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Chairperson: Ms. Ogwu (Nigeria)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Statement by the Chairperson

1. **The Chairperson** said that, during the main part of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, the Committee had used 75 per cent of its allocated conference resources and had lost over 24 hours owing to late starting and early adjournment of meetings. The Committee's statistics had shown no improvement since the sixty-first session; she intended to ensure that they improved in 2008. In that connection, the Committee's meetings would begin punctually at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. If few or no speakers were inscribed for a particular meeting, the time and the conference services should be utilized for either negotiations or meetings of interest groups. It was important for the Committee to function more efficiently and maximize the use of its time.

2. The list of speakers for both the Committee's general debate and the agenda items allocated to it was now open. Delegations were requested to inscribe as soon as possible to enable the Committee to plan its work more efficiently. If a speaker was absent, his or her delegation would automatically be placed last on the list of speakers, unless it had made arrangements to change places with another delegation.

3. She suggested that speakers should be limited to 10 minutes for the general debate and 7 minutes for statements under individual agenda items, with some flexibility for the representatives of interest groups. She urged speakers to confine themselves to the salient points of their statements and provide copies of longer statements for distribution. Introductions by the Secretariat should be limited to 10 minutes. Representatives of the Secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes were explicitly requested to focus their statements on selected issues of concern to them and, if possible, to provide copies of their statements for distribution. She intended to notify all speakers when their time was running out.

4. She drew attention to a letter dated 19 September 2008 from the President of the General Assembly regarding the allocation of agenda items to the Committee (A/C.2/63/1) and to the Committee's proposed organization of work (A/C.2/63/L.1). The latter was largely based on the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 57/270 B and 58/316 and decision 62/543, as well as the recommendations of the

Bureaux of the Committee at the sixty-first and sixty-second sessions of the General Assembly.

5. In that connection, the agenda item numbering in document A/C.2/63/L.1 reflected that used in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly (A/63/150), while the numbering in document A/C.2/63/1 reflected that used in the allocation of agenda items for the sixty-third session of the General Assembly (A/63/252). To avoid confusion, she suggested that henceforth the Committee should use the numbering reflected in document A/C.2/63/1.

6. She recalled several important changes in working methods adopted by the Committee. Draft resolutions under the various agenda items would be negotiated and adopted by the Committee throughout the session, rather than at the end; delegations were requested to do their utmost to facilitate the adoption of draft proposals by the deadlines recommended in document A/C.2/63/L.1. As noted in the guidelines for the submission of draft proposals for processing by the Secretariat which had been circulated, the Secretariat required 48 hours to process and issue draft proposals. Unless such modalities were respected, the Committee ran the risk of returning to its oft-criticized past practice.

7. Recalling General Assembly resolution 50/227, she said that draft resolutions should be more concise and action-oriented. Furthermore, for issues of a procedural nature, decisions, instead of resolutions, should be used to the maximum extent possible.

8. Since informal negotiations would be held early in the session, facilitators must be appointed and draft proposals submitted on time. She urged those interested in facilitating negotiations or submitting draft proposals to respect the deadlines that were being recommended. If necessary, she would consider scheduling informal consultations prior to the adoption of draft proposals at the recommendation of the Bureau.

9. Time had been set aside in the draft programme of work for a number of side events. An informal paper containing details of those events had been circulated. Interpretation would be on an "if available" basis.

10. Lastly, two key elements were required for the successful completion of the Committee's programme of work. One was discipline in honouring the deadlines for submission of draft proposals indicated in the

organization of work document (A/C.2/63/L.1). The other was the full utilization of time in between the consideration of items for delegations to prepare draft proposals, establish group positions or conduct informal consultations.

Organization of work

11. **The Chairperson** invited the Committee to consider the draft programme of work annexed to document A/C.2/63/L.1. The general debate was scheduled to take place on 6 and 7 October 2008. The Deputy Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs would both address the Committee. The Committee would also hear a keynote address by Professor Ricardo Hausmann, Director of Harvard University's Center for International Development and Professor of the Practice of Economic Development at the John F. Kennedy School of Government. The target date for the conclusion of the Committee's work was 26 November 2008, as recommended by the General Committee on the basis of a General Assembly recess date of Tuesday, 16 December 2008. She would spare no effort in ensuring that the Committee completed its work on time. She trusted that she would have delegations' full cooperation in that regard.

12. **Ms. de Laurentis** (Secretary of the Committee) read out a number of changes to the draft programme of work. An informal paper reflecting those changes and the correct agenda item numbering had been circulated. The material would also be available on the Committee's website.

13. **Mr. Blake** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, recalled the General Assembly's recent general debate, where world leaders had highlighted global challenges requiring substantive international cooperation, and the recent High-level Meeting on Africa's Development Needs and High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals, where participants had called on the international community to honour its commitment to address the most serious problems affecting the world's poor. The Group hoped to see a change of mindset in the Committee's discussions under those agenda items that were critical to development and of vital interest to developing countries. The Group welcomed the proposed organization of work and looked forward to spirited but substantive discussions, with a view to

ensuring a meaningful outcome to the Committee's work.

14. As in the past, the Group planned to submit draft resolutions under a number of agenda items. Each resolution would be focused and substantive, bearing in mind its importance for economic growth and development, macroeconomic and financial policymaking, the situation of countries with special needs and sustainable development. In accordance with the ongoing revitalization of the General Assembly, the Group would focus on improving the quality of the Committee's discussions and enhancing the outcome and impact of the Committee's work. It looked forward to enjoying the support of its negotiating partners in that regard.

15. For the Committee to complete its work by 26 November 2008, a considerable amount of cooperation would be required. To that end, the Group would make every effort to be practical and pragmatic.

16. The current global economic and financial situation called for a thorough analysis by, and substantive policy direction from, the General Assembly. The stakes were high for both developing countries and the credibility of international cooperation. The Group hoped to enjoy the full support of its negotiating partners and the Bureau in that regard.

17. **The Chairperson** said that she took it that the Committee wished to approve the draft programme of work annexed to document A/C.2/63/L.1, as orally revised, on the understanding that it might have to be adjusted further as the session progressed.

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **The Chairperson** drew attention to document A/C.2/63/L.1/Add.1, the annex to which provided information on the status of documentation before the Committee as at 15 September 2008.

20. **Mr. Seth** (Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination) said that a rich array of side events was a distinguishing feature of the Committee's work. Such events enabled Committee members to listen to experts and therefore take better informed decisions. For the current session, the number of such events had been reduced by about a third, so as to achieve the right balance between benefiting from the expertise of those participating in such events and focusing on the programme of work.

21. The informal paper before the Committee provided details of the side events scheduled for the current session. In addition, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs planned to organize an event on the current turbulence in the financial markets, in particular its impact on the Millennium Development Goals. Details of the event would follow later.

22. **Ms. de Laurentis** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, as in previous years, the Committee would have at its disposal “QuickPlace”, a secure online shared workspace. Instructions on the use of the tool and a registration form had been circulated.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.