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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 6th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 9 October 2015, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Logar ..... (Slovenia)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

**General debate** (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Otto** (Palau) said that Palau welcomed the outcome of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in March 2015. The adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda needed to be followed up with real initiatives to drive financial flows from developed to developing countries, to facilitate access to financing for middle-income countries, and to find innovative means of financing, particularly in the fields of technology transfer and capacity-building. Palau called on developed countries which had not yet done so to fulfil their commitment to transfer 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to poor countries in the form of official development assistance. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Palau and other Member States had started an initiative on ethics for development as a defining element of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. For small island developing States such as Palau, climate change was a risk multiplier and a matter of survival. At the forthcoming twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, it would be essential to reach a meaningful, universal and legally binding agreement that included financial support for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage, in recognition of the special circumstances of those States. His delegation stressed the importance of Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as Palau and other small island developing States could not develop if the oceans and seas were not responsibly protected and managed.

3. At the end of the day, the overarching goal was the eradication of poverty. In order to ensure the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the required means of implementation would have to be put in place, along with adequate financing, including for capacity-building and technology transfer. The cornerstone of the collective effort was strong global partnerships, involving public and private sectors, non-State actors, civil society and individual citizens; the United Nations had a key role to play in building such partnerships.

4. **Mr. Thomson** (Fiji) said that his delegation believed that the international community would be able to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by maintaining a spirit of unity and political will to work for the global good. To that end, the Committee must work smarter, building on mutually reinforcing elements, facilitating interlinkages for progress, and striking a balance between the economic and social pillars of sustainable development, while stressing the environment pillar. The faithful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would be crucial for the survival of humankind. All the Sustainable Development Goals must be achieved, with a view to eradicating poverty entirely. The Goals must be disseminated and implemented so that every person in the world saw them as both a right and a responsibility.

5. Small island developing States faced many special development challenges imposed by their natural vulnerabilities; adequate financing as set out in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway was essential. Moreover, a binding climate change agreement was needed that limited atmospheric carbon dioxide levels to manageable amounts. The success of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals would depend on meaningful levels of development finance, universal education, technology transfer, durable partnerships, and upholding the principles of equity, inclusiveness and honesty. Robust monitoring and review would also be essential.

6. An appropriate mechanism must be put in place to drive and promote the implementation of Goal 14; if the world failed to achieve that Goal, especially with regard to ocean acidification, the oceans would become devoid of life. He urged support for the proposed United Nations Triennial Conferences on Oceans and Seas, which would provide a high-level global platform to support Goal 14. Starting in 2017, five conferences would be held to assess the ocean's health, identify implementation gaps, form action alliances and benchmark commitments for accountability. The conferences would include all relevant parties, including representatives of Governments, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, knowledge communities and the business sector. As co-host with Sweden to the first of those conferences, to be held in Fiji in June 2017, his delegation would set precedents for the next four conferences by covering the United Nations costs of the conference, jointly with Sweden, thereby demonstrating the universal importance of

safeguarding oceans and seas through a meaningful North-South partnership. The Triennial Conferences would welcome all positive efforts on oceans, including initiatives such as the “Our Ocean” conference held in Chile in October 2015.

7. **Mr. Louati** (Tunisia) said that the Committee’s work would be based on two ambitious documents, namely the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which constituted a landmark in the efforts of the international community to eradicate poverty and help the least developed countries to progress towards development. Seventy years after the establishment of the United Nations, it was unfortunate that poverty, terrorism and war still ravaged the world and ruined the lives of millions of people. Furthermore, climate change was a threat to the existence of humankind. All States should therefore fulfil their commitments in the context of the Millennium Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Developed countries in particular should honour their commitments to financing for development by devoting 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to aid for developing countries, with a figure of 0.15 per cent for the least developed countries. Debt problems were also a burden for developing countries.

8. It was gratifying that the 2030 Agenda included a technology transfer mechanism. Transfers of technology and capacity-building had proved to be among the most successful tools for achieving sustainable development and enabling developing countries to take ownership of their own development. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda should reflect the differences between countries and their respective levels of development, and respect their national priorities.

9. The problems of terrorism and conflict in many countries underlined the interconnectedness of development and peace. Regarding Goal 16 of the Agenda, his country was keen to promote its newly democratic institutions, foster respect for human rights, impose the rule of law and fight corruption. Women’s rights, equality between men and women, and education were of particular importance for sustainable development. His country’s national development plan for 2016 to 2020 would be comprehensive and cover the three pillars of sustainable development as well as competitiveness, innovation, social justice and the other components of sustainable development. The Paris Climate Change Conference should produce a

comprehensive global agreement on reducing emissions, combating desertification and land degradation, and supporting developing countries through financial and technology transfers and capacity-building based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

10. **Mr. Shawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that various tools were needed to determine whether development was on the right track. A fair economy was a prerequisite for development since it enabled small producers to stay in business. It was also important to combat corruption, in particular by recovering funds stolen from developing countries and returning them to their countries of origin. Similarly, climate change should be addressed in an efficient and responsive manner while respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

11. Politics and development were inseparable. The best example of that link was the status of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation, which divided the lands of the State of Palestine into three totally separate geographical areas, namely, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Meanwhile, terrorist settlers and militias roamed Palestinian lands and spread death and destruction while benefiting from the military protection of the extreme-right Government in Israel. Hundreds of road blocks dotted the West Bank, and the isolation of occupied East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip prevented geographical and human contact between Palestinians who lived under three different sets of laws and regulations. Palestinians did not have access to external markets or their own currency, and even their water resources were occupied. Israel practised continuous ethnic cleansing against Palestinian areas behind a wall built in defiance of a ruling by the International Court of Justice. The economic situation remained uncertain and the leaders of the occupation welcomed war and destruction and were disturbed by the concepts of reason, law and international legitimacy. 60 per cent of the land area of the West Bank was off-limits to Palestinians.

12. A recent report by the World Bank Group had estimated that the lifting of Israeli restrictions on investment in sectors such as agriculture, mining and quarries would boost the gross national product of Palestine, increase employment and cut the deficit. A planned economic survey by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia covering the 48 years of Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, including East

Jerusalem, would reflect the economic losses suffered by the Palestinian people as a result of the occupation and show that aid provided by international organizations was used to pay for the cost of the Israeli occupation. The missed opportunities for the Palestinian people were much greater than what the international community provided. An end to Israeli occupation and the development of Palestinian resources would lead to a strong and independent Palestinian economy that would not need international aid.

13. The State of Israel was above international law and the Israeli representative would no doubt ignore his statement other than by exercising a right of reply. It was time to escape from a cycle of condemnation and denunciation and instead support peace and development by closing borders to settlers and the goods produced on the lands of the State of Palestine; preventing settler militias from holding the nationality of their own countries as well as Israeli nationality; preventing settlers from being members of Israeli diplomatic missions in other countries, as Brazil had; blocking companies from investing in Israeli settlements illegally established on the lands of the State of Palestine; banning cooperation in any field with settlers and settlements; cutting off sources of support for the settlements, which were the greatest international crime at the current time; boycotting anything connected to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands; and refraining from transferring technology or weapons that would certainly be used to kill Palestinians.

14. **Ms. Ortiz de Urbina** (International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)) said that sustainable and, in particular, renewable energy had been recognized as key components of the 2030 Agenda. The momentum for increased renewables deployment was moving faster than ever before, thanks to rapid technological innovation, falling costs, appropriate support policies, steep learning curves and clear examples of success around the world. Cost reductions in renewable energy had been immense. At least 164 countries, including 131 developing countries, had national renewable energy targets. Rising investment was reinforcing those targets; for three years in a row, more new renewable power generation capacity had been added worldwide than new fossil and nuclear power capacity combined.

15. With a view to assisting countries to design an action agenda to achieve their development goals, IRENA had launched REmap, a roadmap that examined

the realistic potential of a doubling in the renewable energy share of global energy by 2030. Forty countries, accounting for 80 per cent of global energy use had participated in that exercise, and the key finding was that doubling the share of renewables worldwide by 2030 was indeed possible.

16. Renewable energy made economic sense, thanks to available and affordable technologies, and also made environmental sense, as it could potentially reduce annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 8.6 gigatonnes by 2030. It also made social sense, as already in 2014 some 9.2 million people worldwide had been employed in the renewable energy sector. If steps were taken to double the share of renewables by 2030, that employment could grow to 17 million globally.

17. The opportunities for greater renewable energy use and lifting millions out of energy poverty were practical and achievable in all countries. If the political will and enabling environment for investment existed, there were enough resources worldwide to transition to a low-carbon economy based on sustainable energy. IRENA remained committed to engaging with Member States and other partners to pave the way for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and to secure a safer, cleaner and more sustainable energy future for all.

18. **Mr. Madiwale** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that the IFRC believed that the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda marked a significant improvement from their previous iterations, with a more comprehensive treatment of issues and significantly scaled up ambition. A strong and legally binding agreement should be reached at the Paris Climate Change Conference that was capable of mitigating the enormous threat posed to humanity, as well as assisting vulnerable countries and communities that were dealing or would soon deal with the adverse impacts of climate change.

19. An estimated 250 million people were currently affected by humanitarian crises around the world, while tens of millions were impacted by increasingly protracted conflicts that stretched the capacity of humanitarian organizations. An estimated 60 million people had been forcibly displaced, half of whom were children. As disasters were becoming more frequent and severe, IFRC welcomed the strong focus on resilience in the new agendas. However, it would not

be possible to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, achieve universal health coverage, provide universal education and access to water and sanitation unless due attention was paid to preventing, responding to, and recovering from crises, shifting from firefighting to risk management. Greater cooperation was needed between humanitarian and development actors in order to find innovative ways to bridge humanitarian and development action in funding streams, in programmes, and in the approach to communities themselves.

20. The principle that no Sustainable Development Goal target would be considered met unless it was met for all groups clearly illustrated the focus on the most vulnerable groups in the 2030 Agenda. However, without the involvement of local communities themselves, that ambition would remain an aspiration: the Sustainable Development Goals must therefore be localized.

21. The 189 national societies of IFRC and 17 million volunteers were present at all points of the humanitarian and development continuum: before crises hit, when communities were struggling to address structural vulnerabilities, when disaster approached, after crises providing the initial wave of relief, and after international responders had left, helping communities to achieve recovery and to minimize the risks that had been exploited by disaster.

22. **Ms. Mucavi** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that FAO welcomed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, and in particular Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals on ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture. The 2015 *State of Food Insecurity in the World* estimated that the number of undernourished people had dropped by 216 million since 1990, while 73 developing countries out of 129 monitored by FAO had met Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals on hunger. However, almost 800 million people worldwide remained hungry even though the world produced enough food to feed all humanity. Hunger remained a problem because of inadequate distribution or insufficient production in specific areas, conflict, and insufficient access to food. A comprehensive approach was needed to address food security, one that strengthened social protection and complemented pro-poor investments and the sustainable increase of production, especially by small-scale producers and family farmers, whose importance had been recognized in the 2014 International Year of Family Farming.

23. As approximately 75 per cent of the world's poor lived in rural areas of developing countries, agriculture and rural development could catalyse local sustainable development, improve health and livelihoods and create conditions that would allow the poor to engage in poverty and hunger eradication not solely as beneficiaries, but also as agents of change.

24. Climate change threatened the very existence of many small island developing States, as well as the livelihoods of poor farmers and fishers who already depended on scarce and degraded natural resources. The international community must assist family farmers and small-scale producers to adapt and build resilience. The 2015 International Year of Soils drew attention to the need to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner.

25. According to a recent report published by FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme, an additional annual investment of US\$ 267 billion between 2016 and 2030 could lift every person in the world out of hunger. The areas in which that additional funding should be used would vary from country to country according to specific circumstances.

26. Hunger was only one face of malnutrition: while undernourishment was falling, obesity was a concern in many nations, including middle-income and developed countries. The second International Conference on Nutrition co-organized by FAO and the World Health Organization had highlighted the importance of international cooperation to tackle malnutrition in all its forms. The 2013 International Year of Quinoa and the upcoming 2016 International Year of Pulses drew attention to different types of food that could help improve nutrition.

27. Partnerships, especially South-South cooperation in complement to North-South and triangular cooperation, were vital for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Participation was required at all levels, including farmers' associations, producers' cooperatives, the private sector, academia, parliamentarians and civil society. FAO was committed to working with Member States and all stakeholders to achieve zero hunger and promote inclusive and sustainable development for all.

28. **Mr. Amer** (Israel) speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation congratulated the Palestinian representative for spending one of his eight minutes, or 12.5 per cent of his time, talking about

development, before moving on to distorted and misleading claims. His delegation wished that Palestine would invest more in the development and welfare of its own people, rather than attacking Israel. It was absurd for the Palestinian delegation to speak about terror, while Palestinian extremists had committed more than 11 terrorist attacks against Israel in recent days, attacks that were inspired by the same incitement as was currently being witnessed in the Committee. The Palestinian representative refused to take any responsibility and attacked Israel for everything. While it was much easier to point fingers than to look in the mirror, such rhetoric undermined the Committee's professional nature and monopolized its valuable time. It would be more helpful for the Palestinian delegation to stop making false accusations and start making a real effort to improve the lives of Palestinian children and future generations.

29. **Mr. Shawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Israeli representative — the representative of the occupation — had sounded like a broken record when he had said that it was time for Palestinians to make an effort to improve the lives of future generations. Palestine's future generations had no future, as they suffered from daily Israeli terrorism and there were no avenues for development in an occupied State. Israeli terrorists had even executed children by firing squad. Israel boasted that it was one of the most agriculturally developed countries, overlooking the fact that more than 70 per cent of the water it used was 100 per cent Palestinian water, extracted from the West Bank but not available to residents. Likewise, Israel claimed credit for important medical developments, forgetting to mention that the occupying Power stole organs from and conducted medical tests on Palestinians.

30. Since the beginning of the peace process, per capita income in Israel had increased 129 per cent compared to that in Palestine. The international community should support peace and development by not allowing settlers to have dual citizenship from Israel and their country of origin. Likewise, Israeli diplomats who were settlers must not be allowed to represent Israel. In order to support the future generations of both Palestine and Israel, the borders must be closed to settlers, both personally and with regard to the commodities that they produced on occupied lands.

## **Agenda item 120: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**

31. **The Chair** said that a key task of the Committee was to continuously improve its working methods and rationalize its agenda. He drew attention to the guidelines adopted in General Assembly decision 65/530 on improving the working methods of the Second Committee, including by strictly adhering to the deadlines established by the Bureau for the submission of draft resolutions, while considering requests for an exceptional extension of deadlines on a case-by-case basis, and by making draft resolutions more concise, focused, and action-oriented. He also drew attention to General Assembly resolution 68/307 which, *inter alia*, called for proposals for the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of agenda items. During previous discussions within the Committee, proposals had been made regarding the rationalization of the general debate and the debates on individual agenda items. He noted that significant progress had been made at the current session in respecting time limits during the general debate.

32. The debate on the Committee's methods of work and agenda was important for three reasons. First, it contributed to the fulfilment of General Assembly mandates, especially under resolution 68/1, regarding the rationalization of agendas by eliminating duplication and overlap and promoting complementarity in the consideration of similar or related issues. Second, it addressed the provisions of resolution 69/321, wherein each Main Committee was asked to discuss its working methods at the beginning and end of every session. Third, it would ensure that the Committee's future work was fully aligned with the integrated vision of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. There was a need to move beyond business as usual, as the review of the Committee's agenda was timely, urgent and appropriate.

33. In order to focus on the substantive rationalization of the agenda, he suggested that the following questions could be addressed: whether the agenda as currently constituted could effectively support the promotion and integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development; whether sustainable development could become an overarching framework for the Committee's agenda, and what options there were for rearranging the agenda to reflect that approach; what implications, if any, that approach would have on outcomes and draft

resolutions; whether the agenda items adequately covered the main aspects of the 2030 Agenda; and what gaps needed to be filled, bearing in mind the agenda of the Third Committee and other bodies.

34. **Mr. Nyembe** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it was of paramount importance that in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the developing South should work together with the developed North in making development a reality. The Committee's work should therefore build on the development priorities set forth in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the 2030 Agenda and the various programmes of action for countries in special situations. The ultimate objective should be to lay the foundation for the implementation of the commitments resulting from those processes.

35. The richness of the Committee's agenda should not be diminished in an attempt to increase efficiency. The Group of 77 and China would be tabling updated draft resolutions in order to start the process of aligning the Committee's work with the 2030 Agenda, without prejudging the discussions and decisions on how the Committee's work related to that of the other Main Committees and the United Nations development system. There was a need to reflect on the Committee's current agenda, but doing so did not mean moving beyond the past, as some development partners had urged; indeed, according to the 2030 Agenda, the follow-up and review would build on existing platforms and processes, where they existed. It should be borne in mind that the General Assembly was the only intergovernmental body that could ensure universal participation in the follow-up and review of the implementation of the Agenda.

36. The upcoming Economic and Social Council dialogues would afford another opportunity to discuss the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system in relation to the next quadrennial comprehensive policy review. In particular, all Member States should share a common understanding of what the Secretariat's "fit for purpose" concept meant. It was also necessary to explore synergies in the work of the Committee and the United Nations development system with the High-level Political Forum; those discussions would enable Member States to share their views on strengthening that system and ensure integrated support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee should consider the

recommendations emerging from those discussions before reaching any decisions on its own working methods. Any immediate change to the Committee's work should be avoided since it would not enjoy the support of all Member States, particularly the developing countries. Instead of functioning in silos, there was a need to work together to streamline the Committee's working methods in a structured and sustainable manner.

37. The scope of the 2030 Agenda was much greater than the Committee's remit and any reform of the Committee should therefore be preceded by an in-depth discussion to ensure a win-win outcome. Since the Agenda's 17 goals were interlinked, that discussion should also cover the complementarity of the Committee's work with that of the other Main Committees and the High-level Political Forum. The United Nations development system, and the Committee in particular, must begin aligning their working methods with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

38. **Mr. Swan** (Australia), speaking on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, said that as the Committee was the Main Committee most closely associated with the 2030 Agenda, its revitalization would serve as an integral component for the implementation of the Agenda. A comparison of the Committee's programme of work and the 2030 Agenda revealed significant differences. Although a large number of resolutions addressing subject matter integral to the Agenda were being considered by the Committee, important elements of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda were not being considered at all.

39. One possible approach to rationalizing the Committee's agenda items would be to cluster its resolutions broadly into organizational and operational activities, thematic considerations, and follow-up to United Nations conferences; that structure would emphasize the Committee's role in implementing the 2030 agenda. The Committee did not exist as an island, but was part of a larger United Nations architecture; thus any discussion of its revitalization should aim to eliminate duplication and overlap, as exemplified, for instance, by the subject matter considered by both the Committee and the Economic and Social Council. The role of the Committee and of its resolutions and reports should also be considered against the backdrop of the new international architecture supporting follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

40. Substantial revision and strengthening of the Committee's agenda was a complex matter and would require a significant effort. Nevertheless, it would be worthwhile to ensure that the work of the Committee was fit for purpose and would support and promote to the greatest extent possible the collective ambition to achieve a sustainable and more prosperous world by the year 2030.

41. **Mr. Sareer** (Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the ultimate goal of evaluation of the Committee's working methods should be to implement effectively the development priorities that had been established in the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the various programmes of action for countries in special situations, including the SAMOA Pathway. The quality and substance of the Committee's work should not be lost in an attempt to ensure efficiency. A balance between achieving core objectives and timeliness was needed. The various agendas and programmes of action should be linked in such a way that all processes led to the same outcome, namely, sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and the building of resilient communities. Development could not be tackled in silos, but only by approaching challenges holistically. The 2030 Agenda therefore required a rethink not only of the work of the Second Committee but also on how the Agenda related to the work of the other Main Committees and the entire United Nations development system, in particular the High-level Political Forum.

42. The current discussion was part of a more comprehensive discussion on how the United Nations development system could support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and that exercise could not be rushed or concluded during the current session. Crucial aspects such as the global indicator framework were still to come. The discussion would also need to be guided by the Secretary-General's report requested in paragraph 90 of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review would offer key insights into how the United Nations system could best respond to and align its work with the 2030 Agenda. Armed with those critical pieces of information, and a deeper reflection on its own needs, challenges and existing gaps, the Committee would be able to make a more informed, evidence-based, and sustainable decision on how to organize its work to best serve the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

bearing in mind that each country would implement the 2030 Agenda and measure its progress in its own way.

43. **Mr. Poulsen** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the country of the stabilization and association process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the substance of the 2030 Agenda, global eradication of poverty and sustainable development, was at the very core of the Committee's work. The Committee needed to move beyond the past and prepare an agenda for the next session that fully corresponded to the need for effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. To that end, the Committee should hold a comprehensive discussion, perhaps jointly with the Economic and Social Council and the Third Committee, on how best to avoid duplication of agendas. General Assembly resolution 68/307 had made provision for such a review and had called for proposals for the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items on the agenda of the Assembly.

44. The Committee's resolutions should reflect the new and indivisible agenda, the integrated targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and their means of implementation, and their interlinkages. The Committee should use language in thematic resolutions that would not perpetuate current working arrangements, thereby pre-empting adjustments to its agenda. The European Union envisaged the Bureau playing a stronger role in ensuring policy coherence by proposing measures that would counter the current tendency of increased fragmentation and proliferation of often repetitive resolutions at the sub-issue level; such measures would also provide considerable savings in human resources and ease logistics constraints. The Bureau should also ensure that the Committee implemented General Assembly decision 65/530, including by keeping to the deadlines it set. Experience had proven that missing deadlines, either when introducing resolutions or when finalizing negotiations, could seriously hinder the Committee's work. If deadlines passed without agreement being reached, procedural texts should be pursued; in that regard, the procedural guidelines issued by the Bureau for exceptional extensions to deadlines were appreciated.

45. Proclaiming new international days, years or decades should be proposed only in accordance with



the corresponding guidelines of the Economic and Social Council, including the necessity of securing the financing and organization of such proclamations before they were agreed upon by the General Assembly. Finally, through close cooperation between the Bureau and the Secretariat, and while fully respecting the mandate of the Fifth Committee regarding budgetary issues, basic information on the possible financial implications of the Committee's draft resolutions should be made available at an early stage, in order for delegations to take the best informed decision during negotiations, rather than providing the information at the moment of adoption of texts, a practice which often took involved parties by surprise.

46. **Ms. Camacho** (Mexico) said that by virtue of the fact that it was a universal forum in which to hold substantive discussions on cross-cutting and emerging subjects, the Committee was in a position to drive the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, thereby complementing the follow-up and review frameworks of both processes. There was also room for follow-up of other major conferences and summit meetings.

47. Consideration should be given to how to adapt each resolution and topic of discussion in the light of the priorities set forth in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and at other relevant conferences, and the concept of integration of the three dimensions of development. Emerging, urgent or cross-cutting issues that would support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should be given priority as of the current session, and topics and resolutions should be identified which could be combined with existing topics or with new proposals covering several sub-items. In the Committee's resolutions on follow-up to major conferences and summit meetings, an effort should be made to identify linkages with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, without losing the focus of those processes and their outcome documents.

48. The Secretariat could help draw up a list of topics and activities of the United Nations system for which the Committee could provide direct guidance in order to identify the relevant resolutions. The experience gained in other Main Committees such as the Fourth Committee, where a cluster of resolutions was adopted every year, could be replicated in order to ensure the continuity of activities without the need for a proliferation of negotiations. Differentiating between

levels or types of decisions would save time that could then be used for substantive discussions. The programme of work could be divided into clusters focusing on technical or operational issues; cross-cutting and emerging issues; and the follow-up of large sustainable development-related conferences. The experience gained during the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda could help improve the Committee's work by involving all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, in inclusive and transparent consultations. There should also be input from technical, scientific and academic sources in order to ensure a substantive discussion and relevant decisions; the Committee should also discuss the best way for the reports of the Secretary-General to be drawn up. Once the programme of work was adapted to the new context, the Committee should reconsider the added value of general and thematic debates and organize them in such a way that the time allotted to could be optimally used.

49. **Mr. Lauber** (Switzerland) said that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda would have a significant impact on the work of the General Assembly and its Main Committees, which needed to be ready to contribute to the follow-up process. They would also need to ensure close collaboration with the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum, which would play a central role in overseeing all the follow-up and review processes. Switzerland therefore believed that an in-depth discussion of methods of work should be conducted at the current session, which could take the form of a more thorough and structured dialogue among Member States that could feed into the discussion on the follow-up and review mechanism at the High-level Political Forum in July 2016.

50. Consideration needed to be given to the role of the General Assembly and the Main Committees, and the division of work and roles with the High-level Political Forum and the Economic and Social Council. All those bodies needed to work together in a coordinated manner. The discussion should take into account the agendas and methods of work of not only the Committee itself, but all bodies affected by the 2030 Agenda, and could take place at the plenary session during consideration of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. That discussion was likely to lead to a reconsideration and restructuring of current agenda items and related resolutions, with the goal of improving the coherence and integration of all three dimensions of sustainable development and better reflecting the realities of the 2030 Agenda.

51. **Ms. Miyano** (Japan) said that the Committee's agenda did not fully support all three dimensions of sustainable development; following the agreement reached on an integrated 2030 Agenda, the items on the Committee's agenda should also be integrated, thereby abandoning the siloed approach. As they were aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the agenda items should be consolidated and rationalized in order to eliminate duplication and control the number of resolutions. The clustering approach mentioned by some Member States would be in line with the mandate given by General Assembly resolution 68/307, and duplication of the work of other Main Committees and bodies, especially the Economic and Social Council, would be eliminated.

52. The implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda required the Committee to examine areas where duplication existed, especially in light of the tasks given to the Economic and Social Council by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Close contact with the Council was therefore required. Duplicative reporting was another issue that merited consideration. Many of the Committee's draft resolutions requested the Secretary-General to submit reports, but the Sustainable Development Goals progress report would henceforth follow up on most issues and duplication with the Secretary-General's reports would therefore occur. Those reports should be streamlined and consolidated in order to achieve an integrated approach and allow the Secretariat to use its limited resources effectively. Her delegation agreed with the representative of the European Union that, after all efforts had been exhausted, procedural resolutions should be pursued, and also that the financial implications of resolutions should be provided at an early stage.

53. **Mr. Singer** (United States of America) said that the Committee's agenda should be updated to clearly reflect global priorities, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the current agenda was likely to result in three resolutions on sustainable tourism, which, while an important issue, should not be perceived as more important than poverty eradication or climate change. The Committee should also focus on how it could add value to the follow-up and review process, consider its own comparative advantage with respect to other United Nations entities and strive to avoid overlap with their agendas. It would do well to revisit the nomenclature used in designating its agenda items. For instance, the sustainable development

cluster included only environmental issues, ignoring the other two pillars of sustainable development. The Committee should also be dynamic, and should be able to address new and pressing issues as they arose and to remove items from the agenda which were no longer of the highest priority. Finally, the necessity of holding both a general debate and a general discussion on each agenda item was questionable; perhaps one of the two could be eliminated, thus leaving the Committee more time to complete its heavy workload.

54. **Mr. Oguntuyi** (Nigeria) said that the Committee's work should be aligned with the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda. The Committee should provide leadership on current challenges and realities in the area of sustainable development, and experts from developing countries should have the opportunity to present their perspectives during the Committee's discussions. At the same time, delegations should refrain from introducing controversial concepts that lacked universal acceptability in draft proposals. Similarly, greater efficiency and coherence could be ensured by fostering collaboration between the bureaux of the Second Committee and the Third Committee.

55. **Mr. González Soca** (Cuba) said that his delegation was not in favour of initiatives that might adversely affect the Committee's position in relation to other Main Committees of the General Assembly. Working methods needed to be improved but the Committee's mandate was determined by the Member States. Ideally, the Committee's work should be made more efficient by means of a set of internal recommendations. Any discussion regarding the alignment of the Committee's agenda with the 2030 Agenda should be conducted carefully and should take place after the end of the current session, as of January 2016.

56. The Committee's general debate was an important forum enabling all delegations to express their points of view and indicate their priorities before the beginning of the consideration of individual agenda items. His delegation did not support the strict enforcement of deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions since some groups, such as the Group of 77 and China, which comprised 134 Member States, could need more time to reach a consensus. More complex issues should be allowed more negotiation time. No draft resolution should be postponed until the next session or challenged on procedural grounds when it had not been possible to conclude informal

consultations before the deadline set by the General Assembly for the Committee's work. Under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, delegations that did not agree with a specific proposal were entitled to move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment should be voted on separately.

57. Decisions about whether resolutions should be biennial or triennial should be taken only on a case-by-case basis and should take into account the willingness of the delegations concerned to accept amendments, without detriment to the right of Member States to submit proposals to the Committee.

58. Round tables and interactive activities were welcome but there should not be so many of them that the Committee's workload became excessive. The issues selected should be relevant to the subject matter discussed by the Committee. The consideration of agenda items should not be replaced by interactive debates that did not enable genuine objective exchanges or discussion of the Secretary-General's reports.

59. **Mr. Amaral Bezerra** (Brazil) said that the Committee should endeavour to enhance the relevance and impact of General Assembly resolutions, in line with the 2030 Agenda, and its work should support the follow-up and review process. The Sustainable Development Goals provided the best road map for revitalization of the General Assembly. However, care should be taken not to duplicate the work being done in the First, Third and Sixth Committees in such areas as peaceful societies, gender equality and access to justice. During the forthcoming budget negotiations, the Fifth Committee should acknowledge the relevance of development as a pillar of the United Nations.

60. **Mr. Torrington** (Guyana) said that any discussion of the Committee's methods of work should be conducted with a view to retaining its status as a global, deliberative and norm-setting body, especially since it was, for many States, the only forum where they had a voice on important issues and were able to put forward proposals, either individually or in representative groups. His delegation also saw value in the biennialization and triennialization of agenda items, as that would improve the quality and effectiveness of deliberations. The shift from a siloed to an integrated approach to methods of work could conceivably be carried out in phases, given that the Committee did not yet appear to have a collective

understanding in that regard. Finally, the Bureau should provide clear guidance on questions having programme budget implications, so as not to encroach upon the mandate of the Fifth Committee and delay negotiations.

61. **Ms. Loe** (Norway) said that the Committee should strive to augment the quality and relevance of agenda items and resolutions, while at the same time reducing their quantity. Time and resources should be dedicated to issues important for the future, while efforts should be made to avoid duplication of agenda items with other bodies, particularly the Third Committee and the Economic and Social Council. In line with the 2030 Agenda, an integrated approach was needed, and work should focus on substantive issues as opposed to modalities. Norway supported the comments made by the representative of Australia concerning the clustering of agenda items.

*The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.*