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Summary record of the 7th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 11 October 2013, at 3 p.m.

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 pm.

General debate (continued)

1. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal) said that countries committed to graduating from least developed country status should receive special attention and assistance from the United Nations and its development partners. Welcoming the adoption of the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, he called for greater efforts to ensure transparency and accountability by countries of origin, transit and destination. As countries like Nepal were facing systemic deficiencies in the global trading system; trade policy must be revised to ensure open, rules-based, equitable, predictable and non-discriminatory mechanisms. He called for an early conclusion of the Doha Development Round and expressed the hope that the forthcoming Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) would address issues vital to the least developing countries, including duty-free and quota-free entry, rules of origin, a services waiver and cotton.

2. Expressing concern at the recent decline in official development assistance (ODA) to the least developed countries, he stressed the need for meaningful progress in ODA commitment and delivery. Nepal attached great importance to the continued sharing of knowledge and transfer of technology, and to South-South and triangular cooperation as a complement to — not a substitute for — North-South cooperation.

3. He drew attention to the disproportionate and heart-rending effects of climate change on Nepal, particularly its mountains, which housed precious ecosystems, rich biodiversity, ancient civilizations, countless glaciers and vast fresh water sources. Nepal deserved special global attention in that domain, and called for the urgent implementation of the decisions of the Cancun and Doha Climate Change Conferences in letter and spirit, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Nepal had significant potential for the promotion of a green economy, which it hoped to translate into reality with the help of foreign direct investment (FDI).

4. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development should take into account that a one-size-fits-all approach could not provide tailor-made solutions. His delegation supported the strengthening of “Delivering as one” and called for the establishment of a strong mechanism to ensure mutual accountability of programme countries and development partners, including the United Nations system as a whole. It also believed that the voices of developing countries should be reflected in the decision-making processes of the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO.

5. **Mr. Jiddou** (Mauritania) said that the most prominent challenges facing the Committee included eradicating poverty, developing education and health systems, enhancing the role of women in decision making, tackling climate change and fostering the role of the private sector in developing economies. New and innovative development financing mechanisms should be created without, however, detracting from the role of ODA, whose decline over the previous two years gave cause for concern. He hoped that the recovery of the global economy would encourage developed countries to comply with their ODA commitments.

6. Mauritania was one of the countries worst affected by climate change. The international community should take action to curb greenhouse gas emissions, support the Green Climate Fund and ensure the transfer of green and environmentally friendly technology. In cooperation with the United Arab Emirates, Mauritania had built the largest solar energy plant in Africa. His Government had also formed partnerships with the private sector in order to build roads and a new international airport, which were vital for sustainable development.

7. **Mr. Kihurani** (Kenya) said that the results of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had been mixed, largely because the Goals had not adequately addressed the multifaceted dimensions and roots of poverty. An integrated approach that had a cascading effect on a broader range of issues — for example, climate change as it related to food and energy insecurity, or diminishing FDI and ODA as they related to poverty and disease — would have a more meaningful impact on the lives of the poor. Sound ideas without concrete means of implementation would not prevent children in African countries from dying of malnutrition or preventable

diseases, nor would they save small island developing States from the threats of rising sea levels. Effective service delivery, appropriate technologies and stable and predictable financing were necessary in order to move those countries towards sustainable development.

8. Poverty eradication, equity and global sustainability must be at the heart of the next development agenda. In order to lift the greatest number of people out of poverty, efforts must not stop at eradicating extreme poverty, pegged at \$1.25 a day; the aim must be to eradicate absolute poverty. An ambitious and practical development agenda must emphasize rapid economic growth, good governance, infrastructural improvement and access to energy. The new development agenda should also address global trade issues in a holistic manner in order to ensure a fair and balanced global trading system. Greater political commitment and an ongoing spirit of international cooperation would be more necessary than ever. As Co-Chair of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, Kenya would continue to support and constructively engage in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

9. **Ms. Jorgji** (Albania) said that Albania had organized a national consultation process on the post-2015 development agenda to push for a strong and legitimate successor framework that combined development and sustainability. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the outcome document of the special event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the establishment of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Goals and the reform of the Economic and Social Council.

10. In recent decades, developing countries had grown more confident about driving their own development agendas and more aware of their own potential and resources. Nevertheless, they had also realized that they needed a renewed and more cohesive United Nations system that responded more rapidly to the calls of Governments. In that context, close monitoring of the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was of paramount importance. Albania had experienced first-hand a new and transformative relationship with the United Nations through the “Delivering as one” approach and had found it to be highly productive.

11. **Mr. Ricciardi** (Paraguay) said that poverty was not merely an issue for some, but for all, and as such should be addressed by both global and local policies. The challenges Paraguay faced as a landlocked developing country, including difficulties accessing global markets, had a direct impact on trade, employment and poverty. His delegation hoped that the comprehensive 10-year Review Conference on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, to be held in 2014, would provide guidance on how to cope with those challenges.

12. A public-private alliance was the best means to generate decent work for all and monitor how aid was allocated; poor planning of poverty reduction measures diminished national control and allowed for wasteful use of resources. Paraguay was thus working to target State poverty reduction measures as precisely as possible and generate quality jobs for its citizens.

13. **Mr. Empole** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that his delegation welcomed the launch of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. It hoped that their work would combine with reform of the Economic and Social Council to bring about better integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. The post-2015 development agenda should be universal, ambitious and based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It should incorporate the contributions of women, youth and civil society and address the issues of youth unemployment, migration, food security, drought and environmental degradation. At the same time, his delegation wished to remind development partners, in particular developed countries, of commitments they had undertaken previously — from allocating 0.7 per cent of their gross national income (GNI) to ODA, and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent to least developed countries, to financing developing countries' efforts to deal with climate change.

14. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was committed to creating an investor-friendly environment and had made significant progress towards achieving the MDGs. As a result, it had witnessed increases in school enrolment (including in parity between girls and boys in primary school); adult literacy; participation by women in political life; and child immunization. The infant mortality had gone down and major strides had been made in controlling HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and

malaria. Thanks to discipline and the reform of public finance management, the national economy was stable and growing. His country had also reformed its security and justice sector and public administration and had moved a step closer to decentralization by adopting the necessary implementing legislation. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was reviewing its national strategies for inclusive growth and poverty reduction with a view to increasing their effectiveness. And its Grand Inga hydroelectric power project could serve nearly half the population of Africa.

15. Nevertheless, without peace, no progress was possible. Armed conflict had inflicted huge losses on his country and untold suffering on its population. Thousands of women in the eastern provinces had been victims of rape and millions of children were unable to attend school. The post-2015 development agenda must thus address the issue of peace and security, as well as climate change. Rich in biodiversity, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had incorporated a forest ecosystem management policy in its sustainable development efforts.

16. **Ms. Al Doseri** (Bahrain) said that her country had made great strides in promoting sustainable development in accordance with the Bahrain Economic Vision 2030, which focused on sustainability, competitiveness and fairness and sought to promote a diversified economy, effective Government services, transparent oversight, quality education and health care, a clean environment and sustainable energy. The country's reliance on the oil sector had seen a marked reduction from 2000 to 2012. The 2013 Index of Economic Freedom published by the *Wall Street Journal* and the Heritage Foundation listed Bahrain as the 12th freest country in the world and the freest in the Middle East. Health care, education, technical and professional training had undergone thorough reform. In accordance with Bahrain's new environmental strategy, legislation had been adopted to list certain species as endangered, regulate chemical waste disposal and curb pollution.

17. **Mr. Nazarian** (Armenia) said that the international community had made great progress in formulating a cohesive approach to its shared challenges. The global economic and financial crisis had, however, revealed certain issues underlying the implementation of the MDGs. The overall picture was nevertheless very encouraging; many countries had

emerged from conflict and were consolidating peace and the enjoyment of human rights.

18. Although severely affected by the crisis, Armenia had begun its recovery and remained committed to achieving its targets. The country faced many of the same challenges as low-income countries, but its middle-income status had caused a decline in donor support. He urged the United Nations and other development partners to continue garnering support for middle income countries.

19. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) had enriched the international community's collective understanding of the way forward. Armenia stood prepared to support the reform of the United Nations system, which would improve its ability to confront global development challenges.

20. **Mr. Chipaziwa** (Zimbabwe) said that Zimbabwe had made progress towards some of the Millennium Development Goals and targets, including higher net school enrolment and reductions in HIV infections and other diseases. However, developing countries generally were not on track to meet others, such as universal access to maternal health care or poverty eradication. The post-2015 development agenda must address the factors making it difficult for countries to meet those Goals: unemployment, income inequality, insufficient infrastructure and undiversified economies, among others.

21. The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development would facilitate international commitment to achieving all three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, its economic, social and environmental dimensions. The decrease in ODA over the past two years was of serious concern to developing countries. Stressing the importance of Goal 8 on a global partnership for development, he urged donors to meet their commitments and ensure that ODA could be used flexibly in accordance with national priorities.

22. Climate change was causing more frequent and more severe disasters. Developing countries suffered the most from such disasters, yet produced minimal emissions. Those responsible for high emissions should take the lead in combating climate change, as a matter of urgency.

23. Expressing concern at the stalemate in the Doha Round of negotiations, he said that a fair multilateral

trading system was necessary for developing countries' growth and increased access to markets. Discussion at the Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization should respect the WTO mandate and prioritize developing countries' needs. Duty-free, quota-free market access would boost developing economies. International trade and financial institutions should be more democratic, giving developing countries a greater say in WTO and the Bretton Woods institutions.

24. **Ms. del Águila Castillo** (Guatemala) said that recent improved coordination between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions was praiseworthy and should be extended to include intergovernmental forums, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the executive directors of the major multilateral financial institutions.

25. The post-2015 development agenda should be broad and ambitious. The eradication of poverty and hunger should figure prominently, as should societal transformation to promote sustainable development, including more environmentally sound energy use.

26. Regarding the organization of work, the Second Committee's agenda should be streamlined and should prioritize the post-2015 development agenda. To avoid any impact on the effectiveness of the Committee's work, parallel processes, such as future meetings of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, should not be scheduled to coincide with General Assembly sessions.

27. The process begun at the International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, had lost momentum, and should be reinvigorated during the current session. Lastly, the next session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should make progress on curbing greenhouse gas emissions and operationalizing the Green Climate Fund.

28. **Ms. Brennen-Haylock** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), also speaking on behalf of the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), said that despite a proportional reduction in the number of undernourished people and

people experiencing chronic hunger worldwide over the past 10 years, food insecurity and malnutrition persisted, with differences across regions. Globally, one in eight persons was undernourished and one in four children under five was stunted. The international community must recognize the importance of nutrition-enhancing interventions in the first 1,000 days of a child's life.

29. Women played a huge role in agricultural production, as well as in caregiving and supporting families and communities. The three Rome-based agencies — FAO, WFP and IFAD — were committed to implementing the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in conjunction with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and in the context of sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda.

30. The Rome-based agencies hoped that the Second Committee would positively review the FAO submissions to the General Assembly proposing the International Year of Soils 2015 and International Year of Pulses 2016. The focus of World Food Day on 22 November would be on sustainable food systems for food security and nutrition. That day would also mark the launch of the 2014 International Year of Family Farming, intended to highlight the role that family agriculture played in improving food security and nutrition, employment generation and poverty alleviation in developed and developing countries.

31. The Committee on World Food Security, with its multi-stakeholder approach, was an example of good stewardship and could serve as a point of reference for the Zero Hunger Challenge. Lasting solutions must be found to the problem of food price volatility. With the coincidence of two vital processes — the acceleration of efforts to achieve the MDGs and formulation of a post-2015 development agenda — came an unprecedented opportunity to eliminate hunger and malnutrition. For a stronger, more prosperous world, it was necessary to commit to sustained investment in agriculture, rural development and the Zero Hunger Challenge's five objectives. Those objectives could be achieved through global movements led by countries, such as Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN). South-South cooperation could play an important role as well.

32. **The Chair**, summarizing the general debate, said that a common thread had been the call to accelerate

the implementation of the MDGs, the follow-up and implementation of the outcomes of Rio+20 and elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. Many Committee members had linked climate change to poverty eradication and the sustainable development goals. Implementation of the proposals they had put forward in that regard could make a real difference. It had been encouraging to hear donors' renewed aid commitments despite the economic and financial crisis; innovative approaches to development financing, over and above ODA, would be crucial. The general debate had also set high expectations for the forthcoming Ninth Ministerial Conference of WTO to be held in Bali. Countries in special situations had made their case clearly within the broader context of poverty eradication and sustainable development, and middle-income countries had drawn attention to their ongoing development concerns. As for the discussion of operational activities for development, a number of speakers had stressed the need for coherent programme delivery and praised the effectiveness of "Delivering as one".

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.