrined in

various international instruments, Nigeria continues to adopt strategies and policies aimed at improving the social welfare of its people, with special emphasis on the vulnerable members of society.

Finally, Nigeria seizes this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to all issues, strategies and programmes that promote social development. This commitment has been amply demonstrated in our adherence to relevant international instruments and initiatives on social development, as well as the progressive development of appropriate national legislation and policies on persons with disabilities, the aged, the family and youth.

**Mrs. Jurcan** (Romania): Romania fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member States (see A/70/PV.73). Please allow me now to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

This year, Romania marks 60 years since it became a Member of the United Nations. In this celebratory year, our holding of the chairmanship of the Commission for Social Development is a reflection of our commitment to the development of an inclusive social system, based on quality, efficiency, equity and accessibility and underpinned by respect for human rights, the values and principles of democracy, the rule of law and dignity for all.

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this high-level debate today. As Chair of the Commission for Social Development, we take due note of all the ideas that were presented today, and we will use them in discharging our mandate.

Earlier this year, the fifty-third session of the Commission for Social Development marked the first celebration of the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, landmark documents in the field of social development that continue to guide the work of the Commission. Twenty years ago, on the occasion of the World Summit for Social Development, the international community acknowledged that social development and social justice are at the core of peace and security. The commitments made in Copenhagen in 1995 to eradicating poverty, promoting full employment and decent work, and fostering social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights remain unfulfilled, and the vision of the Summit continues to be relevant.

This acknowledgement is of great relevance today, as across the world the task of placing people at the centre of development is not yet fully accomplished. Despite the remarkable progress made in the eradication of poverty, more than 1 billion people are still facing this scourge. With more than 200 million unemployed people globally, the creation of decent employment should be emphasized on the worldwide political agenda. This process, aimed at reducing the gaps, should be extensively sustained by a combination of political will, concrete measures and coordinated action capable of providing tangible solutions for the unemployed, especially for youth and those in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations.

The adoption in September at the highest level of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) demonstrated our clear commitment to a universal approach that implies a paradigm shift. Its implementation entails clear commitments, specific measures and cooperation at the national and international levels, including all stakeholders, Government and local authorities, social partners, civil society and the private sector. The multidimensionality of social development was underscored. It reinforced the need for action as a road map to end poverty and to foster sustainable economic growth. The countering of inequality in the working environment should start with enhanced social protection with comprehensive mechanisms tailored for long-term benefits. The economic advancements acquired through new technologies should be reflected in improved social inclusion and social cohesion. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action represented a turning point in the way the international community approached social action and a milestone in the efforts to develop a worldwide policy for social development. We should continue this work within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and to implement the underlying measures.

The protection of the environment, recently discussed at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Paris, is one of the multiple social challenges we are all facing in the context of global governance. The pursuit of sustainable development should be the silver lining of a better future. It is dependent on the capacity to unite in the spirit of the common hope of humankind: the hope for a better life for all. Nevertheless, this process should be conducted

in full respect for human rights. Our major general objective is to build a society based on social inclusion, taking into account intergenerational solidarity and ensuring improved quality of life for citizens.

In conclusion, I am confident that the fifty-fourth session of the Commission for Social Development, to take place in February 2016, will represent an opportunity to further this cause and contribute to the meaningful implementation and monitoring of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Romania will continue to promote a transparent and inclusive dialogue in order to move the social development agenda ahead.

**Mr. León González (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we express our full support for the statements made by the representatives of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and of Ecuador on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/70/PV.73).

We underscore the full validity of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action, in which we agreed that poverty eradication was the principal means by which to achieve development. Twenty years after its adoption, although there have been notable advances in poverty reduction, much of that progress has been uneven and it has yet to bring us closer to our goal of eradicating hunger, poverty and social exclusion. The commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action calls on us to reflect on how we can more effectively fulfil the objectives we set for ourselves two decades ago and have not yet achieved.

The basic commitments of social development can be met only if the current international economic order, which by its very nature is unjust and unsustainable, is changed. We highlight the need to implement public policies that promote the various aspects of social development, taking into account the fundamental role that States play in that area, in coordination with other actors. We reiterate the urgent need for the development aid commitments made by developed countries to be fulfilled. It is necessary to promote international collaboration that is genuine and clearly targeted to address the serious issues facing humankind, without political conditions. The eradication of poverty does not depend solely on a country's economic growth. National and international factors are essential to the

creation of a macroeconomic environment that helps to eradicate poverty and contributes to the achievement of full employment and productive work.

The commitment made in 1945 to promoting social progress and raising people's standard of living and their economic and social development remains an illusion when 795 million suffer from hunger, 781 million adults are illiterate, and 17,000 children die every day from curable diseases, and while annual military spending worldwide totals more than \$1.7 trillion.

The facts speak for themselves. Unequal trade has deepened; official development assistance has contracted in real terms; technology transfer remains very limited and highly conditional; the markets of the most advanced economies remain restricted to exports from poor countries; the external debt has been paid several times over and yet continues to grow. To this is added the burden of the economic, financial, food and energy crises and the negative impact of climate change. The current international economic and political order remains deeply unjust and unsustainable. The countries of the South continue to suffer the adverse effects of a world economic order that excludes our legitimate interests.

Cuba achieved the Millennium Development Goals and has cooperated with other developing countries in various sectors. We will continue to do so to the extent that our modest resources allow. The infant mortality rate in Cuba is 4.2 per 1,000 live births — among the lowest in the world — and life expectancy at birth is 78 years. In our country, no one is illiterate, and we have a system of universal, accessible and free health care for the entire population. More than two thirds of the State budget is allocated to raising standards of education, health, security and social assistance, culture, sports and scientific and technical research, among other sectors.

Cuba has shared and continues to share its modest efforts with sisterly nations. Cuban workers in the health, education and other sectors lend their assistance to 158 nations of the South. In addition, young people from sisterly nations receive free training in Cuba in the areas of health care, sports, culture and education. We have also taken our literacy programme, entitled "Yes, I can", to 28 countries free of charge, and restored sight to hundreds of thousands of patients afflicted with eye problems in several countries. These results have been achieved despite the persistent economic, commercial



and financial blockade that has been imposed against Cuba for over half a century, and brought harm and hardship to the Cuban people, and is the main obstacle to the economic development of our country. It also affects other nations owing its extraterritorial scope, and continues to harm the interests of United States citizens and companies.

We reiterate that we will never relinquish the principles of dignity, human solidarity and social justice, which are the deeply held convictions of our socialist society.

**Ms. Flores** (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): Honduras associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Ecuador on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.73).

Two decades ago, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action provided a road map in the context of a commitment to placing people at the centre of social development. The leaders and Governments represented there and the international community agreed to promote a vision and inclusive policies to create for their peoples an economic, political, social and cultural environment that respects human rights with a view to eradicating poverty and reaching the most vulnerable groups; generating full employment and decent work for all; achieving equity and gender equality; ensuring universal access to primary education; expanding the coverage and quality of health care in a spirit of generosity to Africa, the cradle and ancestral home of humankind; and sharing with the least developed countries in a spirit of solidarity. It is a commitment to strengthening cooperation mechanisms by earmarking more resources for social development.

At that meeting, Honduras spoke on behalf of the Central American family, embracing sustainable social and human development through democracy and inclusive dialogue in the context of the convergence and participation of a new regional society with a new face and voice as a zone of peace, freedom, work and the full participation of civil society, and where the individual is recognized as the centre of development. The individual's willingness and desire to create, participate and be involved are essential to guiding and strengthening processes and agendas that will impact the lives and future of coming generations.

Twenty years have elapsed since then, and using the progress and successes achieved in the completion of the Millennium Development Goals, a new century calls for actors committed to updating and adapting existing strategies in the light of the new challenges posed by the new global agenda in an innovative and creative manner. Honduras, at the centre of America, renews its commitment to the social development agenda within a broader context that transcends our borders, increasingly integrates us into our region, and calls for convergence, collaboration and cooperation among sectors and actors.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/70/173), which is based on the recommendations made by the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-third session in February. The report provides insight on the way forward with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the Sustainable Development Goals. We share this space with all States involved in the process of inclusive social development. We share in their experiences in the area of building trust and opening new spaces to align and harmonize policies in the context of a historic opportunity to work together towards an interrelated agenda that facilitates new synergies.

Honduras prioritizes inclusive social development domestically, reaching out to the most remote and deprived areas where families live in conditions of extreme poverty through social programmes and a platform for a better life, ensuring and providing care and services that create opportunities for development for over 400,000 households. Our achievements and progress are reflected in the income, food security, nutrition, decent and healthy housing, and access to education and health care reaching those households. We are committed to reducing poverty to less than 20 percentage points, as measured by the Multidimensional Poverty Index. Through these actions, and with our national resources and potential and the help of all friendly countries and the international community, which result in greater benefits for our people, we will be able to make a major contribution to the universal social agenda for the sustainable development of and for all.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 28 (a).

*The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.*