



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

22nd plenary meeting
Thursday, 31 October 2019, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 9 and 14 (continued)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/74/3)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/74/241)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

The President: In connection with agenda item 9, I would like to recall that, pursuant to resolution 58/316, of 1 July 2004, the Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided, at its 22nd plenary meeting, on 20 September, to consider agenda item 9 in its entirety in plenary, on the understanding that the administrative, programme and budgetary aspects should be dealt with by the Fifth Committee.

At the same meeting, the Assembly took note of the clarification that, in implementing resolution 58/316 to consider item 9 in its entirety in plenary, the relevant parts of chapter I of the report (A/74/3) that are under agenda items already allocated to the Main Committees will be considered by the Committee concerned for final action by the General Assembly.

In connection with agenda item 14, members will recall that, pursuant to resolution 57/270 B, of 23 June 2003, the Assembly decided to consider, under the

item, the chapters of the annual report of the Economic and Social Council relevant to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including through the participation of the President of the Council in its discussions.

I now give the floor to the President of the Economic and Social Council for the 2019 session, Her Excellency Ms. Inga Rhonda King, to introduce the report of the Council on its 2019 session.

Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), President of the Economic and Social Council: I have the honour of introducing to the General Assembly the 2019 report of the Economic and Social Council (A/74/3) on its 2019 session. The report offers an overview of the results of the Council's 2019 session, which supported the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I hope that we can draw upon that work in our deliberations in the General Assembly as we enter the fifth year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The vision and commitment to action that was evident in this Hall in September 2015 are still with us today. The ability of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to cross the traditional boundaries of international development cooperation has been inspiring. The SDGs are now included in the agendas and action programmes of the leaders of nations, cities and communities, the research community and business, from banking to retail and beyond. The high degree to which Member States have taken ownership

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

19-34431 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



of the Agenda, as witnessed by their broad engagement throughout the Council cycle, is encouraging.

Drawing upon the previous four Council cycles and sessions of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held under the aegis of the Council, at the recent SDG Summit under the auspices of the General Assembly, Member States launched a decade of action for accelerated action.

The report before the Assembly offers messages underpinned by the Council's theme for 2019, "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality". As shown throughout the report, the 2019 cycle highlighted that we are not on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030. However, the cycle also made clear that there is still time to make a course correction. This sense reverberated from the Council and the 2019 High-level Political Forum into the SDG Summit in September. For example, we saw, through many of the 49 voluntary national reviews, how Governments are working to strengthen the capabilities of their institutions in order to maximize the synergies required by this transformative agenda. The voluntary national reviews showed that effective institutions that live by the principles of the 2030 Agenda form the bedrock for SDG implementation.

At the High-level Political Forum, we also heard that we do not fully understand how to achieve progress on some of the SDGs under review, such as Goal 10, on inequality. We were reminded of the impact of growth and employment on all other SDGs. We discussed responses to the existential challenge of climate change and the importance of education, institutions and science, technology and innovation for transformation. We built on the proposals of the Forum on Financing for Development follow-up.

The Council's operational activities segment provided strategic direction for the repositioning of the United Nations development system to ensure that support for the implementation of the SDGs is impactful. We can now steer the development system reforms through their final phase. The critical planks of the review of the regional architecture of the United Nations and multi-country offices are moving forward. The Council's contribution has been useful in preparing for the next quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities in 2020.

Against the backdrop of record levels of forced displacement, increasingly complex protracted crises

and destructive natural disasters, and in view of the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the 2019 Climate Action Summit, the humanitarian affairs segment underscored the importance of humanitarian work and promoted action to save lives, reach those in need and reduce humanitarian risk vulnerability and need. The joint informal event of the operational activities and the humanitarian affairs segments, on the topic of the transition from relief to development, took stock of recent progress, challenges and best practices in terms of the collaboration between the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors in Africa.

In April, the Council convened a special meeting to mobilize international support for the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. It highlighted the importance of humanitarian action in meeting immediate humanitarian needs, providing early warning and rapid response services and ensuring longer-term recovery and reconstruction. At the Council's special meeting held in November 2018 on "Pathways to resilience in climate-affected small island developing States — a Forward-Looking Resilience-Building Agenda: promises, results and next steps", we saw how climate change can have devastating consequence for small island developing States, such as my own country.

Effective collaboration enabled the Council to deliver results. For example, the collaboration between the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council has grown. I trust that this collaboration will continue to grow. The implementation over the past Council cycle of resolution 72/305, on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, contributed to the Council's effectiveness in providing strategic direction and guidance at the global level to better respond to the 2030 Agenda and improve the effectiveness of the Council's outcomes.

With its redefined mandate, following resolution 72/305, the integration segment brought together key messages from subsidiary bodies of the Council and the United Nations system on the Council and High-level Political Forum's theme. At a joint meeting of the Council and the Second Committee in October 2018, under the theme "Circular Economy for the SDGs: From Concept to Practice", we discussed how the transition towards a circular economy — in which waste or pollution do not exist, products and materials are kept

in use and natural systems are regenerated — can accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

The Council's previous Bureau and I undertook many efforts to make the Council open and innovative. Throughout the 2019 cycle, seeds were planted to inform our upcoming reviews of the Council and the High-level Political Forum at the seventy-fourth session. In my view, the Council and High-level Political Forum serve as the destination of choice for solid analysis and policy recommendations to support accelerated action for the Sustainable Development Goals. They are an open, shared space where policymakers and stakeholders from every sector come together to address the integrated agenda, specifically how to accelerate its implementation and find transformative pathways to respond to our common global development challenges.

During the high-level week of the General Assembly, we heard that the world needs a United Nations that is stronger in promoting sustainable development and fair globalization. In that endeavour, the United Nation needs a stronger Economic and Social Council and High-level Political Forum, where both are strategic and forward-looking and produce effective results.

The Assembly will again review the functioning of the Economic and Social Council in tandem with the High-level Political Forum, under the auspices of

the Council, in the coming months. We have ample experience from which to draw. I trust that the Assembly will proceed with a shared sense of optimism as we reflect on how to further strengthen the Council and the High-level Political Forum.

The Economic and Social Council's ecosystem and the High-level Political Forum, under its auspices, has a bright future. I look forward to the Assembly's collective reflection and collaboration as we identify the specific transformations that can enable them to optimize its potential for the betterment of people and the planet.

The President: I have been informed that the speaker inscribed for the joint debate is not in the Assembly Hall. We have therefore concluded the debate on agenda items 9 and 14.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Economic and Social Council, contained in document A/74/3?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 9 and 14.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.