



General Assembly

Seventy-first session

57th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 8 December 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Thomson (Fiji)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 69 (continued)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/395)

Draft resolution (A/71/L.34)

Draft amendments (A/71/L.36 and A/71/L.37)

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/71/82, A/71/329, A/71/336 and A/71/353)

Draft resolutions (A/71/L.32 and A/71/L.33)

(b) Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/87)

Draft resolution (A/71/L.31)

(c) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/620)

(d) Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and

minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/411)

Draft resolution (A/71/L.28)

Mr. Uğurluoğlu (Turkey): At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the humanitarian activities of the United Nations system.

We would also like to commend the efforts of the United Nations humanitarian agencies in their life-saving work, as well as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, whose role in ensuring effective coordination in the delivery of humanitarian assistance remains essential. As we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 46/182, the framework and the instruments that that resolution has set continue to be relevant in shaping the international humanitarian response system.

Last week in Geneva, Under-Secretary-General Stephen O'Brien stated that we face a time of immense global suffering and fear, and that 80 per cent of the humanitarian needs stem from man-made conflicts, many of which are now protracted. Despite all our collective efforts, it is undeniable that the gap between humanitarian needs and the resources available to address them continues to widen. Beyond the devastating effects of man-made disasters, such as the crisis ravaging in Syria, particularly in Aleppo, we are also faced with other challenges. Public health emergencies, climate change and the effects of El Niño have long-lasting impacts. The number of forcibly

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



displaced persons continues to grow. Millions of children are at risk of starting their lives without shelter or education.

As an effect of globalization, today's humanitarian challenges easily transcend borders. They therefore demand better and collective solutions. Our humanity entails a responsibility that we should all shoulder so as to help those in need, whether they are on our doorstep or in faraway lands. At the opening of the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May, President Erdoğan stated that we should never forget our responsibilities vis-à-vis the people who have set their hopes on the messages and commitments that arose in Istanbul. Indeed, that is why Turkey strongly supported the organization of that Summit from its very inception. It was needed in order to sow the seeds of transformative change in the humanitarian system.

In Istanbul, we announced our support for the commitments contained in the five core responsibilities set out in the Agenda for Humanity and made national commitments to that end. We are pleased to note that the Summit was a success. It brought together all the stakeholders of the world humanitarian community, with a record 9,000 participants. Member States and other participants shared valuable experiences and expressed their commitments to the future of the humanitarian system. However, as has been the case with various United Nations-led achievements in the past few years, such as the Sustainable Development Goals or the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), we are cognizant of the fact that we need to move ahead with the implementation. The aftermath of the Istanbul Summit is crucially important for the future of the humanitarian system. We need to build on the global momentum that the Summit has generated and assume our responsibilities for the follow-up in order to improve our collective response.

Bearing that in mind, we should continue our efforts to ensure strong political leadership aimed at addressing the root causes of conflicts and crises; address the need for fair burden-sharing, because it is our common responsibility to help people in need; always recall that no humanitarian problem is local, as all crises can become global; exert great efforts to support the humanitarian-development nexus through human-centered policies and, finally, increase our financial resources and use existing ones in a more efficient manner. While doing all of that, we should work in close partnership with all stakeholders.

As the world's largest refugee-hosting country and the second-largest individual humanitarian donor in the world in 2015, Turkey's humanitarian assistance efforts, be it in Somalia, Haiti, Myanmar, Iraq or Syria, will continue in that spirit. Our common objective remains simple — to better respond to humanitarian crises in order to save lives and thereby, save humankind. We are confident that the Istanbul Summit was a point of departure for us all in reaching that common objective.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Every year, we meet to reiterate our humanitarian and ethical commitments to extending humanitarian assistance to all those in need without discrimination, politicization or blackmail, in accordance with the humanitarian principles in which we all believe.

We emphasize our concern that some States, organizations and other actors have been using humanitarian action to serve inhumane political and economic agendas and achieve other goals and interests in order to defame and malign the Governments of Member States. That negatively affects humanitarian action itself, as well as the stability of States and the welfare of peoples.

In my statement, I should like to clarify the position of my country, Syria, vis-à-vis the draft resolutions on humanitarian assistance in their various manifestations. I wish to reiterate the commitment of my Government to its firm and principled position in favour of extending humanitarian assistance to all those who are disadvantaged without discrimination, in accordance with our constitutional duties.

We also emphasize our continued cooperation with the United Nations and its agencies in order to ensure the delivery of such assistance on the basis of respect for the United Nations guiding principles and to extend humanitarian assistance in emergencies, as specified in resolution 46/182. At the forefront of those principles are respect for national sovereignty and the role of the States concerned in overseeing the distribution of humanitarian assistance within their territories and the principles of impartiality, integrity and non-politicization.

Regrettably, the actions of some sponsors of the draft resolutions and some of those responsible for the coordination of humanitarian assistance — the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs being at the forefront of the latter — demonstrate a

preoccupation with politicizing humanitarian crises and seek disgracefully to cover up the cardinal reasons for those crises. We have to state that the optimal solution for such humanitarian crises lies in addressing their root causes and consequences without politicizing or twisting facts. I wish to make the following observations on the draft resolutions:

First, with regard to combating terrorism, my delegation is of the view that the fact that draft resolution A/71/L.34 contains, for the first time, a reference to terrorism as one of the main causes of humanitarian crises, after that issue having been ignored for years, constitutes an important step in the right direction. Some States have recently stated — albeit reservedly — that violence, poverty and disasters are not the only reasons leading to evacuation, displacement and humanitarian crises, and that another basic cause of such phenomena is terrorism.

Despite the importance of that step, it is too little, too late. We must use stronger language that unambiguously and decisively condemns terrorist acts, as was done last year in resolution 70/104, entitled “Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel”. It seems that some tend to forget that terrorism is the main scourge of humanitarian crises, be it in my country of Syria or in Iraq, Libya and other States.

A case in point is the terrorist madness that is killing innocent civilians throughout the world. We have warned about that problem for a long time. Terrorism is the cardinal reason for the suffering of the Syrian people, particularly women and children. Combating it requires cooperation with the Syrian Government, which is struggling to combat terrorism on behalf of the world. We have called for pressure to be brought to bear on States that support terrorist armed groups to stop arming, financing, training and sheltering such groups, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism.

Not only have our recurrent calls fallen on deaf ears, but our very stance has been distorted and called into question. I insist that efforts to address the main cause of the humanitarian crisis in Syria should focus on international coordination and cooperation with the Government of Syria and its efforts to combat terrorism in all its aspects and forms, as well as on the implementation of the pertinent Security Council

resolutions and returning to the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Secondly, I turn to the grave consequences of unilateral economic coercive measures. The United Nations has rejected and condemned the imposition of unilateral economic coercive measures, given their illegitimate nature and disastrous impact on the economies of States and the welfare of peoples. However, some sponsors of the draft resolution still seek to avoid any reference to such measures.

Those measures continue to date, despite repeated international calls and demands to terminate them forthright, given their disastrous impact on the Syrian economy and the living conditions of Syrians. They have caused thousands of Syrians to flee their homeland and prevented the implementation of health and humanitarian response plans in Syria, as described in the Humanitarian Response Plan Monitoring Report issued in September by the United Nations Resident Representative Office, in cooperation with the International Society for Quality in Health Care.

The report emphasizes that the unilateral economic measures imposed by the United States and the European Union against Syria adversely affect all categories of Syrian citizens. It is paradoxical that the draft resolution contains a reference to resolution 70/1, on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but no reference to the adverse effects of those measures. How can States be expected to implement the Agenda while sanctions are being imposed on them?

We wish to reiterate our reservations on the inclusion in the draft resolution of a reference to the World Humanitarian Summit and its conclusions, because the host country, Turkey, did not allow my delegation to participate. We are therefore not party to that conference or to its resolutions. We wish also to enter our reservations with regard to the reference to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). As a United Nations document, the draft resolution ought to address general situations in all States and not specific States. We had hoped to hear the voice of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, not those of influential financing States. Meetings should not be exploited to politicize the guiding humanitarian principles of the United Nations, which are of great significance in terms of humanitarian action among Member States.

In conclusion, I would like to comment on the statement by the representative of Israel. The General

Assembly knows that Zionism is the Israeli ideology on the basis of which it established itself in occupied Palestine. Zionism is a form of racial discrimination. It is equivalent to Da'esh, as Zionist ideology maintains the desire to take over the entire area of Palestine in order to establish a Jewish State, excluding all others, including Muslims and Christians. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) claims something very similar. It claims that it wants to set up a State only for those who believe in Da'esh, and not for all Muslims. That simple comparison reveals that the cause for the disasters and crises in our area is Israel, which has introduced racial and religious radicalism and intolerance into our region and introduced the concept of occupying the lands of others.

For 60 or 70 years, hundreds of resolutions have been adopted by the Organization condemning Israel and its aggressive policies. It is not only today that we are discovering Israel's aggressive policies; we discovered them a long time ago, and we are all too familiar with them. There is therefore no need to respond to the illusions and falsifications that are put forward by the Israeli delegation to mislead the audience in this Hall.

I would like to remind the Assembly that Israel's authorities have links with the terrorists of Jabhat Al-Nusra and ISIL in the occupied Golan. Israel protects ISIL and Jabhat al-Nusrah. It helped them to evict the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force contingent stationed at the separation line on the occupied Golan. Just yesterday, Israel launched rockets into the heart of Damascus, into the area of Al-Miza. Nobody should therefore blame us when we respond to those brazen Israeli actions at the appropriate time.

Mr. Zehnder (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Humanitarian needs continue to grow year after year. The fundamental rules of international humanitarian law are being violated as never before. The number of people forcibly displaced, to escape violence or natural disaster, has reached a record high. Humanitarian workers are regularly the target of attacks, and their access to people in need is increasingly denied. Against that backdrop, the international community must provide a strong and united response. The draft resolutions that we are discussing today should be an expression of that response. I would like to emphasize three points.

First, Switzerland considers international humanitarian law to be the principal universal legal

framework for the protection of all victims in armed conflicts and the provision of humanitarian assistance. That legal framework must be respected by all parties to an armed conflict. In that regard, there are considerable challenges: access to those in need must be improved, the safety of those who risk their lives to care for the sick and wounded must be strengthened, and violations of international law are unacceptable and must be effectively prosecuted. In the light of the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan and Iraq, it is our duty to strengthen protection for all war victims and humanitarian health workers in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

Secondly, the phenomenon of forced displacement caused by natural disasters, climate change or armed conflict requires the close coordination of humanitarian and development activities, as well as of those in the areas of peacebuilding and human rights. We need an approach that encompasses prevention, protection and resilience.

Thirdly, the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit in May provide a unique opportunity to transform and strengthen the global humanitarian system in the long term. Those commitments, particularly within the framework of the grand bargain on humanitarian financing, must materialize, in order to be able to provide a more effective humanitarian response to the needs of an ever-increasing number of victims.

Given the enormous humanitarian challenges that we currently face, the draft resolutions that we are adopting today should represent a strong and united response from the international community. However, although some progress was made in the negotiations on the drafts, we see that they in no way go far enough to meet the requirements of the global humanitarian situation. We regret in particular that genuine, concrete progress could not be made in terms of international humanitarian law, owing to the inflexible positions of some delegations.

However, my delegation wishes to express its deep gratitude to the representatives who facilitated the various draft resolutions. The facilitators have been fully engaged in their efforts to arrive at decisions by consensus. That consensus, which is a testament to the unity of States in the face of humanitarian needs, has been consistently respected in the past. We regret that such a consensus could not be respected within the

framework of the draft resolution entitled “Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel” (A/71/L.34). Concerning draft resolution A/71/L.32, entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations”, my delegation regrets that the consensus reached during the negotiations was not respected during the silence procedure.

My delegation believes that draft resolutions must be negotiated in good faith and full transparency, and calls on Member States to engage constructively during negotiations and to respect the consensus once it has been reached. We, the Member States, owe that much to the victims of armed conflicts and disasters, who depend on humanitarian aid, as well as to the workers who provide that aid, often risking their lives to do so.

Mrs. Kanchaveli (Georgia): Georgia aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/71/PV.56), and I would like to make a few additional remarks in my national capacity.

At the outset, I would like to acknowledge the work of the delegation of Sweden in successfully negotiating the text of the humanitarian omnibus draft resolution, entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations” (A/71/L.32), and in securing consensus on the document again this year. The draft resolution maintains its focus on the most pressing issues concerning the humanitarian situation around the globe, and covers the issues of forced displacement and the protection of civilians and medical personnel and facilities, while stressing the need for strengthening respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as for supporting enhanced humanitarian action in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in accordance with the commitment to leave no one behind.

In today’s world, more than 60 million people have been forced to abandon their homes and flee in search of safety owing to conflicts and violence or man-made or natural disasters around the world. Today, they represent the world’s most vulnerable groups, which are at high risk of being left behind. To echo the Secretary-General, delivering better for people in need, *inter alia*, encompasses strengthening the respect for humanitarian international law, ensuring humanitarian access and protecting humanitarian and health-care personnel.

Over the years, the position of Georgia on humanitarian issues has been coherent and cohesive in its substance and modalities. Political impasses or paralysis should not hinder humanitarian action. In that regard, we stress the importance of humanitarian access, which is also a human rights issue, while recognizing that the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence play a central role in establishing and maintaining access to the victims, and should be respected by all actors.

In the light of the current challenges to the securing and sustaining of humanitarian access by humanitarian personnel, including the personnel of United Nations humanitarian agencies, and bearing in mind the central role that access plays in contributing to humanitarian assistance and protection, my delegation raised the concern regarding the lack of access in various parts of the world during the negotiations on the text of the humanitarian omnibus draft resolution in document A/71/L.32 and, together with other delegations, was advocating for the strengthening of the call for better access.

For years, 20 per cent of Georgia’s sovereign territories have remained inaccessible to international monitoring missions, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other human rights mechanisms, owing to the current illegal military occupation of those territories by foreign forces. The denial of access raises the legitimate questions expressed by the OHCHR regarding the blocking of access to international observers. Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of victims of ethnic cleansing — refugees and internally displaced persons — are unable to return to their places of habitual residence, while those residing inside the occupied regions continue to be deprived of fundamental rights and freedoms, including but not limited to the right to free movement and to education in one’s native language.

During humanitarian emergencies, the delivery of humanitarian assistance and health care to those in need should be the priority. However, addressing the immediate, short-term needs, such as providing the displaced populations with appropriate shelter, food and health care, may not be enough. The plight of those forcibly displaced people remains unresolved in many cases, as it is impossible to provide conditions for the exercise of their inalienable right to a safe and dignified

return to their homes. The voluntary return rate — a measure of how many internally displaced persons and refugees can safely go back home — is at its lowest in over three decades. We must support the right to safe and voluntary return, if we wish to manage forced displacements with effectiveness and efficiency.

Against the backdrop of global humanitarian crises caused by violence and armed conflict, transnational terrorism and violent extremism, as well as by climate change and global health threats, Georgia believes that the international community should focus on more effectively protecting humankind and humanitarian principles. The international community ought to do more to assist the most vulnerable groups of populations. First and foremost, that includes those affected by armed conflict and those in post-conflict situations. The international community must also reduce the vulnerability of people to natural disasters.

Ms. Pritchard (Canada): As a number of humanitarian draft resolutions have been submitted today for action, Canada would like to speak to the humanitarian situation that we see around the world and how it is reflected in the draft resolutions that are currently before Member States.

We live in a world in which increasingly complicated and protracted crises have become the norm. Given the scale of current needs, we must work together with all partners to develop innovative programming that addresses the underlying causes of conflict. Canada is changing how we work in order to ensure that every dollar goes as far as possible to reach those in need. For example, Canada is doing more to provide multi-year funding in order to allow for better humanitarian planning and results. That includes enabling host countries and communities to deliver adequate services to large numbers of refugees and displaced people.

(spoke in French) Canada remains deeply concerned about the growing number of people subject to forced displacement, as well as about the discrimination and marginalization that characterize the experiences of many refugees and migrants globally. Canada is grateful for the generosity of the numerous host countries and communities around the world, and we will continue to assume our responsibility in welcoming our most vulnerable neighbours when they most need it.

Canada remains resolved to respond to the world's needs. That is why Prime Minister Trudeau promised to increase the humanitarian aid doled out in 2016-

2017 by at least 10 per cent, as compared with the total of \$684 million from 2015-2016. That will help our partners in the United Nations, the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations to better support those affected by crises, including the so-called forgotten crises.

(spoke in English)

And yet every year, we see more and more people affected by humanitarian crises. The United Nations has recently appealed for \$22.2 billion to respond to the needs of over 90 million people in 2017. Those are shocking figures that demand our attention and real collaboration. We already know that women and girls are disproportionately affected and that social inequalities grow worse during a crisis. As a result, women and girls face even greater risks of being sexually abused, trafficked or forced into marriage. They are more likely to be displaced. The burden of care that they carry for their families and their communities increases, and their access to essential sexual and reproductive health services is reduced. When humanitarian assistance does not take their needs into account, the inequalities that exist are reinforced. Put quite simply, that is unacceptable.

We know that women's knowledge and leadership can be critical to preventing and responding to crises. In the midst of a crisis, women and girls are not just victims. Rather, they are resilient people, and many of them have survived tremendous losses. They are the experts. We need to ask them and ourselves how we can support their participation, leadership, and decision-making in their communities.

We are pleased in particular to have made improvements in the humanitarian draft resolutions before us today so that they better reflect today's realities and our changing mindset. However, we are concerned at how difficult it has been to address the critical issue of the protection of civilians in times of conflict. Indiscriminate attacks on humanitarian and medical personnel, on the wounded and sick, on hospitals and civilians, including children, are taking place on a regular and sometimes daily basis.

As Member States, we must remind ourselves of our obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in particular the obligation to allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need. The focus of our attention should be on the

life-saving needs of civilians and their protection in times of humanitarian crises. We reiterate that compliance with obligations under international humanitarian law is absolutely essential in that regard. Not only are those obligations matters of legal responsibility, the principles that they represent are the very essence of humanity. Canada will therefore continue to promote principled humanitarian action and support concerted efforts to address the challenges faced by humanitarians in complex environments.

Before closing, I wish to say that we are concerned by calls for a vote on draft resolution A/71/L.34, on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, which is based on well-established norms of international law. We believe that calls for a vote send all the wrong messages, especially given the scale of the humanitarian crises that we are facing.

In closing, Canada would like to commend the remarkable dedication of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers and medical personnel, including international, national and local staff, in delivering life-saving assistance to those most in need in increasingly complex and volatile environments at great personal risk. Their work brings hope, dignity and life to the world's most vulnerable.

Mr. Kazi (Bangladesh): Bangladesh attaches great importance to the humanitarian and emergency relief assistance provided through the United Nations and remains supportive of international efforts to help build resilient societies and nations and to respond to humanitarian challenges. We stress that the constructive engagement and coordinating role of national Governments, especially their leaders, are instrumental in facilitating international humanitarian assistance.

As our delegation underlined at the World Humanitarian Summit in May, international humanitarian assistance must be premised on the basic principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. We underscore the need for better coherence and coordination among Member States, United Nations agencies and other relevant stakeholders with a view to promoting the spirit of working together for humankind. The unwarranted politicization of humanitarian issues must be avoided in order to make sure that humanitarian response is fast, timely, more effective and targeted to the evolving needs on the ground.

In recent years, we have witnessed continued high demand for humanitarian relief and assistance across the globe, owing mostly to the increased numbers of natural disasters, armed conflicts and crises of a protracted nature. Climate change, unplanned urbanization, irregular human mobility, epidemics, recurrent food crises, and water and energy insecurity continue to threaten the preservation of the development gains already achieved in many developing countries, especially the least developed countries. The resulting consequence of underdevelopment, poverty and inequality increases the vulnerability of the affected people and reduces their capacity to cope with various endogenous and exogenous shocks.

We believe that sustainable development is the most effective preventive prescription for many humanitarian crises, including those related to forced displacement. The international community needs to consider and undertake development activities with a focus on building resilience and eventually reducing dependency on humanitarian aid. The underlying root causes that adversely impact the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance need to be addressed in a holistic manner. There is a need for discretion in apportioning financial support for humanitarian and development work without compromising their respective priorities.

Bangladesh recognizes the importance of the transition from emergency response to preparedness and resilience-building. Many developing countries, especially the less-developed countries, suffer from systemic constraints in terms of the finance, technology and development capacities needed to effectively withstand and overcome humanitarian challenges.

The international community should, in full respect for national conditions and actual needs on the ground, develop mechanisms to provide enhanced, sustainable, flexible and multi-year-based financing support and related expertise, technologies and products. In that context, we reiterate the need for effective and meaningful implementation of the provisions of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. We also acknowledge the centrality of the role of women as first responders and the need to further strengthen gender-responsive policy development concerning disaster-risk reduction and mitigation.

Bangladesh remains concerned over the reported denial of humanitarian access in many conflict situations, including in a neighbouring context in

recent times. We condemn the indiscriminate armed attacks against humanitarian personnel and convoys, medical and peacekeeping personnel and the civilian infrastructure essential for humanitarian operations. We urge all parties to conflicts to refrain from such egregious attacks, blockades and impediments, in conformity with international humanitarian law. We also emphasize the importance of evidence-based information to ensure probity and accountability in the event of any such reported violation.

As a climate-vulnerable and disaster-prone country, Bangladesh continues to make substantive investments in disaster-risk reduction, prevention, mitigation and relief, building on lessons learned as well as on international best practices. In line with our commitment to share our home-grown expertise and innovations with others in a comparable situation, we have made efforts to stand by disaster-affected people in Nepal, Haiti, Sri Lanka and the Philippines in recent times.

In Bangladesh, our Government has established a National Committee on International Humanitarian Law so as to ensure the further dissemination and awareness-building of international humanitarian law among our people, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross. At the international level, we remain committed to promoting advocacy for addressing the humanitarian needs of those displaced as a result of climate change, especially in cross-border contexts.

We look forward to enhanced coordination and coherence among the relevant United Nations entities and other stakeholders in further promoting dialogue on that emerging issue. As hosts to a protracted refugee situation involving an oft-forgotten people, Bangladesh reiterates the need to explore avenues to further strengthen the international burden- and responsibility-sharing framework for the protection and assistance of refugees and other displaced population groups.

In conclusion, we thank all of the facilitators for their diligent work on the draft resolutions, which our delegation is pleased to support.

Mr. Sadykov (Kazakhstan): In my statement I shall focus on the draft resolution on Chernobyl (A/71/L.28). We are honoured to co-sponsor that draft resolution regarding the continuing grave effects of the Chernobyl disaster, which will be adopted today by consensus. We believe that the decision to designate 26 April as

International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day will raise awareness of the long-term consequences of the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters and drive action to prevent such casualties in the future.

Approximately 30,000 technical and nuclear experts and military servicemen from Kazakhstan were among the first to arrive in the accident zone in April 1986 to help reduce the consequences of the Chernobyl explosion. In solidarity, Kazakhstan participated actively in the reconstruction of the sarcophagus of the Chernobyl nuclear-power plant, allocating more than €2 million to that cause.

We fully support the decision to be taken by the United Nations today, as Kazakhstan itself has suffered from nuclear-weapons testing. Having directly experienced those horrors, my country is today recognized as a passionate campaigner for peace and nuclear security and disarmament. The area in Kazakhstan affected by intense nuclear testing comprises more than 300,000 square kilometres, and the consequences are tragic. The land has been rendered useless and unfit for human habitation, agriculture or economic activity. Nearly 1.5 million people have been impacted by nuclear and radiological contamination, resulting in fatalities, cancer and weakened immune systems. The incidence of disease has increased and the duration of recovery prolonged, with phenomenally high costs.

Kazakhstan has struggled with the consequences of the nuclear tragedy for more than two decades and calls on the international community to intensify efforts aimed at nuclear security and disarmament, as well as at the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We thank the United Nations system and several countries for helping to fund our recovery efforts. Much has been done, but the effects of 40 years of testing will require many more years before that vast region is rehabilitated. International efforts will have to be stepped up to return it to normalcy.

Next year, we will introduce a draft resolution entitled "International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan". It will be the ninth time that such a draft resolution has been submitted. In that regard, we also express our deep appreciation to the Member States that have previously supported that resolution. My delegation deems that support to be recognition of the historic

contribution of Kazakhstan to nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, in 1991, for the first time in world history, the huge nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan was shut down by decree of the President of our country, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev.

We have since worked closely with the United States, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency on institutional arrangements for nuclear safety and security and worked with Member States to implement the recommendations of the four Nuclear Security Summits. Next year, we will host on our territory the International Atomic Energy Agency Low Enriched Uranium Bank as a measure to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and thereby reduce nuclear risks.

The General Assembly draft resolution on Chernobyl is clear evidence of the recognition by the international community that that issue remains a matter of serious concern for the people of the planet. We stand with all countries around the world that have suffered from nuclear tests and disasters. It confirms our deep conviction that such problems can be solved only by the joint efforts of the international community.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2, of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Senghore (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), allow me to express my appreciation for the opportunity to address this important debate.

This fall, Member States adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and the New Urban Agenda in Quito, adding to the several multilateral agreements adopted during the previous year, many of which have important implications for humanitarian action. Each of those agreements has, in one way or another, recognized the importance of bridging humanitarian and development action. That bridge in programmes, in finance and in approaches is critical if we are to effectively respond to the ever-growing humanitarian needs. Allow me to make three points in that regard.

The principle of leaving no one behind, as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

cannot be realized without addressing the needs of those caught in humanitarian crises. That includes the many people affected by the biggest displacement crisis of our time. With the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in September, the international community recognized the need to act urgently to stem the loss of lives, the suffering and the needless indignities inflicted on those valuable people.

The current process leading towards a Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration is a welcome step. We are particularly interested in the potential for the Compact to support a more effective approach to the humanitarian and protection needs of the most vulnerable migrants. We hope to see the Compact lay out concrete goals and activities to reduce the number of deaths and the privation and suffering of migrants, and ensure that migrants have safe access to essential services and accurate information that allows them to make safer choices along their journey. We also hope the process will strongly reaffirm the need to counter xenophobia, discrimination and violence against migrants.

The IFRC is working together with its national societies with and for vulnerable migrants to help them meet their immediate needs and integrate into the societies that host them. We will be pleased to contribute our expertise in the Global Compact consultations that will be taking place next year. We commend the efforts to design an inclusive, transparent and action-oriented consultation process that includes various stakeholders at a global, regional and subregional level. We would also recommend holding national consultations, as that would help to ensure a more context-specific and inclusive process.

The important topic of localizing aid has been extensively promoted on the international policy agenda in 2016, including through the grand bargain on humanitarian financing, which features specific commitments to support local and national responders. We think that greater support for local actors can make an important difference in the timeliness, efficiency and appropriateness of humanitarian aid.

In the short term, we are hopeful that the various commitments of the grand bargain, including the goal of channelling at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funds as directly as possible to local and national actors by 2020, will begin moving us in the right direction. In the long term, humanitarian and development actors

need to invest in the pre-emption of future crises, strengthening the functional and operational capacities of local Governments and civil-society actors in order to ensure that local actors are as ready and capable as possible to step up to the needs in their communities. It is also important to avoid overwhelming local actors with a sudden influx of relief funds.

With regard to funding, the international community has fallen short in identifying emergency funding mechanisms that are adaptable to local action. For its part, the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund can quickly disburse funds, both for emergency relief operations and for making preparations in the event of an imminent disaster, to a national society within 24 hours and with minimal bureaucracy, while still ensuring proper accountability. However, we have recognized that that is not enough, and we are currently working with our partners in the International Committee of the Red Cross and a number of donors to develop a capacity-building fund with an eye towards developing longer-term sustainability and flexibility.

The IFRC welcomes the recognition given to Red Cross efforts in this year's draft resolution on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters (A/71/L.33). We acknowledge the usefulness of developing and enhancing forecast-based preparedness systems, making resources available for action in anticipation of natural disasters and making ex ante investments in order to mitigate disaster risks and build resilience. For our part, we are in the process of piloting a forecast-based financing mechanism that enables the allocation of funds for the timely implementation of early action and preparedness for responses based on forecast information before disasters happen. Using a forecast-based financing mechanism, investment is allocated based not only on a certain forecast, but also on a clear understanding of potential impacts and a cost-benefit analysis of actions. It will facilitate decision-making processes in scenarios of uncertainty.

The IFRC and its 190 national societies have been working to assist vulnerable people for approximately 150 years. We will continue to mobilize the power of humankind to provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable people. We will also continue to work with Governments in our auxiliary function to deliver services at the last mile.

The Acting President: In accordance with resolution 45/6, I now call on the observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Ms. Duran (International Committee of the Red Cross): The year 2016 has been a big year for United Nations policy-making. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development came into force. The New York Declaration on Migrants and Refugees (resolution 71/1) and the Quito New Urban Agenda were adopted by Member States. Each of those decisions involves important humanitarian commitments. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) welcomes them and is ready to advise on humanitarian aspects of the Compacts on migrants and refugees, which States will start developing in 2017.

The World Humanitarian Summit in May brought focus to several important areas of humanitarian policy, such as protracted conflicts, internally displaced persons, localization, the relief-to-development nexus, cash transfers, education and the inclusion of disabled people. This year also marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 46/182, on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance.

Our remarks will concentrate on respect for international humanitarian law, the link between the 2030 Agenda and humanitarian action, the significance today of resolution 46/182, and two particular groups of vulnerable people, namely, internally displaced persons and missing persons.

The need to generate greater respect for international humanitarian law has rightly been an important priority in United Nations policy-making during 2016. Countless attacks on health-care facilities and health-care workers led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 2286 (2016), which included a strong reaffirmation of the importance and relevance of the laws protecting health-care delivery in situations of armed conflict. More broadly, violations of international humanitarian law by State and non-State armed groups have continued across many armed conflicts. Humanitarian access has remained deeply problematic in several contexts. States' efforts to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law need to be significantly improved.

The agreement on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a major achievement by States, but the Agenda must not obscure the distinct role of humanitarian action. It is not the main purpose

of humanitarian action to meet the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and the ICRC does not pursue a particular ideology of political, economic or social progress. Our action focuses on need alone. However, principled humanitarian action may make a special contribution to meeting the basic human needs identified in the SDGs, especially for people left behind in armed conflicts. Many of the basic human needs prioritized in the SDGs — such safety, nutrition, health, water, education, livelihoods and legal protection — are also prioritized in international humanitarian law and humanitarian action.

In protracted conflicts, humanitarian action can hold together development infrastructure and services at a basic level and even function as a safety net. Smart collaboration between humanitarian actors, public authorities, development institutions and businesses can enable some continuity of the SDGs during and after armed conflict, but humanitarian action is not development or peacebuilding, which tend to have political goals.

Resolution 46/182 remains important today. It recognizes State sovereignty and prioritizes the role and responsibility of States in the facilitation of neutral and impartial humanitarian action. It also recognizes the importance of respecting international humanitarian law and the vital additional role of principled humanitarian organizations in strengthening humanitarian response.

Our operational experience is clear. This combination of a responsible and actively engaged State allowing and facilitating principled humanitarian action works best to protect and assist the victims of armed conflict. When States embrace their humanitarian responsibilities, the ICRC is better able to reach people and to support or provide the services they need. An effective Government is often the difference between humanitarian success and humanitarian failure.

Finally, our operations suggest that two groups of people deserve significant attention in global humanitarian policy today: urban internally displaced persons (IDPs) and missing people and their families. Urban IDPs form a growing category of people whose conditions require a more coordinated response. The majority of the world's IDPs now live in urban areas, usually alongside urban poor. IDPs and their host communities share many similar needs. States should focus more effort on integrating urban IDPs and their

host communities into improved basic services and livelihood opportunities. We welcome the commitment of the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme to partner with Governments, municipal authorities and humanitarian organizations to support State capacity to meet the needs of IDPs.

Missing people and their families also require better coordination of humanitarian services. Here, ICRC is facing increasing needs as missing migrants are added to people missing in armed conflicts. The emotional pain and socioeconomic impact felt by their families is deep and lasting. People need a concerted effort on the part of States to enable and link up the search for missing people. ICRC stands ready to support these greater efforts.

The year 2017 will be taken up with the important work of rolling out new global policies agreed this year and developing the compacts on migrants and refugees. The humanitarian role and responsibilities of States must remain central and in line with their obligations under international and domestic law. The need to clarify the relationship between humanitarian action and Agenda 2030 will be key. But the needs of people, like IDPs and the missing, must remain at the heart of new humanitarian policies.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/71/L.28, A/71/L.31, A/71/L.32, A/71/L.33 and A/71/L.34 and draft amendments A/71/L.36 and A/71/L.37.

Before proceeding further, and in view of the desire of members to dispose of this item expeditiously, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider draft resolutions A/71/L.32, A/71/L.33 and A/71/L.34 and draft amendments A/71/L.36 and A/71/L.37. In this connection, since the draft resolutions and draft amendments were not circulated until this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which reads as follows:

“As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting.”

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees with the earlier proposal that I made to waive a provision of the rules of procedure.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Before giving the floor for explanations of vote or position before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Galbavý (Slovakia): I would like to speak in explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/71/L.34, entitled “Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel”. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

The United States facilitator of this humanitarian draft resolution has made every possible effort to ensure a transparent and inclusive process in which all views were taken into account. During the month-long negotiation process, all delegations had ample chance to be involved. Unfortunately, after we reached consensus on the draft text, as presented today, the delegation of the Sudan proposed an amendment to the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and the deletion of operative paragraph 7. After a new informal reading, all the other delegations preferred to stick to the consensus reached during the negotiations.

The references to the International Criminal Court in the preambular and operative parts have existed since 1999, when the first resolution on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and the protection of United Nations personnel was adopted.

We ask all Member States to vote against the proposed changes in agreed language from previous years for the following reasons. First, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is the only standing legal instrument in which attacks directed against personnel involved in humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping missions are explicitly recognized as a war crime. That simple factual reference is as relevant now as it was in 1999. Referring to an instrument is stronger than referring in general to international law, as suggested by the delegation of the Sudan.

Secondly, it is important that the present wording recognize the role that the International Criminal Court can play in the enforcement of that prohibition. We consider the International Criminal Court to be

an indispensable building block in the prevention of impunity, including in the case of the war crime of directing attacks against humanitarian assistance personnel and peacekeepers. It is for that reason that the 28 States members of the European Union will vote against the amendments, and we urge all other States and, in particular, the States parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to also vote against them.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I would like to reiterate that we support draft resolution A/71/L.34, on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel. We have voted in favour of the draft resolutions on that subject since 1999, and our delegation will continue to do so. As the draft resolution relates to humanitarian assistance, it is particularly important for the text to be acceptable to the international community. In that regard, I would like to note that it is the responsibility of the sponsors not to introduce controversial issues that would require delegations to vote against certain paragraphs.

(spoke in English)

Humanitarian assistance is premised on principles, including the principles of independence and impartiality. We, along with several other delegations, consider that they are both absent from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Since 23 November, in all transparency and having broken the silence, we have proposed different language in an attempt to overcome this difference with our partners and colleagues in the European Union. During those 15 days, we took every available opportunity to try to arrive at agreed language. Unfortunately, the European Union insisted on retaining the unamended wording and overruled the silence procedure the moment we did the opposite, thereby giving us no opportunity to put forward our proposals.

Our first amendment (A/71/L.36) is to the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and simply proposes the deletion of the words “in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and noting the role that the Court can play in appropriate cases in bringing” and their replacement by a general reference that reads “in international law, and expressing resolve to bring”. The remainder of the sentence can be left as is. That is our first amendment. We are ready to consider any language that could assist us in our endeavour. In the past few

days, we have submitted other improved language that is more acceptable in an effort to overcome the impasse on the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph. Unfortunately, our repeated calls have gone unheeded.

In the second amendment (A/71/L.37), we propose the deletion of paragraph 7, which reads “Also calls upon all States to consider becoming parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court”. We consider that this wording offers an opportunity to advance in a controversial matter that conflicts with the purpose of the draft resolution on humanitarian assistance, because the Court has already proved, during its short, 10-year lifespan, that it does not respect the principles of independence and impartiality. We have brought to the attention of all States Members of the United Nations the reason we are calling for the deletion of any reference to the International Criminal Court in this draft resolution.

It should be noted that the Sudan is a party to the four Geneva Conventions and the two Additional Protocols. Paragraph 5 of article 6 of Protocol II, which relates to internal conflicts, expressly refers to the obligation of the States parties to the Protocol to resort to amnesty as a measure that will bring peace to a conflict situation in any given country. Unfortunately, the Statute of the International Criminal Court negates that principle of international law. When asked about that irregularity and contradiction, the first President of the Court described it as “constructive ambiguity”. Constructive ambiguity can be a basis for any political situation, but it cannot be the basis for a rule or a statute governing the International Criminal Court.

In the note we circulated to all delegations, we said that the references to the Court lacked relevance to the subject matter of the draft resolution and that they were therefore invalid. The only purpose of the references is to try to promote a controversial issue, as we can clearly see from paragraph 7. Serious concerns about validity, usefulness, integrity, efficiency, corruption, politicization and selectivity are being increasingly voiced, even among the membership of the Court.

The General Assembly, the highest organ of the Organization, is entrusted with the fulfilment of the objectives and purposes of the United Nations, chief among which are respect for and adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It is noteworthy that the United States of America and India pointedly affirmed the following in their

joint statement on the eve of the adoption of the Rome Statute in 1998:

“We are concerned about the international criminal treaty with respect to the inadequacy of checks and balances, the impact of the treaty on national sovereignty and the potential for conflict with the United Nations Charter”.

The Sudan, too, is concerned about any potential conflict with the United Nations Charter, and, since the Statute of the International Criminal Court is at odds with the Charter, our amendments eliminate the references to the Court.

Reference to the Court should not be forced into a draft resolution on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel. It seems appropriate to cite the Canadian/Irish human rights professor mentioned in our circular. Mr. William Schabas stated that it is a fact that many States seek to influence the direction of international justice, and they resist efforts to strengthen the independence and impartiality of the judiciary because it threatens their ability to fulfil such an agenda. The fact is that they do not want to do so because they would lose control.

In sum, because of these arguments, I urge Member States to vote in favour of our amendments to draft resolution A/71/L.34, both as regards the wording of the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and the deletion of operative paragraph 7. I seek guidance as to whether we will vote separately on each of those two paragraphs.

The Acting President: Yes, we will conduct a separate vote on each of the two amendments (A/71/L.36 and A/71/L.37).

Mr. Nardi (Liechtenstein): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and my own country, Liechtenstein.

I would like to remind delegations that the wording in question is the exact wording agreed on by consensus in previous years. Concerning the first proposed amendment (A/71/L.36), it is important to stress that the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph merely reflects the fact that the crimes in question are referred to in the Rome Statute. We find it therefore deeply disturbing that the established consensus is now being challenged. This is even more distressing since we have been witnessing an alarming erosion of the respect for international humanitarian law in recent years, with

some of the most disturbing expressions being attacks against humanitarian and medical personnel in conflict situations, in violation of international humanitarian law. Therefore, the relevance of the agreed text today is even greater than in past years, and we strongly insist on the retention of the agreed language.

On the second proposed amendment (A/71/L.37), we want to emphasize that paragraph 7 does not touch upon each State's own decision to choose whether to join the Rome Statute system, and that therefore the text should be kept. We hope that all delegations will join us in opposing changes to the consensus language from previous years.

Mr. Pronin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation consistently advocates the prosecution of individuals guilty of having perpetrated grave international crimes. Our country was at the origin of the establishment of the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes tribunals. We took part in crafting their Charters. For the same fundamental reasons, Russia voted in favour of adopting the Rome Statute, and we signed it on 13 September 2000.

The International Criminal Court (ICC), as the first permanent body of international criminal justice, was closely linked to the expectations of the international community to combat impunity, to settle existing conflicts and to prevent new hotbeds of tension from arising. To our regret, the Court has failed to meet our expectations. It has not become a genuinely independent and authoritative body of international justice.

This is a matter of principle. In various forums, including the General Assembly and the Security Council, we have observed the ineffective and one-sided work of the Court with respect to the cases on its docket. That is borne out by the fact that, in the 14 years of its work, the ICC has rendered only four judgments; yet, it has expended more than \$1 billion. We therefore understand the initiative taken by the African Union in deciding to formulate measures for a coordinated withdrawal of African States from the Rome Statute.

We view in a similar light the position of the Sudanese delegation in proposing amendments to the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph (A/71/L.36) and paragraph 7 (A/71/L.37) of draft resolution A/71/L.34, which refer to the role of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute. From the very outset of the negotiations on draft resolution A/71/L.34, our delegation clearly set forth its position on both

paragraphs. We repeat that position once again today. Our country's decision to withdraw from the Rome Statute prevents us from aligning ourselves with the twenty-sixth preambular paragraph and paragraph 7 of the draft resolution. In that connection, we support the amendments proposed by the Sudan.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote or position before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.28, entitled "Persistent legacy of the Chernobyl disaster".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.28: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, Estonia, Georgia, Iceland, India, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.28 without a vote?

Draft resolution A/71/L.28 was adopted (resolution 71/125).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.31, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed on the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.31: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro,

the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.31 without a vote?

Draft resolution A/71/L.31 was adopted (resolution 71/126).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.32, entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.32: Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nauru, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Vanuatu.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.32 without a vote?

Draft resolution A/71/L.32 was adopted (resolution 71/127).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.33, entitled “International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development”. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.33: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and the United States of America.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.33?

Draft resolution A/71/L.33 was adopted (resolution 71/128).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.34, entitled “Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.34: Andorra, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Guatemala, Guinea, Iceland, Malawi, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, Turkey and Uruguay.

The Acting President: In accordance with rule 90 of the Assembly’s rules of procedure, the Assembly will first take a decision on the proposed draft amendments

to draft resolution A/71/L.34, issued as documents A/71/L.36 and A/71/L.37, one by one.

We will first take action on the draft amendment contained in A/71/L.36. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Bahrain, Belarus, Burundi, China, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritius, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Singapore, Somalia, Turkey, Uganda, Viet Nam

The draft amendment contained in A/71/L.36 was rejected by 22 votes to 80, with 23 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of the Niger, Samoa and Senegal informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft amendment contained in A/71/L.37. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Belarus, Burundi, China, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Morocco, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritius, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Singapore, Somalia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam

The draft amendment contained in A/71/L.37 was rejected by 16 votes to 84, with 26 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of the Niger and Samoa informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.34?

Draft resolution A/71/L.34 was adopted (resolution 71/129).

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Lithuania, who wishes to speak on the resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Šorytė (Lithuania): I would like to present my country's explanation of vote on resolution 71/125, entitled "Persistent legacy of the Chernobyl disaster".

Thirty years after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster — one of the biggest disasters in human history — we continue to witness the long-term impact of Chernobyl, with its humanitarian, environmental, social, economic and health consequences. We appreciate the efforts of the international community to mitigate the consequences of the accident. The solidarity of regional and global partners in the face of such accidents is crucial. However, solidarity must be genuine and go well beyond mere declarations such as the Minsk Declaration referred to in the resolution adopted today.

Lithuania remains concerned about the construction of a nuclear plant in very close proximity to my country, without the provision of full, reliable and transparent information on many aspects of the project, including on how to ensure that provisions under international conventions and nuclear-safety standards are respected and implemented, the seismic evaluation of the site, emergency-preparedness plans and various other crucial safety aspects.

As we remember the tragedy of Chernobyl, we must once again stress the urgency of doing everything we can in order to avoid and prevent other nuclear disaster. The lessons of the Chernobyl disaster force us to develop nuclear technologies in conformity with the spirit and letter of international nuclear-safety and security requirements. We recognize and respect the right of States to develop peaceful nuclear programmes. However, this should be done while keeping in mind the broader context of transboundary implications and

in full compliance with the rules and requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and other international and regional bodies.

Confidence-building and ensuring maximum safety are crucial for nuclear energy development. Implementation of stress tests and IAEA safety standards, adherence to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, cooperation with specialized IAEA missions, including Site and External Events Design review missions for the entire nuclear cycle, should be integral parts of each and every nuclear-power programme. We call on all countries that develop nuclear energy to implement the highest international nuclear-safety and environmental requirements throughout the full nuclear-facility cycle in the most comprehensive manner, as it is the only reliable way to avoid and prevent disasters similar to Chernobyl in future.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

Several delegations have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind Member States that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Pronin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to begin with a general remark on today's meeting. Sub-item (a) of agenda item 69, which is the topic of the meeting, focuses on the coordination of humanitarian assistance. To be frank, we expected the meeting to be an opportunity to exchange views on the substantive content of the agenda for international cooperation on humanitarian response. That is what we based our statement on.

Regrettably, I must note that we have recently seen a clear trend towards the politicization of the humanitarian dossier, where matters of assistance to those in need are put on the back burner and what comes to the fore are political discussions, unjustified accusations and exchanges of caustic remarks specific to specialized committees and the Security Council. Unfortunately, today's meeting, which has taken up the entire day, has hardly provided an opportunity for a meaningful discussion on the possibility of building cooperation for humanitarian assistance, which is a great pity.

I do not wish to delve into a political discussion or respond in detail to the statement of the representative of Ukraine, in which he made some remarks about my country (see A/71/PV.56). However, we do indeed have something to say about the de facto economic blockade of populations in the Republic and the fact that they are being punished for their unwillingness to acknowledge the unconstitutional coup that occurred in the capital. Members may refer to our statement on this topic, which has been delivered in the Third Committee, the Sixth Committee and in other General Assembly meetings.

I should like to call on everyone to focus the discussion on the substantive content of humanitarian cooperation and meaningful practical initiatives that could improve the humanitarian situation in affected countries, rather than open up yet another political discussion in this Hall. As we see it, having the latter discussion is not the reason we have come here today.

Mr. Amer (Israel) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today we have heard numerous accusations levelled against the State of Israel that ignore realities and distort facts. Attacking Israel has become a hobby and pastime of some of our neighbours that will ultimately prove futile. Attacking Israel is a failed attempt to divert attention from the brutal crimes perpetrated by the Syrian regime.

From this rostrum, the representative of Syria spoke in a bizarre manner, distorting facts and giving free rein to his imagination. The words he used had little connection to reality. Tampering with the truth, he uttered lies. His army continues to drop barrel bombs upon its citizens, including the elderly, children and women, while Israel has aided and provided health services to many innocent injured Syrians. We say now to the representative of Syria, “While you kill, we treat the injured”. The situation has become very clear. Syria is now mocked in the Arab street.

The representative of Syria mentioned the so-called occupied Golan. No comparison can be made between the situation in the Golan and the situation in Syria, either before or after the tragic war. The situation in the Golan is hundreds of thousands of times better than that in Syria and other parts of the Arab world with respect to the provision of services, including welfare, social services, employment opportunities, pensions and the economic situation.

We exhort the representative of Syria not to venture any further down that path.

Mr. Lisuchenko (Ukraine): For the sake of time, I will be brief. It is obvious that there is a direct causal link between Russian actions in Ukraine since February 2014 and the dire humanitarian situation in my country. This has been confirmed on numerous occasions by reports of various United Nations agencies, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, and during the debates heard in the Third and Sixth Committees of the General Assembly.

To become fully aware of the current humanitarian situation in my country, I invite all the delegations to attend the briefing that will be held by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs next week.

Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The representative of the Government of Israeli occupation spoke disparagingly of the situation in my country, and we have responded to him. However, our response was not enough for him, so he persists in misguiding Member States, believing that the crisis in my country will make us forget our arch-enemy, Israel, the occupying Power.

My country is the victim of organized terrorism, which, recalling the actions of Israeli terrorist gangs, is similar to the terrorism used by Israelis to build their country. It is naive to believe in the veracity of the Israeli representative’s claims that his Government is looking out for people’s interests. Indeed, the situation reveals that for six decades the occupying forces have deprived the Arab population of their rights and freedoms. Those who occupy the territories of others and who adopt policies of starvation, occupation, confiscation of land, assassinations and killings cannot claim to be listening to the dictates of their conscience, much less talk about humanitarian issues.

It is very ironic to see the representative of the brutal Zionist regime shed crocodile tears over the population of Aleppo and other Syrians, in the light of the adoption moments ago of resolution 71/126, the resolution on “Assistance to the Palestinian people”, which addresses the practices of the Israeli regime in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories.

At a time when the annals of the Organization teem with condemnations of the bloody actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, against the defenceless Palestinian people and against our people in the occupied Syrian Golan and other Arab territories occupied

since 1967, we again recall the terrorist role played by Israel, the occupying Power, in the area of separation, where it is supporting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other extremist terrorist organizations. The current situation, which is clearly described in United Nations reports on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, threatens the separation agreements and undermines international peace and security in the area.

Israel, the occupying Power, intermittently bombs targets in my country to boost the morale of the terrorists it supports. Those who transact with terrorists are terrorists themselves, as is stated in numerous Security Council resolutions.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 69 and its sub-items (a) to (d).

Agenda item 7 (continued)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Letter dated 7 December 2016 from the Chair of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/71/382/Add.1)

The Acting President: Members are aware that, pursuant to section 1, paragraph 7, of resolution 40/243, no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during the main part of a regular session of the Assembly, unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

Authorization is thus sought for the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing to meet in New York from 12 to 15 December, during the main part of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, on the strict understanding that all meetings would be allocated conference services on an as-available basis, from within existing resources, and in such a way that the work of the General Assembly and its Main Committees is not impeded.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to authorize the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing to meet during the main part of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I would like to make the following announcement concerning the work of the plenary. The consideration of agenda item 14, entitled “Culture of peace”, and agenda item 127, entitled “Global health and foreign policy”, originally scheduled for tomorrow, Friday, 9 December, is postponed to Thursday, 15 December.

Additionally, as indicated in a letter from the President of the General Assembly to Member States that was sent today, the Assembly will now consider agenda item 31, entitled “Prevention of armed conflict”, tomorrow, Friday, 9 December, at 10 a.m., to take action on draft resolution A/71/L.39.

Lastly, the consideration of the following agenda items, originally scheduled for Monday, 12 December, is also postponed to a later date to be announced: agenda item 32, entitled “Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development”; agenda item 33, entitled “Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic”; agenda item 37, entitled “The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan”; sub-item (c) of agenda item 114, entitled “Election of five members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission”; sub-item (l) of agenda item 115, entitled “Appointment of the judges of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal”; and agenda item 128, entitled “International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991”.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.