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Chairman: Mr. Djumala (Vice-Chairman) (Indonesia)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Djumala, (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

Agenda item 98: Environment and sustainable development (*continued*)

(f) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (*continued*)
(A/56/306, A/56/385 and A/56/509)

1. **Mr. Cutajar** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), reporting on the work of the Conference of the Parties (A/56/509), said that the seventh session of the Conference, held at Marrakech, had been a political success. Thirty-nine decisions had been adopted, bringing to a close four years of negotiations following the third Conference of the Parties at Kyoto.

2. The first of those decisions, namely the Ministerial Declaration, was an important contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It introduced the Marrakech Accords and signalled the prospect of the prompt entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol.

3. The Marrakech Accords dealt, inter alia, with the modalities for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and the new arrangements intended to provide financial and technical support to developing countries to enable them to deal with climate change and its adverse effects. They formalized the political consensus reached at the second part of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties at Bonn and brought work on the Buenos Aires Plan of Action to a conclusion.

4. He also drew attention to a number of points concerning the 2002 programme of work, in particular several decisions regarding the provision of aid to the least developed countries to enable them to meet their adaptation requirements, the creation of an expert group in that connection, the study of reporting guidelines by developing countries parties to the Convention, the follow-up to the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, public awareness-raising, cooperation with the secretariat and the steering bodies of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the

intersessional workshops and the next Conference of the Parties, to be held in New Delhi, India.

5. He placed particular emphasis on two decisions regarding, on the one hand, Turkey, the only party listed in annex I which had not ratified the Framework Convention but was in a position to do so and, on the other hand, the situation of parties not listed in annex I which were not regarded as developing countries, in particular countries of the Caucasus region, Moldova and Albania. The Conference of the Parties had also decided to increase the participation of women in the bodies established pursuant to the Framework Convention and its protocols.

6. The first perspective that arose from the Marrakech Accords was the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol before the end of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, given the positive attitudes of the European Union and Japan in that regard. The Protocol was not, however, a guarantee that the industrialized countries would significantly reduce their greenhouse gas emissions during the first phase of its application, owing, inter alia, to the flexibility of its provisions and the withdrawal of the United States of America. To achieve that aim, the developed countries must make a commitment not only to take practical measures at the national level but also to invest in the clean development mechanism and not to concentrate solely on the market.

7. To assist countries to implement the Framework Convention, the financial and technical instruments must be finalized. A fund administered by the Global Environment Facility would be set up and the parties listed in annex II must contribute the necessary resources to it. Measures to promote the transfer of technology to developing countries must be implemented.

8. The first meeting of a liaison group comprising the executive secretaries of the three sustainable development conventions and the chairpersons of the subsidiary organs would soon be held in Washington in order to improve the management of the three intergovernmental processes, strengthen policy coordination and, possibly, conduct a joint assessment of the capacity-building needs of developing countries.

9. The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol would be followed by the technical implementation of its mechanisms. During that stage, an inventory should be made of methods relating to greenhouse gases, the

experts should examine the data and a baseline level should be set for the clean development mechanism, while devoting particular attention to the emerging market of emissions and their regulation.

10. Future negotiations should focus on the reintegration of the United States of America into a global approach to climate change, accelerating developed countries' emission reduction and a greater commitment by developing countries to the aims of the Framework Convention. Such negotiations would take place in the context of the periodic review of the implementation of the Framework Convention, and parties' respect for their obligations and the monitoring of progress made towards the accomplishment of its aims.

11. In conclusion, he said that the General Assembly might like to take note of the progress made since the adoption of the previous resolution on the protection of the global climate, take account of that progress during the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development and maintain the institutional linkage of the secretariat of the Framework Convention to the United Nations, since it had proved a useful management tool for the secretariat of the Framework Convention in Bonn.

12. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, given that it had been functioning well, the institutional linkage of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the United Nations and the related administrative arrangements should continue for a further five-year period, as proposed in the Secretary-General's report (A/56/385).

13. The historic agreements concluded in Bonn and Marrakech meant that it was now possible to envisage the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol before the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. The expeditious ratification of the Protocol by the parties listed in annex I of the Framework Convention was expected to open the way for the effective application of its provisions and, in particular, the Buenos Aires Action Plan.

14. The agreements and decisions adopted in Bonn and Marrakech had taken account of the concerns and interests of the various parties and were well balanced. Furthermore, every effort had been made to preserve the environmental integrity of that multilateral process:

the lesson to be learned was that multilateralism and cooperation led to positive results. Recent negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol had renewed confidence in the value of dialogue, understanding and cooperation, which contributed to addressing global problems such as climate change and to resolving seemingly insurmountable difficulties. In that connection, he stressed that the agreements reached in Bonn and Marrakech could not have been concluded without the constructive contribution and approach of the Group of 77 and China. Developing countries, which were the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, would continue to participate actively in the current multilateral process in that area in order to safeguard and promote the long-term interests of all parties.

15. **Mr. Ashe** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), pointed out that the adoption of the Marrakech Accords had brought to a close several years of tough negotiations and had opened the way to the widespread ratification by States of the Kyoto Protocol and its early entry into force. The next step would be to test the effectiveness of the Protocol's mechanisms in contributing to the 5 per cent cut in greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries over the forthcoming decade.

16. He was particularly pleased that the Accords had emphasized the need to strengthen financial and technological support to developing countries, particularly to the least developed countries and the Small Island Developing States, so that they could move towards a viable energy strategy. He hoped that that theme would be further elaborated upon during the various preparatory processes leading up to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.

17. To enter into force, the Kyoto Protocol needed to be ratified by at least 55 parties to the Framework Convention. To date, 40 countries had ratified it, including a majority of the members of CARICOM. His delegation was therefore heartened that several industrialized countries had declared at Marrakech that they would begin the respective national ratification procedures, which might mean that the Protocol could enter into force before the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Without a global coalition of States, however, it would be impossible to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and/or adapt to them. No one State should unilaterally decide that it did not

wish to join the international community in a collective effort to tackle that major challenge facing present and future generations.

18. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an authority in the field, had repeatedly asserted that greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity were accumulating in the atmosphere, leading to global warming and contributing to rising sea levels. Given that the Caribbean States were predominantly low-lying countries and consequently extremely vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, in particular the increase in the frequency of tropical storms, they were particularly concerned and hoped that all Governments would honour their commitments in that area.

19. The Framework Convention emphasized that economic and social development and poverty eradication were overriding priorities for developing countries and that their emissions would increase as their material welfare improved. However, even though their greenhouse gas emissions were negligible, the countries of the Caribbean region were willing to contribute to a global effort intended to identify sustainable development strategies, consistent with the aims of the Framework Convention, which would lead to a flatter rise in emissions through lowering those generated by economic activity. Those strategies could be driven by technological innovation and different patterns of energy resource development backed by external support.

20. **Archbishop Martino** (Permanent Observer for the Holy See) said that at the end of the previous century, mankind had been able to feel proud of the preceding 100 years: it had unlocked the secrets of the atom and produced energy by nuclear fission; it had discovered that the universe was expanding and that life's architecture was based on a double helix of DNA; and it had travelled to the moon, not to conquer but to learn. However, that same mankind which had come to understand the forces of nature had omitted one thing, namely that mankind itself had become a force of nature powerful enough to change the world for centuries to come. That force had created the greenhouse effect, which the scientific community had agreed was attributable to human activity.

21. The history of humanity had been punctuated by various revolutions. The first had occurred at the end of the ice age, when man had used his knowledge to sow

seeds and produce a more stable food source. The second was the industrial revolution, which had taken place when man had applied his knowledge to produce energy from coal and steam, unleashing the build-up of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

22. It had taken nature a million years to produce the amount of fossil fuel that humanity burned in one year. Moreover, 25 per cent of the world's population was responsible for 75 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions. Global warming was a genuinely global phenomenon which did not recognize borders, nations or cultural differences. Consequently, any action to combat it must reflect the interdependence of countries and their common responsibility to present and future generations.

23. A third revolution might be necessary, a revolution of knowledge, which was a public good and could be shared without ever being exhausted. That revolution would help humanity move from a resource-intensive model to a knowledge-intensive one, where people would count for more than they produced and would be at the centre of sustainable development. Civilization must not reach a stage where it knew the price of everything and the value of nothing.

24. **Mr. Maksimychev** (Russian Federation) said that reducing the anthropogenic burden on the climate had become a major concern of the international community. In that context, he welcomed the successful work carried out at the seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, recently held at Marrakech. On that occasion, the international community had shown that it could reach mutually acceptable decisions on extremely complex issues and find effective responses to the new challenges facing it.

25. The Marrakech Accords enabled all States to study the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, which was of primordial importance to preventing climate change at the global level. That issue had a political aspect: it had been studied at the highest level during the Group of Eight Summit at Genoa, when the Russian Federation's proposal to organize a world conference in 2003 in Russia on the problems associated with climate change had been approved. That conference would fall within the same framework as the Kyoto Protocol and all interested parties would be invited to take part. The work carried out there should contribute significantly to the gradual development of the Kyoto Protocol and

would enable a better understanding of the varied elements of climate-related problems.

26. **Mr. Vencel** (Slovakia) observed that the last report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had sent a clear warning about the consequences of global warming and, in particular, had projected the increasing frequency, severity and duration of weather-related natural disasters such as floods, droughts, storms and landslides; no country was free of the risks to all sectors caused by global warming, and therefore all countries had a long-term interest in minimizing its extent.

27. In that context, the Kyoto Protocol offered the best prospect of an orderly transition to a climate-friendly economy, on account of several mechanisms which promoted non-polluting technologies. His Government welcomed the conclusion of the Bonn Agreement, under which the Kyoto Protocol would continue to play a crucial role in tackling the issue of global warming. His delegation was aware that the political decision adopted on that occasion was the product of a compromise and therefore difficult to implement but welcomed the fact that the Bonn Agreement had led to the opening of the Kyoto Protocol for ratification and had marked the end of the uncertainty about its future. His delegation also welcomed the outcome of the Conference of the Parties held at Marrakech, which had pursued that process through the adoption of a coherent package of 39 decisions which would open the way for more specific measures at the national and international levels. Slovakia had been a Party to the Framework Convention since 1994 and hoped to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, which it had already signed, in 2002.

28. The signatories would clearly find it difficult to fulfil their commitments under the Protocol, but they had a moral obligation to future generations. However, it was important to consider the Protocol's impact on economic development, and in that connection the mechanisms established at Kyoto, such as emissions trading, were significant because they would enable more flexibility in the implementation of the reduction targets. One way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions was to increase energy production efficiency through greater usage of combined heat and energy production. Considerable efforts should also be made in the area of energy consumption, which was still far too high in the industrial sector. Slovakia had little experience in the area of demand management but was convinced that its

systematic use would lead to significant energy savings. On the other hand, Slovakia had a relatively high potential for renewable energy, either geothermal or biomass, which should make it possible to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the residential sector.

29. The negotiations in Bonn and Marrakech had proved that a political consensus could be reached if all countries were willing. Although it was necessary to take account of the legitimate concerns of some countries with regard to the impact of the Kyoto Protocol on domestic welfare, it was undesirable to step back from the global threat of climate change. The sooner the international community took action, the more acceptable and cost-effective the impact of its measures.

30. **Mr. Kokubu** (Japan) said that his Government welcomed the outcome of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention, particularly the agreement on the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. That agreement represented substantial progress in the fight against global warming, climate change being the most serious threat to sustainable development as it could bring about a rise in sea levels, affect ecosystems and biological diversity and speed up desertification. Furthermore, if the international community wished to further implement Agenda 21 it must address the issue of climate change. Given that the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties had led to the drafting of a document which stipulated the modalities for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, his Government had decided to begin preparations to ratify it in 2002.

31. To ensure the effectiveness of measures to combat global warming, it was vital that all countries endeavoured to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. With the aim of subjecting all countries to the same rules, his Government would continue to do everything possible to ensure that the United States of America joined the rest of the international community on that important issue.

32. For the same reason, Japan attached considerable importance to the formulation of international rules in collaboration with developing countries. It was hoped that, at the next session of the Conference of the Parties, the participants could study in a constructive and practical manner ways of better respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibility established by the Framework Convention. In that

connection, he wished to pay tribute to certain developing countries, such as China, which had voluntarily made tremendous efforts to that end. Japan was committed to supporting the efforts of developing countries to address climate change, as evidenced by the launch of the Kyoto initiative at the third session of the Conference of the Parties in 1997 and by the practical assistance provided to those countries through training and project financing.

33. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that the question at issue had special relevance in the context of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Since the Rio Summit, and under Agenda 21, a new development model had gradually been established, intended to protect the environment for present and future generations.

34. Bangladesh was particularly vulnerable to climate change, on account of its geographical location, and was therefore concerned about global warming. According to recent studies, including the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the various aspects of that phenomenon were having a significant impact on the South Asian countries: higher temperatures would lead to an increased risk of drought, which was already affecting India and Pakistan; rising sea levels would also affect low-lying areas in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh; rainfall and hydrology would be affected in as yet unpredictable ways, since the impact of the monsoon had not yet been modelled; cyclones were unlikely to become more frequent but might become more potent and be accompanied by tidal waves due to higher sea surface temperatures.

35. The Framework Convention had been negotiated in the belief that anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions in the post-industrial era had reached levels that would change the global climate if drastic and urgent measures were not taken. Bangladesh had ratified the Convention in 1994 and had conducted a number of studies on climate change, but to implement the action plans designed to mitigate its effects it would need adequate financial and technical support from the donor community.

36. Thus, Bangladesh, like many other countries, had responded to the global call for the protection and conservation of the natural environment at the regional, national and international levels. It had signed and ratified 27 international instruments relating to the

environment, inter alia the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification, and, in September 2001, had deposited the instrument of accession to the Kyoto Protocol. At the national level, an environment policy had been implemented, which comprised massive forestation programmes to enhance domestic carbon sinks and a social forestry campaign. With the assistance of the development partners, considerable work had been undertaken in a number of areas, such as an emissions inventory, a vulnerability and adaptation assessment and the development of a strategy to mitigate the effects of climate change.

37. As a developing country, Bangladesh emphasized three core factors relating to the Framework Convention which might have far-reaching consequences for the protection of the global environment for future generations, namely the limitation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the industrialized countries in accordance with the targets set by the Kyoto Protocol, the transfer of financial resources from the industrialized countries to the developing countries and the transfer of technology between those same countries.

38. Although there was often a gap between promise and performance, the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties had rekindled hopes with the adoption of a ministerial declaration which emphasized the contribution that measures to combat climate change could make to sustainable development and the need for capacity-building, technological innovation and cooperation in the implementation of the conventions on biological diversity and desertification. It was particularly vital to increase the flow of financial and technological support to the developing countries in order to implement the plans, programmes and projects under the Kyoto Protocol.

39. The international community must act immediately and in a coordinated fashion in order to strike a better balance between human consumption and development, protect the global climate and give priority to collective interests.

40. **Ms. Zhang** Xiao'an (China) said that the Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol embodied the common interests of the international community on the issue of global climate change. The adoption of the Bonn Agreement at the sixth session of

the Conference of the Parties bore witness to the determination and solidarity in that area. The decisions taken at the seventh session on the implementation of that Agreement had created the necessary conditions for the entry into force of the Protocol. The third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change contained additional evidence and information and, to address the problem of climate change, it was necessary to apply the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and to take practical steps to promote the early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol.

41. The Bonn Agreement provided for the creation of a special climate change fund, a least developed countries fund and an expert group on the transfer of technology, which would enable financial assistance to be provided and would ensure the transfers of technology needed to assist the developing countries to address climate change. The three mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol would help the developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions at low cost, and the clean development mechanism would also promote sustainable development in developing countries. She hoped that the operating rules for those three mechanisms would be established and that the clean development mechanism would be launched without delay. A strict procedure of compliance with the Agreements was the guarantee of the Protocol's implementation and relied on the reporting of relevant information and its review. Since the entry into force of the Framework Convention, many developing countries had taken measures to address climate change, and her Government had ensured that the growth rate of China's energy consumption did not exceed half of its economic growth rate. The international community must respect the spirit and the letter of the Convention, and both developed and developing countries must work together in line with its provisions in order to fulfil their respective obligations, establish partnerships and contribute to the protection of the global environment.

42. **Ms. Rühl Burzi** (Observer for Switzerland) said that the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change emphasized that the atmospheric concentration of the main greenhouse gases had reached its highest ever recorded level and was causing global warming. The adverse effects of climate change included rising sea levels and the increased frequency and intensity of

extreme weather conditions, such as floods and drought.

43. To respond to that threat, the Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol must be implemented. The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties at Marrakech had resulted in an agreement which enabled the Protocol to be ratified and enter into force. The Marrakech Accords also contained important elements for furthering the implementation of the Convention, with regard to, inter alia, the transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries, capacity-building needs in relation to the fight against climate change and financial assistance to developing countries with a view to implementing the Convention and the Protocol.

44. Her delegation hoped that the parties to the Convention would reconfirm their political will to combat climate change by ratifying the Kyoto Protocol. For its part, Switzerland had begun the ratification process. The industrialized countries should be a driving force in the fight against climate change by implementing national measures to cut down on emissions. Switzerland had already adopted a law which stipulated that, by 2010, carbon dioxide emissions must be reduced by 10 per cent compared to their 1990 level.

45. The Marrakech Declaration, adopted at the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties and addressed to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, stressed the need to continue fighting against climate change in accordance with the objectives laid down in other international conventions, particularly the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

46. **Mr. Koech** (Kenya) noted that the participants at the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties had studied extremely important questions relating to how countries could implement the Framework Convention, in particular the commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The two main aspects of the problem of global warming were the reduction of the extent of climate change by mitigating emissions and the limitation of the adverse effects of climate change through adaptation. Aware that it was important to educate the public and policy makers, his Government had introduced measures which provided for the development of integrated plans. Traditional adjustments to climate variability were proving

inadequate in the face of poverty and possible future climate change; adaptation measures and the transfer of environment-friendly technology were therefore necessary to improve the adaptation capacities of developing countries.

47. Many African countries were experiencing increasingly unpredictable climatic phenomena. There was, therefore, an urgent need to take steps to address the extreme climatic variations. Massive investment was needed for the production and adaptation of new and renewable forms of energy, but account must be taken of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. His delegation hoped for closer cooperation with the Northern countries in order to assist developing countries to adopt cleaner technologies and develop alternative energy sources. It appreciated the efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme to mobilize resources for the recently completed study on the environmental impacts of the devastating drought which had affected Kenya, and was grateful for the support of the Programme and other development partners in implementing the recommendations of that study. In the run-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, his delegation urged the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol to adhere to the spirit of Rio, which promoted concerted efforts to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.

48. **Mr. Holubov** (Ukraine) welcomed the Executive Secretary's report on the outcomes of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (A/56/509), which clearly reflected the work done over the preceding three years. He commended the secretariat of the Framework Convention for having taken concerted measures to achieve practical results in the area of the protection of the global climate for present and future generations. Substantial progress had been made in that area since the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, and the seventh Conference, recently held at Marrakech, had confirmed the growing willingness of the global community to develop an effective international strategy designed, *inter alia*, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to mitigate their adverse effects. His delegation welcomed the political consensus reached by the parties in Marrakech on the basis of the principles set out in the Bonn Agreement as an important step towards finalization of the regulations required to make the

Kyoto Protocol fully operational. It took note with satisfaction of the decisions adopted in Marrakech relating to the capacity-building needs of the countries in transition in the context of strengthening their national strategies on sustainable development, and the need to ensure that they had access to new environmentally sound technologies. Those decisions could help those countries better adapt to climate change, thereby contributing to the achievement of sustainable development objectives. For Ukraine, which was one of the very few countries which had actually reduced its greenhouse gas emissions to half their 1990 levels, the question of access to new environment-friendly technologies was crucially important, in view of the growth of the national economy. In that context, his delegation hoped that the Global Environment Facility and the other financial mechanisms under the Framework Convention would help developing countries and countries in transition to adapt to the impact of climate change and its negative effects.

49. At the global level, the achievement of the sustainable development objectives remained one of the most significant challenges facing the international community. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in 2002, would fall within that framework; Ukraine was ready to participate actively in both the preparatory process and the Summit itself, recognizing the need to adopt practical decisions designed to ensure the effective implementation of Agenda 21 and to improve global environmental governance. The participants should reaffirm their commitment to sustainable development based on economic growth, social progress and environmental protection. In that context, his delegation considered that the Marrakech Ministerial Declaration and Accords, adopted at the seventh Conference of the Parties, made an important contribution to the Rio+10 process in the area of climate protection and were an integral part of the multifaceted concept of sustainable development. His delegation also supported the recommendation on strengthening coordination and cooperation between the secretariat of the Framework Convention and those of the other conventions relating to sustainable development, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

50. **Mr. Al-Khal** (Bahrain) said that the topic under consideration was of critical and growing importance; the international community was constantly seeking solutions that would benefit future generations. The results achieved by the programmes designed to eliminate the adverse effects of man's activities on the environment were encouraging, but he was concerned to see that the preventive and corrective programmes could not keep pace with those adverse effects. Environmental problems included the depletion of the ozone layer and global warming, which was causing the polar ice caps to melt and leading to a rise in sea levels, the erosion of coastal zones and the serious consequences of the dumping of chemical and nuclear waste. Those problems should be brought under control before they worsened and became uncontrollable.

51. The international community was persevering with its defence of the environment and was preparing, within the framework of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, to conduct a 10-year review of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

52. The contribution of women to environmental protection should not be overlooked, particularly the contribution of mothers who instilled in their children environmentally sound practices. Moreover, women could be the victims of pollution, which could cause miscarriages or birth defects. In order to play their role fully, they must be informed about nutritional and hygiene problems and their linkages to pollution- and climate-related issues and, more generally, to development and the economy.

53. In conclusion, he said that it seemed as though the efforts of the international community — international instruments, local legislation and preventive measures — to preserve biological diversity and natural resources had not achieved the desired results.

54. **Mr. Gospodinov** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) said that his organization's concern about climate issues stemmed from its involvement in mitigating the consequences of environmental changes. Some of those consequences were developing slowly and were having a gradual effect on communities, while others were abrupt and caused immediate and widespread damage. For that reason, the Federation centred its own debate and activities on effective intervention in disaster situations

through improving national and international preparedness. The excellent work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had made the Red Cross Movement aware of the ultimate consequences of climate change on its operations and programmes worldwide. A growing number of people would be affected by natural disasters resulting from more extreme weather conditions, particularly the most disadvantaged members of society and the poorest countries.

55. One of the members of the Federation, the Netherlands Red Cross, had decided to establish a Centre for Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness, which would provide services to the whole International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; it would raise the Movement's awareness of the impact of climate change on its operations and would encourage it to develop programmes to mitigate their devastating effects. That contribution would help the Federation to fulfil its obligations in respect of the implementation of instructions from the twenty-seventh International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The action plan adopted at that conference asked the Federation to draw upon the research and specialized knowledge of the competent international organizations and to assess the future impact of climate change on the frequency and severity of disasters and their implications for humanitarian intervention and preparedness activities.

56. **Mr. Gerber** (United States of America) asked for clarification about the administrative arrangements regarding the institutional linkage between the secretariat of the Framework Convention and the United Nations and wished to know whether those arrangements included payment of costs for conference services from the United Nations regular budget: his delegation considered that that should not be the case because those costs should be met solely by the parties to the Framework Convention.

57. **Mr. Cutajar** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), responding to the United States representative's request for clarification, said that that issue was distinct from that of the institutional linkage. The previous year, the Second Committee had decided to make provision for conference-servicing costs for the process relating to climate change in the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. It was possible to approve maintaining the institutional linkage between the

secretariat of the Framework Convention and the United Nations and to adopt a different position concerning the cost of conference services, since the two issues were not related.

58. He had taken note with interest of a number of statements indicating that the parties which had not yet done so were committed to ratifying the Kyoto Protocol. He was surprised that the European Union had not made a statement regarding its position on the issue.

59. He noted that the Russian Federation had reaffirmed its wish to host a conference on climate change in 2003 and invited the Russian delegation to contact the secretariat of the Framework Convention or the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties in order to coordinate the plans relating to that conference with those relating to the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, also planned for 2003.

60. **Mr. Fins-do-Lago** (Portugal), commenting on the Executive Secretary's reference to the European Union, recalled that the European Union had explained its position on the issue in a previous statement.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.