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Chair: Mr. Dhanapala (Vice-Chair) (Sri Lanka)

Contents

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (*continued*)
- (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)
- (c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*)
- (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*)
- (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)
- (f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)
- (g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session (*continued*)
- (h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*)
- (i) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*)
- (j) The role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia (*continued*)

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In the absence of Mr. Diallo (Senegal), Mr. Dhanapala (Sri Lanka), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*) ([A/68/79-E/2013/69](#), [A/68/258](#), [A/68/278](#), [A/68/308](#), [A/68/309](#), [A/68/383](#), [A/68/544](#); [A/C.2/68/3](#) and [A/C.2/68/5](#))

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development** (*continued*) ([A/68/310](#), [A/68/321](#) and [A/68/322](#))
- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** (*continued*) ([A/68/316](#))
- (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction** (*continued*) ([A/68/320](#))
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind** (*continued*) ([A/68/260](#))
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** (*continued*) ([A/68/260](#))
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** (*continued*) ([A/68/260](#) and [A/C.2/68/2](#))
- (g) **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session** (*continued*) ([A/68/25](#))
- (h) **Harmony with Nature** (*continued*) ([A/68/325](#) and Corr.1)
- (i) **Sustainable mountain development** (*continued*) ([A/68/307](#))
- (j) **The role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia** (*continued*) ([A/68/143/Rev.1](#))

1. **Mr. Kantorczyk** (Germany) said that global political commitment and cooperation among all stakeholders were preconditions for the achievement of sustainable development and that all stakeholders must participate in the crafting of the new development agenda. The High-level Political Forum was imparting momentum to that process and was expected to contribute to mainstreaming sustainable development into all policy areas by providing political leadership and guidance. Germany also looked to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing to deliver substantial input. On the issue of climate change, all countries had a common responsibility to agree on a new legally binding global agreement applicable to all. One growing threat to sustainable development as well as to biodiversity, peace and security, particularly in Africa, was the increase in poaching and illicit wildlife trafficking; that also needed to be addressed by the United Nations.

2. **Ms. Bubanja** (Serbia) said that the sustainable development goals, while needing to be global and universally applicable to all countries, should take into account different national realities, including national policies and priorities. As a member of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, Serbia believed that those goals should be fully in keeping with the Rio Principles and integrate in a balanced manner the three social, economic and environmental dimensions. In view of the growing complexity of global environmental problems, international environmental governance needed to be further strengthened within the institutional framework for sustainable development. The United Nations Environment Assembly, as the new governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), could be expected to play a valuable role in that respect, in particular by giving greater coherence to environmental sustainability discussions in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Integrating the environmental dimension meant being responsive to country needs, promoting a strong science-policy interface, capacity-building and technological support, and providing secure, adequate and predictable financial resources. Sustainable development would also require a shift towards green economies; for that reason, all initiatives that encouraged States to

discontinue domestic subsidies for consumption of fossil fuels were to be welcomed.

3. **Mr. Van Oosterom** (Netherlands) said that a single universal framework for sustainable development, around the core goal of poverty eradication, should also include peace and security, gender equality, human rights, the rule of law and democratic governance. Climate change was a major challenge, requiring low-emission economies and climate-resilient development. One of its most adverse effects was sea-level rise, which posed a particular threat to his country. Over the centuries the latter had built up considerable experience in flood prevention and it stood ready to share that experience with others. The Netherlands also supported regional cooperation measures, which it would continue to promote, in response to climate change.

4. **Mr. Charles** (Trinidad and Tobago) said that, as a small island developing State, his country was particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and had taken or was planning a number of steps to address that challenge. That being said, ambitious global action was urgently required, based on good-faith negotiations towards a response commensurate with the scale of the problem. The forthcoming Climate Summit, while not replacing the Climate Change Conference, would offer world leaders an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the issue.

5. The post-2015 development agenda must build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by ensuring that development gains were sustained and without leaving small vulnerable countries to struggle alone in an unfavourable international environment. His delegation joined the call for support for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in Samoa in 2015. Trinidad and Tobago was looking forward to the next session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and would remain mindful of certain systemic issues, including options for structuring the proposed goals and the need to build a common understanding of the issues of universality and differentiation.

6. **Mr. Biya** (Cameroon) said that his delegation was concerned about the delay in setting up a technological facilitation mechanism, as recommended in the Rio output document, and it welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal in that regard. It was also concerned

about the challenges of desertification, land degradation and drought. Cameroon had significantly increased the amount of national territory given over to the preservation of biological diversity and, not only had it honoured its international commitments under Agenda 21 but it had also demonstrated a domestic sense of responsibility by deciding not to make full use of resources that could contribute to its development. It was not easy, however, to reconcile environmental conservation initiatives with the legitimate aspirations of the population. Accordingly, his delegation called for greater support from the international community for Cameroon's efforts to preserve its forests.

7. Finally, he called attention to the practice of poaching and illicit wildlife trafficking, which was particularly harmful to Cameroon but which also had wider criminal ramifications and contributed to global economic insecurity, institutionalized corruption, regional conflicts, armed insurrections and terrorist activities. It was therefore important that the entire international community remain mobilized against that practice.

8. **Mr. Kasymov** (Kyrgyzstan) said that global challenges could be met if they were included as core priorities in each country's development strategy. Kyrgyzstan had accordingly mapped out its own strategy for achieving sustainable development taking into account the impact of climate change, notably the rapid melting of glaciers, which were the main source of fresh water in the region. Developed countries should make more ambitious commitments to reducing emissions and should continue to provide assistance to developing countries for climate change mitigation and adaptation, technology transfer and capacity-building. Besides having committed to a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, the Kyrgyz Republic had given priority to the development of hydropower, particularly through regional cooperation, as that could help solve many social and economic problems in the region. As a landlocked mountain country, it had special needs for development; the particular challenges facing such countries should be duly addressed in the post-2015 development agenda.

9. The safety of uranium waste and other radioactive and toxic materials was an acute problem for his country, aggravated by the threat of flooding and seismic activity in the areas of the tailings ponds where they were stored. Unless effective solutions

were found, the lives and health of millions of people in central Asia could be endangered

10. **Mr. Šćepanović** (Montenegro) said that sustainable development was a key policy driver in his country, as reflected in its institutional framework, which was constantly being upgraded at both government and local levels. It offered the only way out of the current crisis, provided that the proper balance was maintained between its social, economic and environmental dimensions. Experience had shown, in addition, that it was essential to take into account the national circumstances, specificities and development level of each country. As a member of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, Montenegro was convinced of the need for synergy between the establishment of national priorities and the crafting of the post-2015 global development agenda. That agenda must be based on a universal vision and centred on clear, universal, flexible and coherent sustainable development goals reflecting political commitment; poverty eradication and other unfulfilled MDGs should be at its core.

11. Climate change must also be addressed within that framework, particularly through the adoption of a universally applicable comprehensive and legally binding agreement by 2015. His delegation called on all countries to intensify their efforts to that end. Montenegro was also keen to promote green technologies and would shortly be inaugurating, in collaboration with the United Nations system, a centre for sustainable development which it hoped would serve not only as a regional mechanism but also as part of an international post-Rio 20 network of such centres.

12. **Mr. Desta** (Eritrea) stressed the importance of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, particularly following the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties, and the critical need for resources to be equitably allocated for that purpose from the Global Environment Facility. Being located in the arid and semi-arid region of the Horn of Africa, Eritrea was particularly vulnerable to drought, land degradation and desertification and had joined with 10 other countries in an initiative to halt the advance of the Sahara, known as the Great Green Wall Initiative. The fight against land degradation was an important part of its community-based strategy for reducing poverty and improving food security and comprised afforestation and soil and water conservation activities

throughout the country. Given that desertification, land degradation and drought were interlinked problems that threatened his people's very existence, cooperation must be enhanced at the global, regional and national levels in order to combat them.

13. **Ms. Pacheco** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that, while there were a number of principles that were essential for sustainable development, there could be no single vision or model, nor could development financing be dependent on the adoption of any particular approach. The green economy approach led to the commodification of natural resources, favoured the role of the private sector over that of the public sector, replaced North-South cooperation by South-South cooperation and spelt the gradual disappearance of official development assistance (ODA). For her country, harmony with Nature was the overarching concern and the right to development was a principle that demanded respect for the sovereign power of States to determine their own regulatory and programmatic frameworks, having due regard for the rights of their peoples. Ensuring a proper balance between human beings and their environment required a shift away from the current development model towards one that would culminate in a system of socially just, sustainable growth that did not harm the environment. Globally, that entailed basic changes in patterns of production and consumption, the initiative for which lay with developed countries.

14. Climate change, due in particular to the accumulation and concentration of wealth within a few countries and small social groups, was an existential threat to humanity and a source of grave danger in certain geographical areas. Climate change adaptation must therefore figure prominently in the post-2015 development agenda; it required significant investments, technology transfer and capacity-building and could not be left to the responsibility of developing countries alone.

15. **Mr. Gave** (France) said that it had been clearly established that human activity was at the origin of a climate disorder that would have tragic consequences if it was not rapidly addressed. Although considerable advances had been made, there was now a need for an international response commensurate with the challenge through the adoption, in 2015, of a new international agreement that would enter into force in 2020. It should be inclusive, ambitious, legally binding and applicable to all; it should set quantitative targets

for countries and incorporate the principle of differentiation; it should embrace all aspects, from mitigation to adaptation, and also cover financing; it should be periodically reviewable. The imperative of solidarity with the States most vulnerable to climate change required the mobilization, in 2020, of \$100 billion a year: a first step had been taken in that direction at the recent meeting of the Board of the Green Climate Fund in Paris. France was fully committed to fighting climate change and was moving towards a low carbon economy; it had also introduced a tax on international financial transactions, part of the proceeds of which would be paid into the Fund. The forthcoming Climate Summit would offer the international community a unique opportunity to take the necessary action.

16. Desertification was another major challenge that should have an important place in the post-2015 development agenda. Efforts to combat it should focus, in particular, on innovative means of financing, such as microcredit, and the stronger involvement of private entities.

17. **Ms. Baisabayeva** (Kazakhstan) said that her country was actively participating in the Rio+20 follow-up processes and was leading the transition to a green economy in Central Asia. It had undertaken to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and was currently investing in low-carbon development. As a country affected by desertification and drought, Kazakhstan had begun implementing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and was ready to contribute to the global monitoring of land degradation and restoration. It would also continue to strengthen its partnerships with neighbouring countries in order to improve co-management of the sustainable use of transboundary water resources and water infrastructure. Her delegation welcomed the UNEP proposal to develop guidelines on ecosystem water quality and likewise considered it imperative to develop indicators of well-being, taking into account environmental factors and without relying excessively on GDP as an indicator of prosperity. It was necessary, finally, to incorporate uncompleted Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into the post-2015 development agenda, within the broader perspective of sustainable development.

18. **Mr. Doevi** (Togo) commended all the ongoing efforts within the United Nations system to create a sustainable world for future generations while calling

for a stronger role for United Nations regional institutions in support of States. His own country's sustainable development strategy was geared to poverty reduction, job creation, particularly for the young, sustainable management of natural resources and the promotion of environmentally responsible action. Following repeated flooding and coastal erosion Togo had adopted a national disaster reduction strategy which had received substantial support from development partners. His Government appealed to them to provide further financial and technical assistance in order to give full effect to that strategy and consolidate the measures already taken. Other key areas in preparing for the future, particularly in Africa, included capacity-building in order to gather reliable data on the economy and the environment and thereby facilitate effective decision-making; development of credible institutions for integrated disaster management; citizenship training for the population and advocacy for decision-makers.

19. **Mr. Elisaia** (Samoa) said that the High-level Political Forum should build on and learn from the experience of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Where small island developing States were concerned, it should help to ensure the implementation on the ground of commitments made by Member States in Barbados and Mauritius respectively and follow up on those coming out of the Samoa conference in 2014. That conference, together with the designation of 2014 as the International Year of Small Island Developing States, would provide a strategic platform for building resilience, which was critical for their long-term survival and also a common goal for all nations. While expressing appreciation for the contributions made by all delegations to the preparations for the upcoming conference, he stressed the need for lasting partnerships with both developed and developing countries in order to mitigate the impacts on small island developing States of climate change and external shocks beyond their control. His delegation was counting on the cooperation of the members of the Committee in finalizing the modalities resolution for the 2014 conference and would welcome contributions to the trust fund set up for that purpose.

20. **Mr. Coulibaly** (Burkina Faso) noted that desertification or drought affected more than 40 per cent of the Earth's land area, depriving nearly two billion people of the use of the natural resources on which their lives depended. Strategies had to be put in

place to eradicate poverty and hunger, ensure food and energy security and preserve biodiversity. That meant building resilience to drought and water stress. However, in the absence of an appropriate subregional, regional and international framework, such efforts remained isolated and limited.

21. The effects of drought and desertification were felt worldwide and therefore demanded a global response along two tracks. One was multilateral, aimed at reducing land degradation to zero by 2020 — and in that connection he welcomed the recent establishment of a group of friends on desertification, land degradation and drought, which could be expected to maintain the momentum generated by Rio+20 and play a crucial awareness-raising role in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. The other was intergovernmental, leading to a protocol to the Convention to Combat Desertification that would deal with the issue of sustainable land management. Since resource mobilization was the key to implementing the Convention, his delegation hoped that the decision on the financing and status of the Global Environment Facility would be applied promptly so as to make the latter the official mechanism for funding operations under the Convention.

22. **Ms. Bibalou** (Gabon) said that sustainable development was the way to go in the future. The post-2015 development agenda should be based on predictable funding that combined public and private sources, innovative methods of financing and global partnerships. Poverty eradication must be the main concern. Gabon called for special attention to the priorities of Africa and to such specific issues as energy, access to drinking water and sustainable farming. Climate change was also a major concern and her country was working to mitigate its effects; another was the preservation of biological diversity, which called for greater mobilization of the international community.

23. Growing investment in renewable energy worldwide held great promise for the future and was a key part of Gabon's strategic plan; by 2016, hydroelectricity would account for 80 per cent of the electricity produced in Gabon. Her delegation supported the Secretary-General's recommendations for the achievement of sustainable development and urged that all measures to that end be the subject of awareness-raising campaigns aimed at the rising generations.

24. **Mr. Kushneruk** (Ukraine) welcomed the strengthened institutional framework for sustainable development within the United Nations while stressing the need for coherence and coordination between the different bodies. The Convention to Combat Desertification should play a key role in the implementation of Rio+20 commitments regarding sustainable land management; however, activities under the Convention should address all kinds of land degradation and desertification all over the world, not just in parts of it. Ukraine was committed to effective implementation of the Convention and was putting in place or already carrying out a number of related programmes. Furthermore, it had integrated into a national plan of action a number of the goals set for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and was making consistent efforts to mainstream environmental concerns into its policies and strategies. His Government was also strongly committed to sustainable mountain development and welcomed the progress achieved in promoting it at all levels; nevertheless, further efforts were needed to raise awareness of the importance of mountain ecosystems and of the vulnerability of mountain communities.

25. **Mr. Neelam** (Australia) said that, as the global community moved towards the deadline for the achievement of the MDGs, it was important to maintain the momentum and the global commitment to achieving sustainable development. Since it had become clear that sustained economic growth and effective governance played a crucial role in driving development and lifting people out of poverty, support needed to be given to the efforts of countries to promote the rule of law, develop effective civil and political institutions and foster a strong private sector. Trade and infrastructure development could help unlock the economic potential of developing countries. Accordingly, Australia would be giving increasing importance to aid-for-trade and would continue to seek the removal of agricultural subsidies which prevented developing country producers from participating in international agricultural trade.

26. As a member of both the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, Australia would seek a robust post-2015 development framework that took into account the specific challenges facing the

Indo-Pacific region. Since the region included many small island developing States that were particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, his delegation would also continue to highlight the importance of disaster risk reduction.

27. **Ms. Alshamsi** (United Arab Emirates), stressing the importance of international partnerships for the achievement of internationally agreed goals, called on developed countries to fulfil their commitments, particularly in the area of financing for development. Energy was essential for advancing towards sustainable development and poor countries needed assistance in gaining access to it. Joint efforts were therefore urgently needed to find new, sustainable sources of energy that could be used by developing countries.

28. The United Arab Emirates had adopted a number of laws and good practices to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and raise environmental awareness both in education and in community life. To meet the growing demand for energy and at the same time reduce carbon emissions, it had recently put in place a powerful photovoltaic energy plant and had commissioned a large solar energy plant in Abu Dhabi. His country was also involved in a number of international cooperation projects to make renewable energy a viable option available to all countries, irrespective of their level of development, and it had granted concessional financing for renewable energy projects in Mauritania and Afghanistan. In 2014, Abu Dhabi would be the venue of the World Future Energy Summit, which would address sustainable energy and water issues.

29. **Mr. Zan** (Myanmar) said that the goal of sustainable development required international cooperation in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; it called for higher levels of accountability, timeliness, efficiency and political commitment of both Member States and the United Nations. Myanmar welcomed the Rio+20 follow-up processes and looked forward to the establishment of an international working group on a global mechanism for technology facilitation; technology was the key to the transition to a more sustainable development path.

30. On the issue of climate change, it had become a matter of urgency for developed countries to fulfil their commitments on financing and technology for adaptation and capacity-building in developing

countries. It was also vital to arrive at a comprehensive, balanced, country-driven outcome to the upcoming Climate Change Conference in Warsaw.

31. Myanmar's own sustainable development strategy gave importance to the greening of its economy. Besides being good for the ecosystem, a green economy, by opening up the country to international trade and investments, should contribute to poverty eradication and sustained economic growth, enhancing social inclusion. Environmentally-sound technology, research and development and technology transfer had an important role to play in sustainable development and, in accordance with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, would enhance the ability of developing countries to address environmental challenges more effectively.

32. **Mr. Bame** (Ethiopia) said that the environmental pillar of sustainable development was just as important as the economic and social pillars. Ethiopia aimed to become a carbon-neutral, middle-income country by 2025. As a country threatened by land degradation, it had taken consistent measures to implement the Convention to Combat Desertification, in particular by encouraging sustainable environmental management by local communities. Water and energy were critical to Ethiopia's sustained growth, and it was currently engaged in efforts to generate energy from hydropower as affordable energy would facilitate its industrialization and thereby make an essential contribution to the eradication of poverty. In that context, international and regional cooperation was crucial in order to ensure the equitable use of shared resources under international law. The concept of national interest needed to be understood broadly to include the sharing of what was held in common. Accordingly, the post-2015 development agenda called for enlightened self-interest; that was also true of the commitment to address the global challenge of poverty eradication.

33. **Mr. Karaçay** (Turkey) said that his country was playing an active part in the Rio+20 follow-up processes aimed at addressing the global challenges of growing population pressure on the planet's resources and combating hunger, environmental pollution, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation and climate change. Mindful of the special challenges facing small island developing States, his delegation attached great importance to the success of the Samoa conference in 2014, which should seek to produce a

new development framework for those States in line with the global post-2015 development agenda. Increased cooperation with particularly vulnerable developing countries was a long-term, high-priority objective of Turkey's foreign policy.

34. **Mr. Madiwale** (Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) said that the Federation's specific contribution to sustainable development lay in strengthening community resilience. International recognition of the links between disaster risk reduction, climate change and resilience had been reflected in words but not in actions. Funding for disaster risk reduction remained woefully low and tended to favour some types of disasters over others. He called on donor countries to honour their commitment to allocate 1 percent of ODA to disaster risk reduction and to do so in a way that would permit the necessary long-term investments. Since disasters were felt mostly at the community level, local government and organizations working at the community level should be given adequate resources and be involved in the design of frameworks for disaster risk reduction.

35. In the context of the post-2015 development agenda, disaster mortality should be used as an indicator to capture the impacts of disaster on vulnerable persons and disaster risk reduction should specifically focus on inequality. The most vulnerable groups should be the target of international intervention to reduce disaster mortality and efforts to address disaster risk should be a key priority area for the sustainable development goals.

36. **Ms. Barth** (International Labour Organization (ILO)), recalling that job creation, particularly for youth, was a top priority for action to achieve sustainable development, said that the creation of green jobs was an important part of the shift towards more sustainable development patterns. The ILO Governing Body had recently adopted a strategic action plan that could guide the transition to a greener economy, with emphasis on the creation of an enabling policy environment, suitable training opportunities and the establishment of comprehensive social protection schemes. ILO would provide countries with expanded policy support, particularly in addressing combined environmental and employment challenges, while strengthening its collaboration with other organizations of the United Nations system.

37. **Mr. Kakar** (Observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)) said that the IUCN programme, developed with due regard for the Rio+20 framework, sought to address global consumption and production patterns and to promote more effective and equitable use of Nature, which could offer solutions to such global challenges as climate change, food security and socioeconomic development. The programme aimed to mobilize community efforts for biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and poverty eradication and, in so doing, to encourage a strong science-policy interface. Biodiversity was the foundation on which humanity depended; it needed to be more fully mainstreamed into development and poverty reduction policies. IUCN stood ready to make available its expertise in support of the global efforts to advance sustainable development worldwide, in particular through its science and knowledge base, its capacity to bring together governmental and non-governmental actors in pursuit of common interests and its experience in delivering Nature-based solutions.

38. **Mr. Richter** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration), recalled that Member States had acknowledged the important contribution that migration had made to achieving the MDGs and that it was a key factor for sustainable development. Migration trends were increasingly complex and diverse and would impact national economies and labour markets, national demographic profiles and the built and natural environment. The incorporation of migration in the post-2015 development agenda, not as a single goal but wherever it was relevant to other development goals, would ensure that it played a predominantly positive role. It could, for example, be a key component of a new global partnership and it could be included in progress indicators for other major goals. Moreover, migration could be both the driver and a result of the pressures associated with disaster situations and could also be a coping strategy. It was therefore vital that disaster risk reduction strategies take human mobility implications into account.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.