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President: Mr. Thomson (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 11

Sport for development and peace

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/179)

The President: The history of sport traces back to ancient civilizations. Our ancestors played sport to impress the gods. They played to mark the arrival of seasons and to celebrate peace after conflict. By engaging in healthy competition, they built physical strength and fostered community spirit. Indeed, the ancient Greek tradition of the Olympic Truce, a temporary ceasefire to enable athletes and spectators to travel and compete safely at games, was premised on the recognition of the importance of sport in building peace and goodwill.

Across the world, sport has been used time and again to advance peace and reconciliation. Who can forget the iconic image of Nelson Mandela holding up the 1995 Rugby World Cup and using that moment to unite the people of South Africa in the wake of apartheid? To this day — whether we are watching children kicking around homemade footballs, or our athletic heroes breaking records or the determined look of Paralympians competing or the refugee Olympic team entering the Rio de Janeiro stadium — sports have the power to transcend borders and inspire us all.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the importance of sport as an enabler of sustainable development in peace through its promotion

of tolerance and respect, the empowerment of women and young people, and its contribution to health, education and social inclusion. Sport is a tool for driving forward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We see its application in the Goals related to the health and well-being and the empowerment of women and girls and the achievement of peaceful and inclusive societies. We see it in helping to build the confidence, strength and capacities of young persons, persons with disabilities and minority communities.

The General Assembly's 2013 decision to declare 6 April the annual International Day of Sport for Development and Peace elevated global awareness of the role of sport in peace and development. I congratulate the Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace for its work in that regard, and for promoting the importance of sport more broadly. I also commend the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace for its work to promote sport as a means for furthering the goals of the United Nations, including through the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace.

The Office's priority areas of conflict resolution, gender equality, the development of Africa and the inclusion of persons with disabilities and youth development are particularly important. Nelson Mandela said,

“Sport can create hope, where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than Governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination.”

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Today we celebrate sport for its role in driving sustainable development, for promoting goodwill and understanding and for its push for a more peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable world.

Ms. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): Today, as the General Assembly considers agenda item 11, on sport for development and peace, I would like to take a moment to remember the victims of the recent plane crash that plunged Brazil into mourning as the Chapecoense football team was preparing to play in its first Copa Sudamericana final. As pride gave way to disarray and celebration gave way to sorrow, the expressions of solidarity and sympathy that came from all continents are symbolic of the most noble sentiments that sport can foster, and of our commitment to the universal language of sport and our gratitude to those who promote its values. The gesture of awarding that devastated team the cup is symbolic of the generosity of sport. We offer our Brazilian friends, who hosted the thirty-first Olympic games and the fifteenth Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in August and September, our condolences during this terrible ordeal.

After the adoption of resolution 69/6, in 2014, on sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted last year, designated sport as an important element of sustainable development. The political declaration that prefaced the 2030 Agenda recognized the growing contribution of sport to development and peace through the tolerance and respect it advocates, to the empowerment of women and girls, individuals and groups, and to the attainment of health, education and social inclusion objectives.

The values that sport upholds can be seen in all aspects of our lives through all of the benefits that it provides individuals and communities. Our collective efforts to promote sport in the Organization have been successful. In a world full of danger and violence, any initiative that calls for unity and social cohesion is precious. We must harness the full potential of sport for the three pillars of sustainable development.

Since 2008, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, Mr. Wilfried Lemke, has consistently revitalized and strengthened the role of sport in the Organization's agenda. As his mandate comes to an end, we wholeheartedly thank him, along with the Secretary-General, for his personal commitment to this issue

and for having promoted the culture of sport at the United Nations.

Promoting sport for development and peace, as we have been doing since 2010 as one of the co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace, has convinced me of the extraordinary potential of sport to bring people together, narrow differences and foster a culture of peace among the youth — which is so important to Mr. Lemke. I would also like to thank him for his generosity, his spontaneity and his perseverance. He embodies the values of sport and has made youth his priority. He successfully established Youth Leadership Camps. In those camps, the Special Adviser has prioritized equality among young boys and girls and restored dignity to persons with disabilities. We are therefore extremely grateful to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General. In this tribute, we join all of those who have worked by his side in the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace.

The draft resolution that is to be introduced at a later date (A/71/L.38) calls for renewing the mandate of the Special Adviser to ensure that sport contributes to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and preserving the legacy of more than 10 years of work.

Without question, the role of sport in the United Nations agenda has benefited fully from the support of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), even before it was granted observer status by the General Assembly, in 2009. While the resolution on the Olympic Day (resolution 49/29), which dates from the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, strengthened the links between the IOC and the United Nations, its formalization is due to the leadership of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, IOC President Thomas Bach and, before him, IOC President Rogge. We welcome the partnership and are grateful for its efforts.

Agenda 2030 is our road map. Monaco has teamed up with an innovative project centred on sport through the Sustainable Development Goals Fund in an inter-agency mechanism. The project will be launched in 2017 and will involve athletes, teams and sports institutions in collaboration with United Nations agencies. We hope that other partners will join that promising initiative. The Fund aims to convey the values of sport, namely, team spirit, a sense of community, tolerance, respect, commitment and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

It will work on school absenteeism, exclusion and reducing juvenile delinquency, while addressing sport and education holistically.

As is well known, sport is deeply rooted in Monegasque culture. Local and global sporting events aimed at the youth of the Principality and the greatest world champions are organized in Monaco throughout the year. As such, sport forms a major part of the Prince's governmental policy.

As it does every year on the occasion of Universal Children's Day, on 20 November, the non-governmental organization Children & Future organized the no-finish-line solidarity race where participants covered the distance from the Earth to the Moon, by walking or running, day and night for eight days. It is a symbolic distance that was not only achieved, but surpassed, by the participants. Through their participation in the eight-day race, participants raised €400,000 for Monaco's international cooperation and development programmes.

Furthermore, the ninth Peace and Sport Forum took place in Monaco a few days ago, with 600 participants from 70 countries. A march for peace preceded the opening of the Forum, which brought together His Serene Highness Prince Albert II and Founder President Joël Bouzou, three 2015 Nobel Peace Prize laureates from Tunisia, decision-makers in the field of sport and the Forum's Champions of Peace, who promote peace through sport and the public. The theme of the ninth edition was "Peace in action: changing the world through sport". One of the five plenary meetings was devoted to the theme "Diplomacy through sport: breaking down barriers", which is what we must do here each day.

While highlighting the necessary cooperation among diplomatic representations and intergovernmental organizations involved in the movement for peace through sport, the Forum provided a framework for two meetings: the Council of Europe held an official seminar on its Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions, and UNESCO held a preparatory meeting for the tenth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sport, to be held from 5 to 7 July 2017 in Kazan, Russian Federation.

In addition to its social network campaign "White card for peace", the Peace and Sport Forum developed a handbook of appropriate practices for outdoor sports

some years ago. The aim of that manual is to make sport available to all, especially children who lack access to sports facilities. What we must keep in mind, above and beyond the extraordinary images transmitted to us from global events such as the Olympic Games and the many World Cups, including rugby and football, is the fact that a nice stadium is not necessary for practicing sport. Furthermore, we intend to share some innovative practices by inviting the Peace and Sport Forum and the United Nations next year to celebrate the upcoming International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, in April 2017.

In conclusion, it is unfortunate that the biennial draft resolution will not be adopted today, but I am confident that, with the participants' goodwill in the negotiations, the draft resolution will soon be adopted by consensus by the General Assembly — which I welcome. It is something that we must not fail to achieve.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia highly values the role of the United Nations in strengthening international cooperation in sport, as that contributes to overcoming inter-ethnic and interreligious strife, while strengthening mutual understanding among nations and achieving harmony among civilizations.

Sport has an enormous potential to unite. In today's difficult environment, it is more important than ever to maintain efforts to transform sport into a tool for achieving tolerance, solidarity and multiculturalism and a driving force for comprehensive socioeconomic development. Our country has always attached the highest importance to those issues.

We have extensive experience in holding large-scale international sports competitions. In preparing for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi in 2014, Russia built unique sports facilities and created a modern transportation and resort infrastructure. In addition to powerful socioeconomic effects, those Games became a major impulse for the further development of mass sports in our country. In recent years, the number of those who regularly participate in athletic activities increased by nearly 35 per cent.

Today Russia faces an equally ambitious challenge in preparing for and hosting the football World Cup in 2018. We fought openly for the right to hold that major competition, with the desire to promote that most popular sport. We are doing everything to ensure that the championship will be held at the highest level

possible. The scale of the task before us is greater than any other project ever carried out on Russian territory. A comprehensive programme is in place to prepare for the championship, which currently includes the construction of 269 sites. In addition to 122 sports facilities, such as stadiums and training fields, that also includes transportation facilities and aviation, housing and energy infrastructure and hotel and health-care infrastructure.

In recent years, we have witnessed a dangerous trend of politics interfering in sports, turning it into an instrument for creating negative images of countries and peoples. Great political pressure has been put on the International Olympic Committee and international athletic federations. In essence, that is an attack on the fundamental principles of the international sport movement, as well as its independence and integrity. For instance, in the run-up to the Games in Sochi, we experienced the full force of the anti-Russian propaganda machine, which resulted not only in baseless accusations, but in falsified information.

The unprecedented decision to ban the entire Russian Paralympic team from the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 was also extremely politicized and cynical. The targeted campaign against our athletes was the embodiment of double standards and the principle of collective responsibility. No specific evidence-based charges were ever advanced against our athletes. They were banned simply because they were part of the Russian team. As a result, they were not the only ones who suffered, but it was in essence a blow to the prestige of world sport in general, as well as to the Olympic and Paralympic Movements.

Russia is open to cooperation in combating doping. We have been conducting the appropriate investigations into the relevant allegations and intend to ensure that our national anti-doping system achieves maximum effectiveness. We currently have in place a national anti-doping plan, which includes tightening legislation that entails responsibility, including criminal responsibility, for the use and distribution of doping drugs, as well as for putting pressure on athletes to use such drugs. We also have an independent public anti-doping commission. In order to ensure the full independence of our anti-doping structures, we are making relevant changes to the Russian anti-doping agency, including increasing its financing. That work is being carried out in active cooperation with the relevant international organizations and the International

Olympic Committee. We are also instilling a public culture promoting the total rejection of doping in our country. Those major efforts will continue in Russia.

However, there is also obviously a pressing need to establish whether or not everything is indeed so rosy outside Russia. In that regard, it is unacceptable to continue to ignore the information that has become public knowledge in the sport world that anti-doping bodies tacitly approved the use of powerful drugs by athletes who, over many years, have won major international championships and made tens of millions of dollars. The claims that they were suffering from serious illnesses contradicts common sense. All of that appears particularly hypocritical against the backdrop of the ban on our paralympic athletes simply based on suspicions. That can hardly be seen as being in line with the principles of equality and fair play. We intend to discuss the matter further in United Nations forums. The international anti-doping system must become transparent and ensure the unconditional equality of all athletes. Overall, there is a need to develop common international doping-control criteria. Not just athletes, but the public must have access to information related to doping testing.

Sport has been rightly called the universal language of human communication. We must do everything to ensure clean sport and make it completely open and removed from politics, so that sport ideals and values can bring countries and peoples together.

Mrs. Sánchez Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to express our gratitude for the report (A/71/179) submitted by the Secretary-General, which reviews the actions carried out during a two-year period in the United Nations system for the promotion of sport for the benefit of sustainable development and peace. We believe that the initiatives carried out have been positive and again reflect the fact that sport constitutes an excellent tool for promoting integration, social inclusion and development.

Cuba has given popular sport development a place in the quality of life of the population; its practice is free for all citizens. Guaranteeing the enjoyment of sport as a constitutional right for all Cubans is one of the most relevant achievements of the Cuban revolution in the area of human rights. Since the triumph of the Cuban revolution, in 1959, and under the leadership of Fidel Castro Ruz, sport in our country stopped being exclusive and became a right for all people. For the realization

of that right, we have established a pedagogical system that incorporates physical education as an integral part of a person's education at all its stages. We are working to achieve sport preparation from early childhood, which allows us to foster the talents of those who stand out as future athletes, which enhances and elevates the levels achieved by our country in the international sport arena.

For years, the Cuban sporting movement, headed by the Cuban Olympic Committee and the National Institution of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation, has volunteered its impartial collaboration with various countries of the South through the exchange of coaches, instructors and trainers, so that, in their modest way and within the framework of bilateral agreements, it could transfer innovative sport-training methods, thereby contributing to improving sporting results and the popular practice of sport, as well as developing great bonds of brotherhood and friendship among peoples.

We have also strengthened international cooperation by establishing for the countries of the South the Institute of Sport Medicine and the Anti-Doping Laboratory, with the goal of contributing to the fight against the scourge of drugs, as well as the education and culture of athletes and trainers. Furthermore, Cuba founded the International School for Physical Education and Sport, which is dedicated to training professionals, whose key value is solidarity, which is capable of transforming physical education and sport in their countries.

Cuba reiterates its decisions to continue sharing our principal richness: the human capital created by the Cuban revolution and the best experiences that we have. The presence of Cuban solidarity in the world, with coaches and physical education teachers, sustains the prestige of Cuban sport. Cuba has supported the sporting achievements of many countries and will continue doing so to the greatest extent possible.

All of those goals, which have been achieved at the national level through cooperation, have been possible thanks to the will of the Government and the citizens of Cuba. Notwithstanding the efforts aimed at the full realization of that right, various obstacles have hampered progress during the more than 50 years of the genocidal policy of the economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed on Cuba, because of which Cuban sporting institutions have been prevented from gaining access to United States market installations, equipment and sportswear.

At the same time, we oppose athletic activity being undertaken solely as a means to make money and, as a consequence, we denounce the theft of sporting talents, of which developing countries are the victims. In that regard, we appeal for the fostering of international cooperation and solidarity. We are also promoting projects in the areas of education, culture, sport and health, instead of spending billions of dollars on armaments. That money could do a lot for the right to development of billions of people in the world with relatively few resources; it simply requires sincere political will.

Finally, Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion of sport, both for the Cuban people and for those brotherly nations that need our modest contribution and experience in that area.

Mr. Stone (Australia): Australia is committed to the principles of sport for development and peace and to the role that the United Nations can play in furthering those principles.

We would like to thank Monaco and Tunisia for co-chairing the Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace and for their facilitation of the related biennial draft resolution (A/71/L.38), which Australia is pleased to co-sponsor. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, Mr. Wilfried Lemke, for all that he has done to promote the United Nations work on sport for development and peace over the past eight years.

Sport's popularity, its capacity as a communication platform and its ability to connect people, both within and between communities, make it a tool that can be used to meet a range of development challenges, including the Sustainable Development Goals. Australia is committed to delivering an effective sport-for-development programme, one of four goals outlined in the Australian sport-diplomacy strategy launched in June 2015. During the past five years, the Australian Government has committed more than \$50 million to sport for development programmes in the Asia-Pacific region.

Australia's sport-for-development programmes support communities at the grass-roots level through collaboration between Australian sport organizations and their Asia-Pacific counterparts. The sport-for-development programmes focus on achieving positive development outcomes by addressing risk

factors associated with non-communicable diseases, particularly physical inactivity; supporting people with disabilities through inclusion in sport by challenging community perceptions; fostering the equality of women and girls by showcasing achievement and challenging gender norms; and improving social cohesion by bringing people together.

The Pacific Sports Partnership programme works with 11 Australian sporting organizations across nine Pacific countries. In 2015-2016 the Pacific programmes engaged more than 350,000 people, almost half of them women and girls and more than 3,000 of them having a disability. The new Asia Sports Partnership programme works with 18 countries, and strong participation is also expected. Australian sport-for-development programmes can contribute to improving health-related behaviour. One such example is the One Netball Pacific programme in Tonga and Samoa, where adult sports participants, sports-development officers and community members are working to increase their exercise levels and improve their diets. Our sport-for-development programmes are also contributing to attitudinal change for, and about, people living with disabilities, with sporting participants reporting that they receive increased respect and support from communities and families.

Australia's table tennis programme has smashed down barriers and assists more than 200 patients in Kiribati's only mental facility by promoting motivation, well-being and fitness through sport. Australian-funded activities are also a platform for harnessing community support around gender-equality issues, such as violence against women. The Asia and Pacific programmes highlight women's abilities and achievements and normalize young people's experience of women in positions of power. Since June 2014, Australia's sport-for-development programmes have also increased their focus on social cohesion and peacebuilding, including in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu and Cyclone Winston in Fiji. Australia helped to launch the Just Play Emergency programme in Fiji, bringing vital information to children about water and sanitation and allowing them to feel safe through the simple act of playing football together. Building on that success, new programmes in Asia support resilience in Sri Lanka through netball, access to quality inclusive sport in Afghanistan through cricket and community recovery through badminton in Nepal.

Beyond the primary goals related to health, disability, gender and peace, Australian sport-for-development programmes make a strong contribution to related sectors, such as education, leadership and economic empowerment. Australia will continue to use its expertise in delivering inclusive community sports to make a positive impact in the region.

Mr. Amer (Israel): Israel is proud to be one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.38, which focuses on the transformative and unifying power of sport. Sport can help build more inclusive societies, promote development and foster a future of peaceful coexistence. Sport also serves as a powerful tool to advance gender equality and empower women and girls.

As the report (A/71/179) of the Secretary-General shows, sport initiatives have a positive social impact and can raise awareness of environmental issues and disease prevention, promote inclusiveness for people with disabilities and improve education levels in schools.

This year we will mark the 120th anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games. The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world. Sadly, that has not always been the case. During the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, on the night of 5 September, eight armed terrorists from the Palestinian terrorist group Black September murdered 11 members of the Israeli delegation. This year, after 44 years, the International Olympic Committee held the first memorial service for the victims of the Munich massacre. During the memorial, the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, said:

“We commemorate them because this was an attack not only on our fellow Olympians, but also an assault on the values that the Olympic Village stands for. It was an attack on the universal power of sport to unite all of humanity in peace and solidarity”.

That tragic event is a warning for posterity that sport should not be used as a vehicle for incitement and hatred. We have a shared responsibility to keep the memory of the Munich massacre alive and to protect the peaceful message and sanctity of sports.

Nowhere is the unifying power of sport more evident than on Israel's national sports teams, where Muslims, Jews and Christians all wear the same uniform. Whether they win together or lose together, they always keep the team spirit. One sport initiative

that has made a lasting social impact is Mamanet, the Israeli Mothers' Cachibol League. Founded by an Israeli mother, Mamanet brings together mothers from all ages, religions and backgrounds to play ball. Mamanet leaves no mother behind. It is not about who can score the most points or who is the fastest, but rather about empowering women by giving them a sense of belonging to a unique community with shared goals. Mamanet shows how mothers can serve as powerful role models within their families and communities by promoting good sportsmanship, team work and commitment to physical health. Mamanet is more than just a sport league; it is also a platform for advancing social causes and community initiatives. Its unique model is quickly spreading, and Austria, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and the United States of America have already adopted it.

A unique sports project, headed by the Shimon Peres Peace Centre in Israel, is another example of how sport can act as a catalyst for peaceful coexistence. Every year, the Twinned Peace Sport School project brings together about 2,000 Israeli and Palestinian children to play sport in mixed teams. Those sport programmes not only develop the children's physical fitness, but also foster mutual understanding and teach them tolerance, sportsmanship and teamwork. In the process, they can heal wounds, mend fences and overcome differences. The founder of that programme, Israel's late President Shimon Peres, once said,

"I think peace should be done not only among Governments but among people".

By protecting and promoting the fundamental values of equality and mutual respect and by overcoming adversity through sport, we can create a more peaceful and inclusive future for generations to come.

Ms. Al-Saleh (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to extend the condolences of Qatar to the Government of Brazil over the tragic air crash involving Brazilian athletes.

I thank the President of the General Assembly for his efforts and for the holding of this meeting to discuss agenda item 11, entitled "Sport for development and peace". I also thank Mr. Lemke, United Nations Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, for his strenuous efforts in supporting sport as a means of development and peace.

Numerous General Assembly resolutions have touched on building a better, more peaceful world through sport and the Olympic ideals. The importance of sport has been acknowledged as a means to foster education, health, development and peace. I would like to take this opportunity to shed light on my country's experience, which reflects our firm belief in the important role of sport in fostering dialogue among cultures and in promoting peace and development.

Qatar's Ministry for Youth and Sport deepens the concepts of health, education and peace through sport-oriented youth centres, sport unions and clubs, and the Olympic Committee helps pupils to undertake physical activities. The State of Qatar is a member of the Group of Friends of Sport for Peace and Development. It co-chaired that Group with Costa Rica in Geneva in 2013. As part of the Qatar National Vision 2030, and in order to carry out the initiative to create a psychologically and physically active society, in 2012 we designated 2 February as our annual Sports Day. That day is an official holiday in the State of Qatar and a part of a pioneering and unique international initiative. The purpose of that initiative was to consecrate the concept of societal sport and increase participation in various activities. That day is the best way to increase society's participation in sports, enabling all members of our society to engage in activities that make them happier, strengthen public health and promote sports culture.

The document entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" states that sport is an important empowering element of sustainable development and peace. It encourages tolerance and respect and helps women and young people to participate in society and achieve their goals in the fields of health, education and social integration. In the light of our interest in sport at the regional and international levels, we have hosted major sporting events, such as the 2006 Asian Games, as well as the world athletic championships for persons with disabilities. Qatar has become an important centre for hosting various regional and international athletic events and tournaments, because it believes in the important role played by sport in building bridges and integrating societies in their quest to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The High Commission on Heritage plays a significant role in preparing for the 2022 Football World Cup, so that that occasion will be one of the most

salient and successful in promoting the values of peace, development and understanding among our peoples. It will be the first time that the championship is hosted in the Middle East region. That will assist in promoting growth in the region by encouraging capacity-building and the participation of young people and will be an important forum for fostering understanding and dialogue among cultures. With a view to promoting the hosting of major sporting events, Qatar, along with the Permanent Missions of Germany, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and Tunisia to the United Nations, and the United Nations Office on Sport, Development and Peace, organized a high-level event at United Nations Headquarters on 16 February to shed light on the importance of hosting major sporting events as a means of fostering socioeconomic, environmental and sustainable development.

Participants focused on the socioeconomic and developmental role of hosting major sporting events and on lessons learned, as well as on the constructive impact on local communities, which benefit from the opportunities such events offer. Participants emphasized the constructive role played by major sporting events in developing the capacity of young people, women and persons with disabilities with different languages, religions and cultures. The State of Qatar reiterates its determination to continue its efforts to invest in sport so as to pave the way for an environment conducive to understanding and to strengthen cooperation, solidarity and peace at the national, regional and international levels.

Mr. Pong (Singapore): Before I begin my statement, my delegation would like to extend our deepest sympathy to our Brazilian colleagues, families and supporters of and others involved with the Chapecoense Football Club. Please accept our condolences.

Singapore looks forward to the adoption of the draft resolution entitled “Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace” (A/71/L.38). We welcome the ideals represented in the draft resolution, and we would like to thank Monaco and Tunisia for facilitating the text.

Sport is a potent force for positive change in society. It brings people together and inspires the human spirit. It transcends differences in cultures, nationalities and socioeconomic backgrounds, and it contributes significantly to peace and sustainable development. The Olympic Truce — first established in the eighth century

B.C.E. — has demonstrated time and again how sport can bridge divided communities, support reconciliation and foster peace. More recently, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the growing contribution of sport to the achievement of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the empowerment of women and young people, individuals and communities, as well as its contribution to health, education and social-inclusion objectives.

In Singapore we hope to engender greater inclusiveness, acceptance and understanding of persons with disabilities through sport. We launched a disability sports master plan last year to ensure a more inclusive, sporting Singapore, where everyone, regardless of ability, can take part and even excel in sport. The master plan will harness the potential of sport by making it easier for those with disabilities to lead an active lifestyle. It seeks to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in sport and to develop and grow the pool of sports professionals and educators with expertise in disability sports and increase public awareness and support for our athletes. It is a concrete step that Singapore is taking towards building a more inclusive society. The master plan is already yielding some results.

At the recent Rio Paralympic Games, Singapore was represented by 13 athletes across six sports, our largest-ever contingent. Our athletes also achieved our best-ever result of two gold and one bronze medals. Swimmer Yip Pin Xiu won her second and third Paralympic gold medals in Rio, breaking two world records in the process. Fellow swimmer Theresa Goh won her first-ever Paralympic medal after four Paralympic Games. Like Joseph Schooling, who won Singapore’s first-ever Olympic gold medal at the Rio Olympic Games, their stories of perseverance and striving for excellence have made them sporting heroes among many Singaporeans, and these extraordinary individuals will inspire a new generation of budding athletes to fulfil their aspirations on a major sporting stage.

Mr. El Haycen (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As part of our contribution to promoting a culture of sport in the region, Singapore hosted the eighth Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Para Games last December. That was the first time that Singapore hosted the Games, which included about 1,400 athletes from 11 countries competing in 336 events

in 15 sports. The ASEAN Para Games celebrate the triumph of the human spirit over all odds and exemplify the Paralympic values of determination, inspiration, courage and equality. That was also reflected in the theme of the Games, “Celebrate the Extraordinary”, that is, to celebrate the tremendous courage and spirit of the para athletes, who have overcome great challenges, not just in leading active lives but in excelling in their respective sports.

As we continue to uphold the spirit of the Olympic Truce and implement the 2030 Agenda, Singapore firmly believes that sport is an enduring source of inspiration for us to aim higher and do better in our efforts to build a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous future for our people.

Mr. Prasad (India): India welcomed resolution 70/4, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal” and adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2015. We also welcome the designation of 6 April as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

The valuable contribution of sport in promoting education, sustainable development, peace, cooperation, solidarity, fairness, social inclusion and health at the local, regional and international levels is undeniable. In that context, the ancient Greek tradition of the Olympic Truce underlines the recognition that sport is a valuable tool for consolidating peace and solidarity, as well as tolerance and understanding among peoples and nations.

While sporting events have on occasion been used for political ends, including for propaganda, boycott and the like, on the whole sporting competitions have overwhelmingly served to bring people and nations together and uplift the human spirit collectively.

In a country such as India, our national teams in popular sports such as cricket and hockey reflect the diversity of our population, with players who speak different languages, profess different faiths and come from different urban or rural backgrounds playing together as one. India’s sports policy focuses on the broad-basing of sports and on upgrading and developing sports infrastructure, supporting national sport federations, creating incentives to promote sport and enhance the participation of women, ethnic groups and rural youth, and promoting sport-mindedness among the public at large. That focus aims to draw more and more youth from both cities and rural areas

towards sports and thereby provide a platform for their potential to advance social and developmental goals.

A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in association with local Government bodies, have launched a series of innovative programmes aimed at social development through sports. Those initiatives, a few of which we have profiled, have focused on specific areas, including education and poverty eradication. One example is the Mumbai-based NGO Magic Bus, which has been running a series of adolescent-mentoring programmes to help young persons from weak socioeconomic backgrounds to break out of the cycle of poverty. The programme has used sports in its weekly curriculum to change behaviours in the fields of education, health and gender. Magic Bus has been able to reach more than 370,000 children across four Indian states since its inception in the year 2000.

Another example is the NGO India Ability Foundation, which has chosen to work in the area of youth with physical disabilities in the Indian state of Rajasthan. The Foundation’s IMAGE programme began in 2005 and aims to drive home the importance of education and health for disabled children. In the first phase, the programme focused on developing cooperation and friendship among both disabled and non-disabled children by setting up common sports clubs. In the second phase of the programme, the Foundation has trained a combined group of such youngsters to deliver social impact messages on the importance of education and health through a curriculum based on sports and games.

In that context, we welcome the Olympic Movement and the significant impetus that the Summer, Winter, Youth and Paralympic Games give to the task of involving youth in the development of their physical and mental energies and building bridges across the world. We congratulate Brazil for hosting the Rio Olympic Games and the Paralympics, which took the Games to a new continent for the first time and advanced the Olympic Movement. By providing a number of examples of competitors helping each other and rising above the competition, the Games reiterated that sportsmanship can build bridges among people of different nationalities, religions, ethnicities, languages and cultures.

While India is still working to improve its performance in many of the Olympic disciplines, the recent Rio Olympics provided a fresh crop of young

athletes, many of them women, who endeared themselves with their courageous performance on the world stage, despite the odds that they have had to face in life. From India's perspective, the two biggest stars of the recently concluded Rio Olympics of 2016 were two young sports women: wrestler Sakshi Malik, who won a bronze in her weight category, and Dipa Karmakar, who became the first Indian gymnast to enter the Olympics finals. Each in her own way conveyed the exciting story of women's empowerment in India.

Sakshi Malik, who hails from the northern state of Haryana, embodies the determination of women from the rural areas of the state to pursue their dreams, while overcoming a deeply conservative and patriarchal rural society. Sport is seen by women in that state, which has one of India's most negative sex ratios, as a vehicle to rewrite social norms, and Sakshi Malik is a representative of that effort. Similarly, the triumph of the young gymnast Dipa Karmakar, from the border state of Tripura, highlights the determination of young women from rural pockets of India to participate in sport despite the lack of opportunities and facilities for women, as well as the ingrained conservative social values. Their exploits, along with the march of India's women's badminton star Pusarla Venkata Sindhu to the finals of the women's badminton competition, were the principal highlights of India's participation in the Olympics. Their stories and exploits in the Olympics have resonated across India, making the Rio Olympics both a stage and a booster for women's empowerment in India.

Sport is a reflection of society. The degeneration of values in society — violence, corruption, hooliganism, deception and drug abuse — have also been noticed in sport. Concerted vigilance and resolute action are needed to prevent the intrusion of those ills and to protect the noble ideals and spirit behind the Olympic Games and other sports.

Sport promotes happiness and joy and, at the same time, teaches the qualities of self-discipline, patience, training, skills development, cooperation, excellence and respect for one's opponents among the players, as well as among those who follow sports. A wider pursuit of sporting activities in society helps the cause of peace and development. It must be our endeavour to promote sports and a culture of sport in our countries as a means of building peace, friendship, cooperation and understanding among peoples.

Mr. Tuy (Cambodia): I appreciate the comprehensive report (A/71/179) submitted by the Secretary-General. Cambodia welcomes the recognition of sport as a momentous tool for development and peace. The importance of sport was reaffirmed in the 2005 World Summit outcome document and in the 2010 Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the recognition of 6 April as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

From a multidimensional perspective, Cambodia finds that sport plays a simple and straightforward role towards a solution for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The international community can see that the relevance of sport in each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be shown in areas such as lessons learned and best practices in sport for development and peace.

Of the several roles that it plays in the promotion of education, health and development, sport can play an even bigger role in bringing peace to conflicting communities and peoples, and possibly between countries in conflict. That is because of its universal language, which can bring together and bond peoples and countries, regardless of their cultural and political differences, economic status or religious belief.

The growing contribution of sport has produced good results in various countries with aboriginal peoples or young people with disabilities, as well as in conflict and post-conflict areas, and even in specific cases, such as preventing teenage pregnancy. Almost all the Sustainable Development Goals can be reached if our wholehearted efforts and support for mainstreaming sport for development and peace could be linked to the SDGs. The Secretary-General's report clearly spells out these initial steps, policies and programmes.

The 1960s were considered a golden era for sport in Cambodia. Unfortunately, almost three decades of civil war and internal conflict reduced the country to ruin, including in the domain of sports. Since 1998, however, thanks to the win-win policy introduced by Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen, peace has been fully restored throughout the country, the Royal Government of Cambodia has done its utmost to foster the country's development in every area, and sport has started to re-emerge. Our Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and our National Olympic Committee have strengthened and expanded sports infrastructure at every level. Sport has been introduced into primary

and secondary schools, while playing fields have been renovated and upgraded, instructors trained, sports clubs equipped and federation, school and community clubs developed.

Cambodia has also hosted many regional competitions, such as the football and taekwondo championships of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to name only two. We also had the honour this year of hosting the 2016 Angkor Wat international half marathon charity race, which was held for the twenty-first time on 4 December at the Angkor Wat temple complex in Siem Reap province. Runners from all over the world, including some with disabilities, participated in support of a ban on the manufacture and inhumane use of anti-personnel mines.

Taking a step further in the area of sports, Cambodia will host the biennial Southeast Asian Games in 2023, and we are building the multi-million-dollar Morodok Techo national sports complex for them. In October and November of this year, in preparation for the Southeast Asian Games, Cambodia hosted its first national Games, bringing together thousands of athletes from across the country. Cambodia has taken part in various regional and international competitions, including the Southeast Asian Games and the Asian Summer, Winter, Indoor and Beach Games. Furthermore, this year the National Olympic Committee of Cambodia sent athletes to participate in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro from 5 to 21 August, marking our sixth consecutive appearance at the Summer Olympics, although as Kampuchea we also took part in the Games in 1956, 1964 and 1972.

In conclusion, Cambodia stands ready to cooperate with individual countries, regional groups and stakeholders and international organizations in order to maximize the potential of sport in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. Araújo Prado (Brazil): On behalf of the Government and the people of Brazil, who are also represented here by Senators Gladson Cameli, Sérgio Petecão and José Medeiros, I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the wave of solidarity across the globe in the wake of the tragic accident that recently befell the Chapecoense team members, journalists and others. The demonstrations of support have helped greatly to easing the grief of the victims' family members and the country as a whole. This solidarity, and the success of the Olympic and

Paralympic Games held this year in Rio, have once again illustrated sport's potential for promoting empathy, peace and development. We thank all Member States and the United Nations system for their condolences and support, which is much appreciated.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with resolution 64/3, of 19 October 2009, I now give the floor to the observer of the International Olympic Committee.

Mr. Pescante (International Olympic Committee): On behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), I would first like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive biennial report (A/71/179), which outlines the many ways that sport is contributing to sustainable development. We would also like to pay special tribute to Mr. Wilfried Lemke, his Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, whose efforts have been central to our shared tasks. The recognition of sport as an important enabler in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals has been a milestone in our common path. The sports world is ready to be a key partner in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Only a few months ago, the Olympic Games in Rio demonstrated the power of sport when a country that is deeply divided, socially, economically and politically, came together in a splendid moment of unity. The Games in Rio also sent a message of society's potential for achieving peace, tolerance and respect. The athletes of the first-ever refugee Olympic team represented solidarity and hope for the millions of refugees around the world. They showed the world that, even after facing unimaginable tragedies and suffering, anyone can contribute to society through talent, skill and, most important, the strength of the human spirit. The Games sent a signal to the international community that refugees can enrich society just as they do our Olympic family. The Assembly should rest assured that the IOC's support to the refugees remains ongoing.

Sport can also be a powerful tool for promoting gender equality. In that regard, while we must still continue to strive for progress, we are moving closer to 50 per cent female participation in the Olympic Games. In Rio de Janeiro we saw more women compete than ever before, accounting for 45 per cent of the athletes. Of course, gender parity at the Olympic Games alone is not enough. Therefore, one of the legacies of the recent Games is our joint initiative with the United Nations to

support 2,500 girls across Rio de Janeiro state by using sports programmes to empower them to become future leaders in their communities.

A year ago in Paris, before 1,000 mayors from around the globe, the President of the IOC emphasized that the Olympic Games could be a catalyst for the sustainable development of cities. Beyond sustainability, in our host-city contracts, we have made a clear commitment to increasing the protection of several aspects of human rights in the organization of the Games.

Making sport accessible to all also remains a major priority for us and is the basis of our new programme for building safe spaces for sport around the world. This initiative is designed to provide children with equal opportunities for playing sports in a safe environment and to place sport at the core of public policy.

With regard to the importance of sport for peacebuilding, I would like to thank the General Assembly for its work and for its adoption last year of resolution 70/4, the Olympic Truce resolution, ahead of the Rio Games. A new consultation process for an Olympic Truce draft resolution in the context of the 2018 Winter Olympic Games, to be held in Pyeongchang, will start in the coming months, and we hope that the Assembly will support it once again.

However, sport can succeed only if its autonomy and neutrality are respected and if there is harmonious collaboration, synergy and mutual respect among international institutions, public authorities and sports organizations. At the same time, we are ready to address some of the many challenges we face, which also means combating doping, complying with the basic principles of good governance and increasing transparency.

In conclusion, I would like to express special thanks to all the members and co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Sport for their important support. Lastly, I would like to reiterate to all of the countries represented here in the Assembly the IOC's commitment to cooperation, and our determination to ensure, through all possible means, that the draft resolution to be adopted during this session (A/71/L.35) will bring positive results and generate increased synergies and further recognition for sport in the service of human beings.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 11.

Agenda item 130

Investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him

Draft resolution (A/71/L.25)

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/71/L.25 will be postponed to a later date to allow time for a review of its programme budget implications by the Fifth Committee.

I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.25.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I am proud to introduce today, on behalf of all of the sponsors, the draft resolution contained in document A/71/L.25, concerning the investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him. We are very grateful to all the delegations that have joined us in that endeavour, and I would like to thank all the sponsors for their support.

In these turbulent times, our need for moral and political leadership is greater than ever. The role and function of the Secretary-General provide a unique platform from which to exercise such authority. Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, understood how to use that platform for better ends. More than ever, we need to recall the dedication with which he fought for the independence of his Office, tirelessly defended the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations and loyally promoted the integrity of the Organization.

More than 50 years later, we still do not know the exact circumstances surrounding Mr. Hammarskjöld's death, in Ndola on 17 September 1961. Last year, the General Assembly, by consensus, adopted resolution 70/11, asking the Secretary-General to pursue the pending requests for information made by the Independent Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 69/246. This summer, as a result of the Secretary-General's efforts and the cooperation of Member States, new documents came to light regarding the circumstances of Mr. Hammarskjöld's death. The authenticity of the documents still has to be determined, as does their relevance to any further investigations. Since it is our shared responsibility to pursue the full

truth in this matter, it is clear that the need for additional follow-up remains.

In the light of what I have just said, and in firm support of the Secretary-General's recommendations on the way forward, Sweden, together with its partners, introduces draft resolution A/71/L.25 before the Assembly today. It has six operational elements, the most important of which is contained in paragraph 1. It asks the Secretary-General to appoint an eminent person to review the potential new information — including any that may be available from Member States — in order to assess its probative value, determine the scope that any further inquiry or investigation should take and, if possible, draw conclusions from the investigations already conducted. Because the draft resolution includes a small programme budget implication,

we will take action on it once the Fifth Committee has considered the matter, later in December. In the meantime, the list of sponsors will remain open, and we encourage all Member States to join us and our partners in this endeavour.

Time is of the essence, since with every passing year the door is closing further on finding the truth. But our efforts must continue. We owe it to the families of those who perished that night, to the United Nations as an Organization and to all here who strive to continue to work in Mr. Hammarskjöld's spirit.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 130.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.