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later: Mr. Stepowska (Vice-Chair) (Poland)

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

Agenda item 23: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (A/69/223)

- (a) **Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)** (A/69/204 and A/69/392; A/C.2/69/2)
- (b) **Industrial development cooperation** (A/69/331 and A/69/392; A/C.2/69/2)
- (c) **Women in development** (A/69/156 and A/69/392; A/C.2/69/2)

1. **Ms. Razavi** (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development (A/69/156), said that the challenges of sustainable development and gender equality were not only more pressing than ever but were also closely intertwined. Sustainable development was unachievable if women and girls, who were disproportionately affected by economic, social and environmental shocks and stresses, lacked such necessities as food security or support for care work.

2. There was growing evidence of important synergies between gender equality and economic, social and environmental sustainability. For example, when women were involved in public administration or occupied decision-making positions, investment in human development was greater, delivery was more cost-effective, corruption was lower and there could be environmental benefits. Women's access to and control over agricultural assets and resources was vital to achieve food security and it was proven that women's and girls' access to education and women's increased participation in employment had a positive impact on economic development.

3. Nevertheless, such forms of sustainability did not always lead to improved levels of gender equality. Some patterns of export-oriented economic growth relied on significant wage differences between genders and could entrench gender discrimination. Similarly, when policies framed women as "sustainability saviours", stereotypes of women's behaviour and roles were often reinforced and women's unpaid work burden could be increased without the conferment of rights, resources or benefits.

4. The seventh issue of the Survey examined economic growth, the green economy and public goods; food production, distribution and consumption; population and women's bodily integrity; and needed investments in water, sanitation and energy. It showed clearly how unsustainable development and gender inequality reinforced and exacerbated one another. Without government regulation of growth patterns and labour markets, women could be confined to low-paid work and natural resources could be exploited. A lack of access to sustainable and clean water, sanitation and energy had a bearing on women's and girls' human rights. The report called for investments that recognized women's knowledge, agency and decision-making power. There had already been fruitful investments in those areas.

5. States were central to the delivery of commitments to gender equality since they could control the use of resources and could direct investment. The contribution of the private sector and civil society was also vital but only States could scale up innovative solutions and hold others to account. To assess whether sustainable development policies and investments would also positively contribute towards gender equality and women's human rights, the report proposed three criteria, namely whether human rights standards were respected and women's and girls' capabilities were enhanced, whether unpaid care work provided by women and girls was given attention and redistributed, and whether the participation of women and girls in all aspects of sustainable development was promoted. It also called on States to ensure that green growth policies increased access to high-quality green jobs for women and to consider the role of the care economy.

6. It was critical that green, pro-poor and gender-responsive investments were financially supported and that gender equality was promoted throughout the proposed sustainable development goals. Such policies would only be effective if women participated and led fully and equally in decision-making processes.

7. **Ms. Wenyan Yang** (Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) (A/69/204), said that although the poverty target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had been met at the global level, progress had been uneven across regions and countries. Inequality, social

exclusion, unemployment and climate change were all threats to people living in poverty in developed and developing countries.

8. The report described the actions taken in the context of the United Nations system-wide plan of action for the implementation of the Second Decade, which focused on social protection, best practices for the creation of decent work, capacity-building, youth unemployment and equality in the labour market. It recommended that States invest adequate resources to address the multidimensional nature of poverty.

9. Efforts to eradicate poverty would be more likely to succeed if economic growth was sustained, inclusive and equitable. To that end, greater efforts had to be made to increase the pace of job creation since employment was a key driver of inclusion and poverty eradication. The ramifications of the global financial and economic crisis, however, were still impacting on many national labour markets.

10. States could also accelerate poverty eradication by increasing resilience and tackling rising inequality. That could be achieved through greater social protection, improved equality of opportunity, guaranteed access to adequate food and reduced levels of unemployment. The risks posed by environmental degradation and its threat to those living in poverty must also be tackled through structural change.

11. **Mr. Kitaoka** (United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), introducing the report of the Director General of UNIDO on industrial development cooperation ([A/69/331](#)), said that the past two years had been momentous for industrial development. In 2013, a landmark declaration concerning the concept of inclusive and sustainable industrial development had been adopted at the organization's General Conference in Lima. That concept had been acknowledged as the way forward for industrial development, not only in the least developed countries but also in industrialized countries. In addition, industrialization had been seen, in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, as a major contributor to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. It was very encouraging that the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals mentioned inclusive and sustainable industrialization.

12. The relative resilience of manufacturing in developing and emerging industrial countries had thus

far shielded many people from the effects of the financial and economic crises and the global share of manufacturing value added of those countries was at its highest recorded level. That was due to the tendencies of industrialized countries to outsource production activities, to focus more on the provision of services and to be more dependent on the financial sector than was the case for developing or emerging industrial countries. Manufacturing was an important engine for growth in developing countries and, although there was variance across developing countries, their manufactured exports had grown at a higher rate annually between 2008 and 2012 than those of industrialized countries.

13. Smart industrialization and industrial cooperation helped people escape poverty and provided positive social and economic results for regions and societies. Shared prosperity and inclusiveness had usually derived from progress in absorbing the labour force into higher-income industrial jobs, such as those in agro-industry or pharmaceutical industries. Manufacturing was also particularly effective in fostering jobs for women. Nevertheless, industrial policy had to create the right environment for small and medium-sized enterprises; the mismatch between the education being offered and the needs of industry had to be addressed. Furthermore, progress and prosperity would be short-lived if the environment was not protected.

14. The current UNIDO programmes of work encompassed three thematic fields which, together, were intended to provide a comprehensive and sustainable set of services to address all the dimensions of sustainable development. In the medium and longer term, major industrial structural changes that had been introduced in developing countries would benefit the industrial performance of those countries. The link between inclusive and sustainable industrialization and long-term economic, social and environmental goals was undeniable.

15. The report recommended that efforts be made to ensure that the benefits of industrialization were more inclusive and that they were equally distributed not only among women and men but also across all countries and regions. Similar efforts would be needed to ensure industry's environmental sustainability. UNIDO would enhance its work and partnerships concerning resilient industrial infrastructure, industrial innovation and support for Governments in addressing

key determinants for future industrial growth and prosperity.

16. **Mr. Rahman** (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General of UNWTO on the promotion of ecotourism for poverty eradication and environment protection (A/69/223), said that it provided an update on progress since the 2012 report and contained the insights provided by States in response to a questionnaire that had been circulated regarding sustainable development and ecotourism. Although fewer responses had been received than for a similar questionnaire for the previous report, they did provide sufficient representation, in terms of geographical coverage and level of development, and it was useful that 14 States had replied for a second time.

17. The approach of the report was framed in the context of poverty eradication and environmental protection. That was consistent with the outcome document of Rio+20, since tourism was a sector that was able to contribute to sustainable development and drive change towards a green economy. The report included examples of good practice that demonstrated how sustainable tourism was a significant driver of job creation, environmental protection and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage. The seventh and eighth annual Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conferences had resulted in further commitment and actions on the part of stakeholders in relation to sustainable tourism, including ecotourism.

18. Tourism was growing in importance across communities and States, regardless of size or level of development. It represented 30 per cent of the world's export services and 45 per cent of export services in developing countries. International arrivals were forecasted to reach nearly 1.6 billion by 2020.

19. **Mr. Mollinedo Claros** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed concern that the global economic and financial crisis, food insecurity, volatile capital flows and commodity prices, energy accessibility and climate change all restricted the fight against poverty. It was important that States took ownership of their own development agendas and formulated their own strategies and policies on economic growth, job creation and environmental protection, among other areas. Despite signs of economic growth in developed countries, developing countries continued to suffer

from the slow growth in international trade, from restricted access to international financing and from major imbalances in the labour market.

20. To eradicate poverty, predictable and sustainable official development assistance (ODA) from developed States was needed. They must urgently meet their target and give 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) to developing countries for development purposes, including 0.15 to 0.20 per cent to least developed countries,. Poverty was an affront to human dignity and poverty eradication should be of the highest priority in the post-2015 development agenda. To meet 2030 targets, the agenda should be supported by effective and adequate means of implementation and a strengthened global partnership for development which included the promotion of employment, better access to social services and the eradication of illiteracy and diseases. The new agenda should draw on lessons learned from the MDGs, and development efforts targeted at poverty eradication should respond to the challenges and opportunities of sustainable development at the international and national levels.

21. Industrialization was an essential driver of sustainable development. The international community should provide developing countries with technical assistance, technology and financial resources to help them to develop capacities and policies in accordance with their national priorities and to industrialize in ways that were environmentally sustainable. Such actions would have economic and social benefits, including the integration of women and youth into the economic growth process.

22. In that regard, gender equality and the empowerment of women were critical to sustainable development. Investment in women and girls had multiplier effects in society and in all sectors of the economy but the advancement of women worldwide, particularly in developing countries, continued to be impeded by widening economic inequalities, including unemployment and the intensification of globalization. Governments should therefore promote decent work for all and strengthen labour market regulations in order to create a more level playing field. The Group of 77 and China believed that gender should be properly integrated into the post-2015 development agenda and would accelerate the implementation of its respective commitments under various international legal instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It was necessary for women to participate and lead in all areas of sustainable development and for an enabling environment to be created to improve the situation of women and girls everywhere, particularly in rural areas and local communities, and among indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities.

23. **Mr. Mac-Donald** (Suriname), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that Caribbean States had adjusted the Millennium Development Goals to reflect local circumstances, and that several States had integrated targets based on the MDGs into their national policy frameworks. To drive development and promote sustainable development, reliable and current data was essential. Although the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Caribbean Development Bank had published comprehensive reports on social development in 2009 and 2010, respectively, more recent data was needed. CARICOM therefore suggested that those two organizations should collaborate with relevant statistical bodies with a view to compiling updated data on social development and poverty.

24. Although certain CARICOM countries had already achieved several of the MDGs, or were likely to do so by the 2015 deadline, rural and urban poverty levels in the subregion remained high. Significant pockets of poverty were even present in relatively prosperous countries. In general, the poor enjoyed limited access to health care and basic services. Other indicators of poverty were low educational achievement and acquisition of skills, larger than average families and high unemployment, particularly among women and young people. Compounding matters further was the phenomenon of the “working poor”: many indigenous people, persons with disabilities and older members of society were often unable to escape poverty even when they found employment. Despite sustained economic growth, income inequality was increasing in several CARICOM States, while gender inequality and disparities in the provision of health care and education remained a matter of concern. In the light of those challenges, undue emphasis should not be given to economic growth, which could not, by itself, advance social justice. Instead, efforts must be made to address a range of interconnected issues.

25. By 2050, more than 30 per cent of the subregion’s population would be over 60 years old. Appropriate measures must be taken so that, rather than undermining many States’ already overburdened health-care systems, ageing populations remained part of the labour force, helping to accelerate growth. Although well-funded health-care systems in many countries helped to ensure that populations remained healthy, more could be done to enhance the provision of health-care, combat non-communicable diseases and promote healthy lifestyles, particularly among low-income groups. Caribbean States must also take action to increase the availability of decent, affordable housing for low-income households, including by providing concessionary funding.

26. All CARICOM countries had made progress in the areas of gender equality and women’s empowerment and, with the exception of Haiti, all CARICOM countries had achieved high primary education enrolment rates. Low male participation in secondary and tertiary education remained a cause for concern; however. CARICOM member States were also working together to strengthen food security for vulnerable sectors of society and promote good nutrition, sustainable agriculture and rural development. In that regard family farms could make a substantial contribution to poverty eradication and economic, social and environmental stability in the subregion. CARICOM events to promote agriculture as well as food and nutrition security had just been held the week before.

27. In the face of strong competition from outside the subregion, Caribbean countries’ key exports, including bananas, sugar, rice, and manufactured goods, had declined significantly in recent decades. Further trade liberalization would cause additional difficulties for those countries, which must be able to rely on more highly-skilled, globally competitive workforces. CARICOM States must also enact measures to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change, despite the additional burden that would place on their public finances, in order to strengthen the resilience and secure the livelihoods of their populations. CARICOM looked forward to the launch of the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund and to a successful outcome of the twentieth and twenty-first sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Lima and Paris, respectively, and called for the adoption in 2015

of a legally binding agreement on climate change that addressed the concerns of CARICOM members.

28. All CARICOM countries except Haiti had been classified as middle-income countries on the basis of one dimensional criteria, such as per capita income. That classification had severely restricted CARICOM States' access to concessional financing. The United Nations should take the lead in revisiting those criteria and must urge international financial institutions to replace them with criteria that took into consideration the particular challenges faced by Caribbean States, including those related to economies of scale and high indebtedness. Policies should, moreover, be enacted to facilitate access by smallholders and entrepreneurs to credit, resources, and technical and insurance services with a view to encouraging the emergence of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, which were dynamic job creators. Establishing effective social safety nets, including by mandating a minimum wage and providing universal health coverage, after-school programmes and retirement benefits, could also help combat poverty.

29. CARICOM supported the recommendation in the report of the Secretary-General on going beyond mere symptoms to build physical, social, economic and political infrastructure to sustain poverty eradication efforts (A/69/204, para. 75). Although the Millennium Development Goal on poverty eradication had been achieved at the global level, hundreds of millions of people would still be living in extreme poverty by the 2015 deadline. The post-2015 development agenda provided an unprecedented opportunity to address the unfinished business of the MDGs and eradicate extreme poverty and hunger within a decade. CARICOM emphasized that the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals should not be renegotiated and welcomed the fact that the eradication of poverty, a moral obligation, would remain at the core of United Nations initiatives for the next 15 years.

30. **Ms. Tan** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that, although the international community had achieved the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day ahead of schedule, an estimated 1.2 billion people worldwide and 18 per cent of the population of ASEAN countries still lived in extreme poverty. In view of the growing consensus that poverty eradication

was not only a moral imperative, but also a requisite for truly sustainable development, ASEAN welcomed the proposed sustainable development goal on the complete eradication of global poverty.

31. Poverty eradication and rural development were intricately linked. Indeed, it was estimated that 70 per cent of the poor in South-East Asia lived in rural areas. Furthermore, increasing urban poverty levels in the region often had their origins in entrenched rural poverty. ASEAN had therefore adopted the 2011-2015 Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, which focused on sustainable rural development and economic growth, food security and food sovereignty amid climate change, social protection and safety nets, development of infrastructure and human resources in rural areas, constituency-building for rural development and poverty eradication, and monitoring and evaluating poverty reduction strategies. Community empowerment could also strengthen efforts to alleviate poverty in rural communities; at the 2013 ASEAN Forum on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, ASEAN Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had exchanged views on how best to empower communities so that they could become more self-sufficient and improve and sustain the livelihoods of the poorest members of society. A participatory approach involving the communities themselves, government agencies, the private sector, NGOs and others stakeholders was needed to ensure that development initiatives were relevant, effective, holistic and sustainable. In that connection, ASEAN recognized the key role played by NGOs in rural and community development initiatives and had recently awarded the first ASEAN Leadership Awards on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication to 10 exemplary NGOs from ASEAN member States.

32. Although countries must exercise ownership over their poverty eradication efforts, those efforts could be strengthened through partnerships with regional and international actors. In particular, ASEAN believed that developed countries could and should provide ongoing support to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries and urged developed countries to meet the target of providing 0.7 per cent of gross national income as ODA, with between 0.15 and 0.2 per cent provided to least developed countries. Efforts should also be made to strengthen regional and

international cooperation to promote technology transfer, economic integration and liberalization, and the sharing of best practices, which could all strengthen anti-poverty initiatives.

33. **Mr. Msosa** (Malawi), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that, with the deadline for achieving the MDGs approaching rapidly, it was clear that efforts by the international community to combat poverty and reduce unemployment were proving inadequate, particularly in least developed countries and Africa. Most of the 1.2 billion people who still lived on less than \$1.25 a day were in Africa and Asia. Furthermore, even those who had escaped extreme poverty remained vulnerable to economic shocks, climate change or other disasters. The international community must therefore ensure that poverty eradication was made an urgent priority, and donor countries must support developing countries as they strove to promote growth and development. It was particularly alarming, therefore, that ODA levels continued to fall. The African Group urged developing countries to honour their ODA commitments and support developing countries' efforts to create and strengthen social safety nets, which were a powerful tool for reducing poverty and promoting sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. In particular, developed countries were urged to support the Social Protection Floor Initiative.

34. Gender equality was a key prerequisite for achieving sustained economic growth and eradicating poverty. The Group fully supported efforts by UN-Women to combat gender-based discrimination and promote women's empowerment. The Group also welcomed the fact that the cross-cutting nature of financial inclusion, which contributed significantly to the achievement of a number of development objectives, had been reflected clearly in the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals; target 1.4 in its report called, *inter alia*, for all men and women, particularly the poor and the vulnerable, to have equal rights to economic resources and financial services, including microfinance, by 2030.

35. Lastly, the Group emphasized the need to address the global challenge of youth unemployment and called on the international community to develop and implement global strategies to ensure that all young people could find decent and productive jobs.

36. **Mr. Estreme** (Argentina) said that Latin America was committed to ensuring inclusive development leading to more jobs; greater food security and food quality; respect for cultural diversity; and social protection for the most vulnerable sectors, such as children and adolescents, women, and the elderly. That commitment had three aspects: a conviction that social equity was possible only through balanced and just economic development; an acknowledgement that development had to guarantee equitable distribution and treat individuals as citizens with a full range of rights; and a respect for diversity and the uniqueness of each region.

37. To eliminate poverty in the world, he called for the role of the State to be strengthened and wealth to be shared with the regions and people who needed it most, and for a new global financial architecture providing a viable alternative to international financial institutions and having a fair representation of developing countries. Job creation was the most efficient strategy for combating poverty, distributing wealth and reversing the rise in youth unemployment. Equality of opportunity in the labour market and equal pay for equal work were also key components of decent work.

38. Speaking on measures his Government had taken recently, he mentioned the policy of income transfers for the benefit of children, which included the introduction of a universal child benefit and an allowance for pregnant women. Women were increasingly represented in leadership roles, including in the legislature, which had passed a law bringing the economic and social rights of domestic workers into line with those of all other workers.

39. Disparities in access to financing and transfers of technology to developing countries needed to be resolved, and developed countries likewise should fulfil the official development assistance commitments they had made within the framework of the MDGs and their commitments undertaken at Rio+20, in particular with regard to common but differentiated responsibilities.

40. **Mr. Malawane** (South Africa) said that there was broad global consensus that poverty was the greatest challenge facing the world and that poverty eradication was an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Indeed, the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, which must constitute the main basis for integrating the sustainable

development goals into the future development agenda, had emphasized that poverty eradication must constitute an overarching objective of sustainable development initiatives. However, worsening inequality within and among nations was limiting economic opportunities, particularly for young people, and facilitating intergenerational poverty, especially in countries with high income disparities. It was therefore critical that the post-2015 development agenda sought to break the cycle of poverty so that future generations could achieve prosperity.

41. Recognizing that gender equality was also a prerequisite for sustainable development and poverty eradication, the Open Working Group had proposed a goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. His delegation agreed that poverty eradication initiatives would prove futile if women could not access financial services, technology or high-quality health-care services, and if they could not own or enjoy access to property and land.

42. While many African countries had made significant progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal on eradicating extreme poverty, those gains would be largely reversed by the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. With the goal of raising \$25 million, South Africa had created the Ebola Response Fund to assist affected countries and urged other members of the international community to do more to address that unfolding social and humanitarian crisis.

43. Although employment was the key driver of poverty eradication, having a job was no guarantee of prosperity for the working poor. Indeed, the number of people in employment who continued to live in poverty in sub-Saharan Africa continued to rise. Concerted efforts must therefore be made to spur inclusive growth with a view to creating and sustaining decent employment opportunities for all members of society. Furthermore, to ensure that development was truly inclusive and sustainable, countries must be able to design and implement national industrial policies that advanced their specific development objectives, and the necessary financial resources and environmentally sound technologies should be made available under favourable terms to facilitate implementation of those policies. Countries should also encourage the emergence of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises and agro-industry.

44. **Mr. Patriota** (Brazil) said that, with the deadline for achieving the MDGs rapidly approaching, it was clearer than ever that strong political will and a balanced and coherent approach that integrated the three dimensions of sustainable development were needed to combat poverty, hunger and inequality effectively.

45. Levels of extreme poverty had decreased in all developing regions but not in all developing countries. And despite favourable macroeconomic conditions, greater social inclusion and a robust middle class, middle-income countries were home to the majority of the world's poor. Those countries would require sustained support from the United Nations to successfully eradicate poverty. States classified as middle-income countries should not be reclassified against their will, or until income distribution and other socioeconomic indicators justified such a reclassification. Furthermore, as the international community sought to formulate and implement an ambitious and transformative post-2015 development agenda, Member States must remain committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

46. Social protection programmes had significantly reduced poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean. In that regard, Brazil had implemented conditional cash transfer programmes and other initiatives to promote social inclusion, combat poverty and spur inclusive and sustained economic growth, and had adopted macroeconomic policies to foster the creation of decent jobs. Although millions of workers across the globe had lost their jobs in the wake of the 2008 economic and financial crisis, Brazil, by making massive investments in education and training and implementing policies that were in line with the International Labour Organization Global Jobs Pact, had created 12 million new formal jobs and had achieved one of the world's lowest unemployment rates. Some 36 million Brazilians had been lifted out of extreme poverty since 2003, the purchasing power of the minimum wage had increased by 71 per cent, and a 500-year-old trend of increasing inequality had finally been reversed.

47. Furthermore, Brazil had reduced its net public debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio from approximately 60 to 35 per cent, reduced its gross external debt to GDP ratio from 42 to 14 per cent, paid off its external debt, increased its foreign currency reserves by a factor of 10 and was now an international

creditor nation. Brazil had also become one of the top destinations for foreign direct investment.

48. Moving forward, Brazil saw improving the quality of education as a key priority and, to that end, had expanded schools, increased school hours, revised curriculums and improved teacher's pay, profile and working conditions. Furthermore, the National Programme for Access to Technical Education and Employment had provided technical training to 8 million young people in hundreds of special-purpose built centres throughout the country. Brazil also provided meals and other forms of support to families and their children. Having achieved the goal of universal access to primary education, his Government was now striving to do the same with secondary education.

49. Some 75 per cent of the royalties from pre-salt oil exploration in Brazil were set aside for education financing and 25 per cent were earmarked for health-care funding. Furthermore, 50 per cent of a social fund generated by pre-salt oil revenues would also be used to fund education, with the remainder financing innovation, science and technology.

50. The report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, which would serve as the basis for integrating the sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, had placed insufficient emphasis on the means of implementation; greater focus should be given to ways to foster development cooperation and resource mobilization to meet the demands of what was an ambitious universal agenda. In that regard, Brazil urged States to increase their levels of ODA and respect the policy space needed by each country to address its specific challenges. Accountability mechanisms were also needed to ensure the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken in partnership with the private sector, and consensus must be reached on clear and enforceable goals to be achieved through the new agenda.

51. **Ms. Ben-Dor** (Israel) said that although the MDG target on extreme poverty had been achieved five years ahead of schedule, progress had been uneven across regions and countries, with those living in rural areas, women, persons with disabilities and children disproportionately represented among the poor. However, the post-2015 development agenda presented

an historic opportunity to holistically address the many dimensions of poverty.

52. Promoting decent, productive employment for all, and especially for young people, was central to poverty eradication, the achievement of the MDGs and the promotion of equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. To that end, Israel sought to foster an enabling environment that encouraged entrepreneurship, which, in turn, could help build resilient societies in which people had the confidence, skill and desire to solve the problems they saw around them. Israel also greatly valued small- and medium-sized businesses, especially micro-enterprises, and was working with the Kiva Microfunds, an international non-profit organization, to help low-income and underserved entrepreneurs, including Bedouin and Arab-Israeli women, to set up their own enterprises.

53. Poverty was further exacerbated by inadequate access to employment opportunities, education, health care and sanitation. Israel strongly believed that social protection policies and robust social safety nets could help reduce poverty and inequality, foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and enhance resilience in the face of disasters or crises. Israel also believed that empowering women was a prerequisite for poverty eradication. Women in the developing world were less likely than men to enjoy access to health care, credit and financial assistance or to own property, despite the fact that women were the main axis around which families grew and children were educated and could engender positive outcomes across communities and nations. Israel's development work therefore placed a special emphasis on women, who, on average reinvested 90 per cent of their earnings in their families. Women must be given the tools they needed to prosper, including the capacity to make decisions related to their own reproduction. In cooperation with UN-Women, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV) had recently organized a workshop that had focused on helping women prosper in the agro-technology field and on designing and implementing leadership development programmes in the East Africa subregion.

54. The spread of the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa was a tragic reminder that disease could have devastating health, economic and social repercussions. To help combat the virus, Israel was sending three fully equipped emergency medical clinics to Guinea, Liberia

and Sierra Leone, which would be operated by teams of Israeli specialists.

55. The focus of all Israel's poverty reduction activities, namely finding ways to empower people to become the drivers of their own success, should guide the international community in the formulation and implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. No government, agency or organization could fight poverty better than the people who suffered from it. The international community must listen to their voices.

56. **Mr. Pedersen** (Norway) said that the disadvantage and exclusion that women and girls experienced from living in poverty was exacerbated by the gender-based inequality they faced in their households and communities. Helping women escape from poverty improved the quality of life and lifespans, not only of women, but of the other members of their families, and led to improvements in family health, nutrition and education. It was therefore crucial that poverty eradication initiatives and the sustainable development goals addressed gender-based discrimination and promoted gender equality and women's empowerment.

57. The immediate priority of the international community should be to eliminate gender disparity in education by 2015. Access for all female children, adolescents and adults to quality education at all levels was probably the single most important factor that could unleash the potential of women to play their full role as the most effective agents of change in society. Further efforts were also needed to improve maternal health and carry forward into the post-2015 agenda whatever gaps remained when the deadline set for the MDGs expired. Furthermore, the important aspects of gender equality that had not been addressed in the MDGs must be addressed in the new sustainable development goals. In particular, the world must act with unwavering determination to eliminate all forms of violence against girls and women and take concrete action to change social norms and the attitudes that made such violence acceptable.

58. The post-2015 development agenda must also promote women's equitable participation in politics and the economy, and seek to ensure that women and men enjoyed equal opportunities in employment, received equal pay for the same work, and enjoyed the same rights to property, land and inheritance. The new

agenda must also promote the sexual and reproductive health rights of women based on the commitments undertaken at United Nations summits and conferences. There was overwhelming support among Member States for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and broad recognition that women's empowerment was indispensable if the world was to achieve all the other goals. Norway would therefore strive to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment were taken fully into consideration in the final phase of negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

59. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru), speaking on behalf of an informal Group of Friends on Financial Inclusion at the United Nations, said that financial inclusion was key to poverty eradication and other issues, such as industrial development cooperation and women in development. Financial inclusion contributed to the achievement of numerous development outcomes and the Group of Friends, composed of more than 30 Member States, welcomed the concept's inclusion in the proposal made by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. A target was included under the first proposed goal, intended to eradicate poverty everywhere. By 2030, all people, in particular the poor and vulnerable, should have an equal right to economic resources and access to financial services, including microfinance. Increased financial inclusion for women in particular had been shown to lead to enhanced social and economic empowerment of women, especially when they held individual accounts and increased their decision-making power within the household.

60. Without formal and inclusive financial services, families and individuals had to depend on inferior informal mechanisms to deal with economic disruptions and to build assets. Small businesses were also affected by a lack of financial services such as savings, credit, insurance and remittances. His delegation welcomed the proposed sustainable development goals that included targets intended to encourage the formalization of small and medium-sized enterprises and their integration into value chains and markets.

61. **Mr. Zinsou** (Benin), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that poverty and hunger constrained the ability of least developed countries to make progress in human and social development because they were unable to provide

essential services such as education, health care and sanitation. Globally, the poverty reduction target had been achieved, but more than 47 per cent of people in least developed countries still lived in extreme poverty. The absolute number of poor people had increased in many least developed countries, especially in Africa, yet that fact was not reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017). The percentage of people living in poverty was statistically more significant than the absolute number and 47 per cent of people in least developed countries lived below the poverty line, compared with 20 per cent in other developing countries. Least developed countries faced systemic problems, lacked the capacity to tackle their development challenges on their own and had limited scope for domestic resource mobilization. The United Nations should accord top priority to helping least developed countries bridge the capacity gap and advise them on policies that would correct distribution distortions and set better priorities to guarantee access to basic services for all.

62. The report ignored means of implementation as the cornerstone of poverty eradication. Instead, it highlighted marginal projects implemented by agencies, funds and programmes but not their benefits and did not point to the lessons to be learned. Support for Governments should be more systematic and should not be in the form of selective undertakings targeting two or three countries. That required data disaggregation rather than generalizations. The report also lacked emphasis on the need for international support for poverty eradication in least developed countries, in the form of official development assistance, greater investment, technology transfer, debt cancellation, capacity-building and duty-free quota-free market access. More generally, the report lacked ambition and its recommendations were too general. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had a mandate to include issues of concern to the least developed countries in their reports on social, economic and environmental issues. Despite that provision, the current report did not. It focused instead on other regions and categories of country, some of which were not recognized by the United Nations, but part of the World Bank's classification of countries based only on revenue. The United Nations should help achieve progress and not simply applaud the achievements of a few countries. Nor was it

sufficient to cite various agencies' support for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme when, over 10 years later, so many countries were far from achieving its targets.

63. The report should be a tool of accountability concerning the mandates prescribed by the relevant resolution, not just a mirror reflecting the overall situation in the field of poverty. In that spirit, he called for a more systematic partnership, greater accountability to ensure transformative growth promotion, and a stronger commitment to resource mobilization, as requested at the Ministerial Meeting on New Partnerships for Productive Capacity-building in the Least Developed Countries, held in Cotonou in July. The next report of the Secretary-General should address those concerns, respect the decisions of Member States and focus on the needs of the most vulnerable.

64. *Ms. Stepowska (Poland), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

65. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia) said that his country had achieved sustained economic growth, substantial poverty reduction and progress in human development, becoming an upper middle-income country in the process. Poverty eradication programmes included the eKasih system, a centralized national poverty data bank accessible to all government agencies for planning and monitoring purposes; a rural development programme that had built 20,000 new-generation housing units, ran skills training programmes and provided scholarships to 5,000 children; and the 1AZAM programme focused on job placement and the creation of small businesses, small service providers and opportunities in agriculture.

66. The principle of social justice was at the heart of the tenth Malaysia plan of which the main goal was to raise the living standards of the bottom 40 per cent of households by boosting education, strengthening the social safety net and reducing the vulnerability of disadvantaged groups. His Government was also determined to ensure equitable access to health care, education and basic infrastructure for all Malaysians so that no community or group was left behind as Malaysia developed.

67. **Mr. Abdullahi** (Nigeria) said that poverty and unemployment had long been a twin focus of international attention, most recently in the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development

Agenda and the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. His delegation called for the reassessment and prioritization of financing for development, and greater efforts by donor countries to support national and regional poverty eradication and employment generation strategies. Donor countries should fulfil their commitments so that Africa could feed itself, increase its industrial output and exploit its natural resources prudently, while remaining mindful of the environment and the needs of future generations.

68. Social protection was a powerful instrument for poverty reduction and social cohesion. It promoted sustainable economic and social development, and countries with social protection systems had been better able to cope with the global economic crisis. Women's empowerment was another powerful mechanism for ensuring poverty eradication because women constituted a large proportion of the working poor. In recognition of women's contributions to the economy and to combating poverty, his country had developed women-centred programmes to promote financial empowerment through skills acquisition, and a microcredit programme for women and young people.

69. Nigeria was also promoting job creation, social security, productivity and good industrial relations through its agency for small and medium-sized enterprises and the Ministry of Labour and Productivity. Its National Plan of Action on Employment Creation focused on 11 key sectors of the economy and was partnering with development agencies to adopt new poverty eradication strategies. In conclusion, he stressed the need to address the global challenge of youth unemployment and welcomed the role of the United Nations system in supporting national efforts to eradicate poverty, urging it to provide even greater support to that end.

70. **Ms. Derderian** (United States of America) said that the international community had a once-in-a-generation opportunity to eradicate the worst forms of poverty by addressing the unfinished business of the MDGs. In the past decade, inclusive and sustained economic growth had led to a 90 per cent reduction in extreme poverty, and yet every day, poor families had to make difficult choices between food, medicine, housing and education, trade-offs with potentially catastrophic consequences. Their birth rates were extremely high because the poor knew that their children might die of preventable diseases.

71. Targeted policies, including social safety nets and social protection floors, as well as access to property and productive assets for men and women alike, targeted cash transfers and small business financing, were interventions that had succeeded everywhere. A way forward for realizing what was once inconceivable was being charted amid rapid economic growth in many developing countries and new pathways for information, expression and financial inclusion through mobile technology. As President Obama had indicated, the time was ripe for reinventing development through new partnerships.

72. **Mr. Sareer** (Maldives) said that the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals had affirmed the international community's commitment to place poverty eradication at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda. The report should form the basis for mainstreaming sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, which should also address the unfinished business of the MDGs.

73. To completely eradicate extreme poverty, an inclusive, people-centred approach must be adopted to address inequalities between and within countries, including across age and gender groups and in both urban and rural areas. In that regard, his Government had adopted policies and legislation to identify, support and empower vulnerable groups. The Employment Act guaranteed employees equal pay for equal work and provided for three months' maternity leave with full pay for working mothers, while the Pension Act provided for monthly pension payments to be made to all Maldivian citizens aged 65 or over. The Government had also drawn up policies to provide health care, shelter and legal assistance to the elderly and the Disabilities Act provided safeguards for and promoted the rights of persons with disabilities, including children.

74. Maldives was committed to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and firmly believed that gender equality was a key prerequisite for eradicating poverty. Maldives was investing in women and girls, including through the provision of quality education, which had crucial multiplier effects in society, increased productivity and sustained economic growth. Steps were also being taken to promote the interests of and empower young people, who constituted 44 per cent of the population. Maldives also provided universal access to primary

education and was seeking to combat unemployment by expanding higher secondary, undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational education programmes. Apprenticeship programmes also placed students with private-sectors companies. Wide income disparity remained a matter of concern, however, and Maldives was endeavouring to address that challenge, inter alia, by providing loans to small and medium-sized businesses and promoting economic diversification. Maldives had adopted sustainable fishing practices, which not only added value to the country's fish exports, but preserved its rich marine biodiversity, while the country's sustainable tourism industry continued to make a significant contribution to the economy.

75. Maldives had achieved the Millennium Development Goal on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in 2004 and had graduated from least developed country status in 2011. However, the remoteness of Maldivian islands, the country's narrow economic base, its over-reliance on tourism, which accounted for 30 per cent of GDP, challenges related to achieving economies of scale, and the country's vulnerability to external shocks and environmental disasters meant that the country continued to face significant challenges. In particular, Maldives remained vulnerable to the impact of climate change, which posed a serious threat to people's livelihoods and even to their homes. It was essential that all poverty eradication initiatives took climate change into account and were in line with the objectives set forth in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

76. **Mr. Rimouche** (Algeria) said that it was well established that poverty and social exclusion were a global phenomenon stemming from changes to the international economic order. In many countries in Africa, poverty had reached alarming levels because they did not have the means to combat hunger, disease and malnutrition, and according to World Bank statistics, the number of people living in extreme poverty had exceeded 1 billion in 2013. Rising commodity and food prices had jeopardized the achievement of the MDGs, and prospects for a return to growth in employment seemed more sombre as more Governments were opting for budgetary austerity. The burden of foreign debt, difficulties accessing markets in developed countries, and natural disasters linked to environmental degradation all hindered national strategies for development. The need for

complementarity, solidarity, reciprocity, a deeper commitment by the international community, and innovative approaches to economic growth, financial stability and job creation was greater than ever. Algeria had reduced poverty from 14.1 per cent in 1995 to 5.1 per cent in 2011 and only 0.4 per cent of the population now lived on less than one dollar a day. Unemployment had fallen from 30 per cent in 2000 to 9.8 per cent in 2013. Algeria had also advanced women's empowerment and employment at all levels of society; 31 per cent of deputies elected to the national parliament in 2012 had been women.

77. Efforts to eliminate poverty within the framework of the post-2015 development agenda should be based on increased official development assistance to reduce ignorance and disease; an equitable partnership between industrialized countries and developing countries, geared towards encouraging foreign direct investment in poor countries; and the establishment of more democratic and representative international economic governance.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.