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President: Mr. Shahid (Maldives)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 12

Sport for development and peace: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal

Draft resolution (A/76/L.13)

The President: For millennia, humankind has recognized that sports can represent something beyond recreation. Sports is a unifying force. It brings together people of every religion, race, ethnicity and political background to celebrate humankind's athletic prowess and potential. It diverts energies from hostility and conflict towards friendly competition. It promotes an active lifestyle and supports our mental and physical well-being. These truths were known and celebrated in antiquity during the ancient Greek Olympics, and they remain relevant today. I personally vouch for the mental and physical benefits of sports. Since entering public office and public life, I have done a lot of running. Yes, some of that running has been for political office, but some of it has also been on the track and on sports fields.

Sports can be a vehicle for both global peace and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It can promote inclusive, gender-equal communities by opening the doors for everyone, regardless of background or gender, to pursue their athletic aspirations. It can instil the spirit of camaraderie, solidarity and teamwork, thereby reducing tensions and building bridges where conflict may otherwise take root. It can support quality education by promoting healthier bodies and minds,

thereby improving academic performance. Sports can relieve the psychological stress of the coronavirus disease pandemic, which has taken a big toll on our collective psyche and left us so weary.

We are all keen to rebuild a better world, and sports can help us do that. We must look towards the 2022 Winter Olympics with that sentiment in mind. As many countries prepare to gather in Beijing next year, let us acknowledge the key lesson that we have learned from the pandemic — all of humankind shares a common destiny. As we watch athletes representing every flag, every colour and every background compete in the Olympics, let us celebrate our common humanity. Let us acknowledge our obligations to each another and our planet. Let us reflect on the pointlessness of conflict and aspire for peace.

In that spirit, I heartily support Olympic Truce draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”, which the General Assembly is preparing to adopt. The draft resolution, proposed and co-sponsored by China and many other Member States, urges Members to observe the Olympic Truce, individually and collectively. I call on all Member States to support the efforts of the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee and use sports as a tool to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation. I hope that the games will nurture friendship and be held in the spirit of camaraderie that we need to rebuild a better world, a hopeful world, a peaceful world and a world aligned with the principles and the values of the Charter of the United Nations.

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I now give the floor to the representative of China to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.13.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I sincerely thank you, Sir, for your introductory remarks. I am very honoured, on behalf of China, to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”.

The time-honoured Olympic Truce carries with it humankind’s aspiration for peace and mutual support. The peaceful ideal of the Olympics is in line with the founding mission of the United Nations, which is to safeguard international peace and security. Since 1993, the General Assembly has adopted by consensus the Olympic Truce resolution 13 times in a row, calling on Member States to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation through sport and cease hostilities from seven days before until seven days after the Olympic Games. As the host country of the XXIV Olympic Winter Games, China has kept with tradition and is introducing the draft resolution on the Olympic Truce at the current session of the General Assembly.

Building on its previous iterations, the draft resolution adds the Beijing 2022 visions and ideals for the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games and sends a powerful message of solidarity and cooperation in overcoming the pandemic. The draft resolution recalls the important role of sports in promoting peace and sustainable development, notes that the vision of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, namely, the “Joyful rendezvous upon pure ice and snow uniting the passion of hundreds of millions for winter sports”, is to inspire youth with the Olympic spirit, encourage millions to embrace winter sports, promote social progress and create a harmonious, peaceful and better world. The draft resolution recognizes that Beijing 2022 aims to ensure the delivery of Olympic Games that are green, inclusive, open and clean.

In the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the draft resolution focuses on the Olympic Truce spirit and recognizes the role of sport as a tool in building global resilience to overcome the impacts of COVID-19 and the fact that the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 will be an opportunity to demonstrate the value of solidarity, resilience and international cooperation. It also expresses the expectation that the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 will be a meaningful opportunity to harness the power of sport to advance the world

by fostering an atmosphere of peace, development, resilience tolerance and understanding

Throughout the consultation process, we saw the active participation of all delegations and received many constructive suggestions from them. The draft resolution currently enjoys the sponsorship of 173 Members. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I thank all those Member States that have demonstrated their interest in, and support for, the draft resolution. We look forward to its adoption by consensus by the General Assembly. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the International Olympic Committee and its President, Mr. Thomas Bach, the International Olympic Truce Foundation and the International Olympic Truce Centre. I thank them for their strong support for the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Today marks China’s second time introducing the Olympic Truce draft resolution at the General Assembly since 2007, demonstrating our unflagging commitment to peace, to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to true multilateralism. We have been deeply engaged in and supported the United Nations in all its efforts, consistently doing our part for world peace and development.

China holds fast to the Olympic ideal and advocates the spirit of the Olympic Truce. We played an active part in the previous Summer and Winter Olympics and supported the previous Olympic Truce resolutions. Our success in hosting the Youth Olympic Games and other major international sporting events speaks to China’s strength in promoting world peace, common development and friendship through sports.

In order to achieve the Olympic Truce, we need political will and, more important, concrete actions guided by the theme of creating a harmonious world of better mutual understanding. The Truce segment in preparing for the Beijing Winter Olympics involves raising the awareness of the Olympic Truce concept, knowledge of the Olympics at the community level and publishing books, online videos and other publicity content. We are focusing in particular on young people. Olympic education is carried out in primary and secondary schools nationwide to sow the seeds of peace and friendship in the hearts of the younger generations.

During the Winter Olympics, a Truce mural entitled “Light of Peace” will be installed in the Beijing Winter Olympic Village as a symbol of support for the concept of peace and truce.

In July, the century-old Olympic motto was updated for the first time in history, with the word “together” added. That new motto, combining sportspersonship with the spirit of humanity, shows the steely determination of the countries of the world to join hands in tackling global challenges and, more important, the aspiration of all peoples to build a community of shared future for humankind together.

The Olympic Games serve as a platform for athletes to shine. It is also a global event to unite all minds and hearts, where people from all countries, races and religions can compete and assist one another in becoming faster, going higher and getting stronger together.

The Olympic Charter has long affirmed the principle of political neutrality in sports. We shall join all peoples around the world in rejecting all wrongful words and actions that run counter to the Olympic spirit and are detrimental to the development of the Olympic movement. We call on all countries to take the Beijing Winter Olympics as an opportunity to resolve differences through dialogue, replace confrontation with cooperation, enhance mutual understanding and maintain world peace and development.

In 64 days, the Olympic flame will be rekindled in the Beijing National Stadium, the iconic Bird’s Nest, making Beijing the world’s first city to host both the Summer and Winter Olympics. The Chinese Government attaches great importance to preparations for the Winter Olympics and Paralympics. Thanks to strong support from the International Olympic Committee and countries around the world, our preparations on all fronts have been making steady progress.

China has the confidence and competence to present the world with a simple, safe and splendid Olympic gathering. We are following a safety-first approach in hosting the Olympics. In its coronavirus disease response, the Chinese Government has been putting the well-being of the people front and centre without fail. We are making the lives and health of the Chinese public, as well as of each and every athlete and participant, our top priority. Every effort is being made to guarantee their safety.

Pandemic control is at the top of our agenda, supported by science-based policies and targeted measures. China and the International Olympic Committee have issued the first edition of a pandemic prevention manual and will take the necessary

measures, such as remote prevention and control, closed-loop management and vaccination, to ensure the safety of all parties. At same time, we will do our utmost to provide considerate and caring services to deliver a most pleasant event experience for all participants.

We are also following a green approach in hosting the Olympics. Committed to achieving carbon neutrality, the Beijing Winter Olympics will set many records. It will be the first Games to comprehensively advance the International Olympic Committee’s sustainability policy in social, economic and environmental spheres. It will be the first Games in Olympic history where all venues, without exception, will be powered by green energy and where carbon dioxide refrigeration technology will be used on a larger scale, resulting in carbon emissions close to zero. Moreover, 85 per cent of the vehicles used for the events will be powered by clean energy.

We are also following an inclusive approach to hosting the Olympics. With respect to ice events, the National Speed Skating Oval, the Ice Ribbon, is the only new venue. The rest are repurposed venues originally built for the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics. In other words, all venues can be used for both summer and winter sporting events. After the relocation of Beijing Shougang, the steel company’s former complex was renovated into a ski jump platform for the Winter Olympics. Post-Olympic plans are also in place for the venues so that they can benefit local people and the Olympic movement in the long term. The vision of the Beijing Winter Olympics is to encourage 300 million Chinese citizens to engage in ice and snow sports is gradually becoming a reality.

We are following an open approach in hosting the Olympics. During our preparations, we have maintained close communication with other countries and international sports organizations on venue construction and event organization, inter alia.

From October to December, China hosted 10 international trials and three international training weeks in Beijing, where we expect the participation of 2,000 overseas athletes and staff as a litmus test of our preparedness for the Beijing Winter Olympics.

We are also following a clean approach in hosting the Olympics. Since the start of the bidding process, the Chinese Government has maintained strict budgetary control over costs, cracking down on corruption and advocating integrity with enhanced oversight of

the entire process. In addition, we adopted a zero-tolerance approach to doping and acts in breach of sportspersonship to make the upcoming Olympics in Beijing as clean and pure as ice and snow.

“Together for a Shared Future”: that is the motto of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. It is also China’s action plan to practise the new Olympic motto. Together, let us look forward to the rekindling of the Olympic flame and the performance of our athletes at their best. Let us join hands and stand shoulder to shoulder to uphold the Olympic spirit, ignite the flame of hope for humankind and march towards a brighter and more peaceful future.

In February 2022, the Beijing Winter Olympics will welcome everyone.

Ms. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by paying tribute to Mr. Jacques Rogge, the eighth President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Honorary President until his passing away after the events of the thirty-second Olympic Games in Tokyo. As a high-level athlete and world sailing champion, he represented his country, Belgium, three times in sailing at the Olympic Games. His passion for sport and the values that it embodies and promotes led him to preside over the IOC from 2001 to 2013 and to initiate important reforms. While the Youth Olympic Games will remain his legacy, I would equally like to recall that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also entrusted the role of Special Envoy for Youth Refugees and Sport to him in 2014. Like all those who had the privilege of working with him, I will remember him as a man who was determined to promote the fundamental principles of Olympism, focused on others and driven by a strong team spirit.

Today we once again celebrate the Olympic ideal and call for the Olympic Truce to be observed. Let us also remember that the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the purpose of Olympism are aligned in their pursuit of the harmonious development of humankind and the promotion of a peaceful and better world.

As the pandemic continues to take its toll, the motto of the Tokyo 2020 Games, “United by emotion”, could not be more relevant. Holding those Games, even if delayed for a year, was important to the athletes and the public because it brought hope and achieved success despite the inevitable restrictions. Next February, the

Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games will open in Beijing under the motto “Together for a shared future”.

As draft resolution A/76/L.13, which we are about to adopt, states, those Games must show the value of unity, resilience and international cooperation in overcoming the pandemic. Those are the values that we must strive to uphold together in all our decisions in this iconic General Assembly Hall.

The global impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games is a showcase for the host country, but it must also be a symbol of hope and friendship among peoples beyond the competitors. We therefore wish success and shared joy in the Olympic spirit to the thousands of committed athletes, as well as to all those who work every day to ensure the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Olympic Charter.

Let us take this opportunity to reaffirm the values of Olympism, which are excellence, friendship and respect. Through that solidarity and team spirit, we must ensure a collective response to the challenges facing us in the service of the peoples we represent. In sport, as in multilateralism, we win together and we lose together. With that conviction, we endorse the message of the President of the International Olympic Committee that we are always stronger together.

In that regard, I would like to mention the Olympism 365 strategy, endorsed by the IOC Executive Board. The strategy particularly seeks to strengthen the role of sport in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Its impact in relation to 10 SDGs will be a major contribution of sport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Improving access to sport, including for disadvantaged communities, the sense of belonging to safe, inclusive and fair sport communities, the benefits of sport for physical and mental well-being and the partnerships built under the auspices of that strategy are very important. The IOC’s stewardship role is well established, and the allocation of 90 per cent of its revenues to the Olympic movement, representing more than \$3 million per day, is invaluable in many contexts.

I would also like to highlight the role of sport in the area of climate action. The recent meeting on sport at the session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Glasgow, entitled “Sports for Climate Action — On the Race to Net Zero”, is a good example. Several sports organizations have also joined the United

Nations Race to Zero campaign. On that occasion, His Serene Highness Prince Albert II, who is also Chair of the IOC Sustainability and Legacy Commission, said:

“It is not an exaggeration to say that the climate crisis conditions the future of our planet. ... This crisis is a call to action for everyone, also for all of us in the world of sport.”

As the world looks towards Beijing, let us continue our work to ensure that girls, women, people with disabilities, children and the elderly have unimpeded access to sport and physical activity. To be truly universal, that must be open to all, without discrimination of any kind and safely. Sport and physical activity have a role to play in the inclusive and sustainable recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic. Their importance has been demonstrated more than ever during this difficult time by their direct contribution to physical and mental health.

Sport is an essential enabler in developing peaceful and sustainable societies. It has a direct impact on the lives of people in all countries and in all areas of society, in particular education, health, empowerment, employability, inclusion, mutual understanding and peace. Through this draft resolution, which my delegation co-sponsored, the General Assembly therefore once again reaffirms its commitment to the power of sport in building a peaceful and better world. Let us make the Olympic motto “Faster, Higher, Stronger — Together” our own.

Mr. Latheef (Maldives): The Maldives believes in the importance of sport as an enabler of sustainable development and a promoter of peace, tolerance and respect. In that regard, we are pleased to join in the adoption of today’s draft resolution A/76/L.13. We also congratulate Japan on a successful and thrilling Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The Games were a rare moment of light in the global darkness wrought by the coronavirus disease pandemic, and they provided an inspiring example of the resilience and determination of the human spirit in overcoming adversity.

The Olympics continue to symbolize the benefits of international cooperation, peace and understanding. However, the circumstances of this year’s Games were also emblematic of the immense value of sport as a unifying force. It was the Games that brought people across the world together at a moment when we spent much of our time apart. Sport is a forum in which we rise above the fray, put differences aside and engage

with each other in a spirit of friendship and healthy competition. By its nature, sport demands cooperation, mutual understanding, collegiality and tolerance. Those are also lessons that we can bring to our multilateral engagements in order to advance our progress on pressing global issues.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development rightly links sport to sustainable development. We particularly see that in relation to improving the lives of the vulnerable and the disadvantaged. In 2019, with assistance from the World Bank, the Maldives ran a pilot workshop that used female-led soccer training sessions to empower and inspire self-confidence in girls. The aim was to use sport to help girls break societal barriers, pursue education and enter areas of employment that are male-dominated. The workshop yielded incredible results. After the sessions, the girls were less tolerant towards gender stereotypes and had changed their opinions about the suitability of girls undertaking jobs traditionally held by men. The Maldives also established Paralympic and Special Olympic Committees in 2019 to promote the inclusion of all in sport and remove barriers. In 2020, the Maldives participated in the Paralympic Games for the first time.

The Government of Maldives has prioritized sport to promote education, inclusivity and health. The Maldives continues to make significant investments in sports infrastructure to enhance our communities’ enjoyment of sport. We are currently on-track to open our first Olympic-size swimming pool by 2023. It is crucial that sport infrastructure and policies be inclusive and promote opportunities for all, including all vulnerable groups. Our Government intends to modify at least 80 per cent of sports facilities by 2023 to provide access to people with disabilities, as well as to provide equal opportunities for women and girls to participate more fully in national sports programmes.

The Maldives has also made it a policy to designate a sports councillor in every island. The main role of sports councillors is to help create interest in sports and motivation within the community to initiate and enhance participation in programmes for healthy lifestyles. In addition, the Maldives is working towards achieving the target of women making up at least 33 per cent of the executive boards of all national associations by 2023. And I am pleased to note that we have already achieved the target of equal allowances for men and women on all national sports teams.

Investment in sports is an investment in our society. Encouraging greater participation by youth in athletic activities promotes the development of leadership and cooperation skills, ensuring that they become positive role models in their communities and contributing to economic and social progress. In that way, sport programmes implemented at national and local levels remain key to facilitating sustainable development and peaceful coexistence.

Like in many other areas of our lives and economies, the coronavirus disease has had a disruptive impact on sport. The closure of stadiums and facilities and the cancellation of events have had a significant effect on athletes, businesses and the community at large. It has also had a profound effect on our nation, as we deeply regret the need to withdraw from hosting the 2023 Indian Ocean Island Games, owing to the difficult challenges caused by the pandemic.

Despite those setbacks, sport must remain a key instrument in improving our resilience and cooperation as we build back better from the pandemic. Sport is a social activity like no other in the way in which it unites people from differing backgrounds for a common cause. It also promotes determination, dedication and teamwork — all necessary attributes to confront the broader challenges that we face. By continuing to recognize and promote the important social role played by sports in our lives, we will continue to profit from its ability to engender progress towards all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to participate in this important meeting. We are pleased that the State of Qatar has joined the States sponsoring draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled, “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”. In that context, we are proud of China’s hosting the Winter Olympics next year.

My country, the State of Qatar, attaches great importance to sports because we firmly believe that all kinds of sports can help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the desired goals in the areas of physical and mental health, education, social integration and promoting the values of peace and understanding among all peoples.

Over the past decade, as part of Qatar’s National Vision 2030, my country has invested in sports by building and developing sporting facilities and infrastructure according to international standards.

We have therefore been qualified to host international major sports events. We are pleased today to announce that the countdown for the State of Qatar’s hosting of the 2022 World Cup of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), to be held for the first time in the Middle East and Arab region, started on 21 November. Last week, we were proudly honoured to celebrate the opening of Al Bayt Stadium, which is the most recent of eight stadiums to host the competition in less than one year.

In the context of today’s debate on agenda item 12, it is my honour to inform the members of the General Assembly that, under this item, the State of Qatar will present at the current session a draft resolution on the FIFA World Cup competition to be hosted by the State of Qatar in 2022. We have always wanted the draft resolution to be in line with the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, peace, sustainable development and human rights, as well as the world recognition of the role and contribution of sports, particularly football, in promoting development and peace.

The draft resolution will also contain a paragraph welcoming the Healthy 2022 World Cup initiative, creating a legacy for sports and health. It is a multi-year joint project among the State of Qatar, the World Health Organization and FIFA to make the 2022 World Cup a beacon for the promotion of physical and mental health and an example in organizing healthy and safe major sporting events in the future knowing that this football world cup competition will be the first to take place during the coronavirus disease pandemic.

We look forward to the initiation of informal consultations on the draft resolution during the second half of January 2022, to be adopted by the General Assembly on 6 April 2022, which coincides with the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace. We look forward to the constructive participation of Member States leading to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

In conclusion, we would like to stress that the State of Qatar is prepared to host sports teams and supporters from all over the world from 21 November to 18 December 2022 to celebrate the football competition in an exceptional and unique atmosphere. We want the FIFA World Cup 2022 to be a leading example that creates a permanent legacy, contributing to a better future for my country, the State of Qatar, our region and the entire world.

Mr. Tan (Singapore): I would like to begin by commending all the athletes who participated in the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games earlier this year. We thank them for their determination, competitive spirit and inspiring performances, which uplifted us all.

My delegation congratulates Japan on the successful hosting of the Games in spite of the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic. We look forward to the 2022 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing. We wish China a successful Games.

Sport inspires us to challenge ourselves and to pursue excellence through hard work and self-discipline, and gives us the determination to go faster, higher and stronger. Active participation in exercise and sport also helps develop agile minds and healthy bodies. It nurtures capable individuals and builds vibrant communities. The values inculcated through sport can be transferred to an individual's personal and professional life. That the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the important role of sport only strengthens the conviction that sport must be an important part of all our lives.

The ongoing coronavirus disease pandemic has upended all our lives. Things that we took for granted, such as the ability to participate in team sports and attend live sporting events, have become complex affairs. It is in these trying times that the value of sport becomes more apparent as something that we can rally around. The Olympics, as a global mass sporting event, provides a platform for countries and athletes to come together in a spirit of friendship and friendly competition that resonates beyond sport. It brings people of different origins, creeds, cultures and nationalities together, enhancing mutual understanding through a spirit of fair play, and promotes tolerance, social inclusion, peace and cooperation.

Sport can also contribute to the deepening of ties and cooperation among countries. Singapore has been active in promoting the shared values of fair play and integrity, as well as regional cooperation in sport. In October, Singapore chaired the sixth Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ministerial Meeting on Sports, which adopted the ASEAN Workplan on Sports for 2021 to 2025. The Workplan will chart the regional and bilateral sports programmes to be undertaken by the States members of ASEAN in the next five years. In addition, Singapore was actively involved in the conceptualization and drafting of a

memorandum of understanding between ASEAN and the World Anti-Doping Agency to combat doping in sport and further strengthen anti-doping capabilities in our region.

Singapore recognizes the importance of sport. As we transition to learning to live with the coronavirus disease, we must continue to find ways to allow people to participate in sport and large-scale spectator sporting events in a safe manner. To allow those to resume, Singapore has piloted hybrid and in-person events. That will be an important step towards finding a balance between keeping people safe and reinvigorating the sports scene and economy.

Equally important for the success of sport is the environment in which people participate. It must be a respectful and equitable space, free from all forms of harassment and abuse. In 2021, Sports Singapore launched the Safe Sport Programme to address abuse and harassment in sport, based on the fundamental belief that no person should feel unsafe as they train, compete or play any role in sport. At the heart of the Programme is the Safe Sport Unified Code, which sets clear definitions of sexual, psychological and physical abuse. The Safe Sport Programme also contributes to the ongoing conversations on women's development in Singapore by facilitating an enabling sporting environment that protects women and girls.

Singapore is committed to providing a safe and inclusive space for everyone to participate in sport. Through its tangible and intangible benefits, sport is a force for positive change. Such benefits transcend national boundaries and help to promote ties among people from all over the world. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has recognized the role of sport in the development of peace, the promotion of tolerance and respect and the empowerment of women and young people, as well as its contributions to health, education and our goals of social inclusion. Let us continue to uphold the spirit of sport and aim to build a sustainable, inclusive and prosperous future for all.

Mr. Poveda Brito (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): For the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the development and support of policies to promote and enable widespread participation in sport on a national scale is an essential component of its development plans and represents a major pillar in the ongoing pursuit of peace, dialogue, solidarity and

social inclusion, as well as being a key element in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Given the uncertainty and the devastating consequences of the pandemic on all aspects of life, sport represents a beacon of hope, since it encourages people of all ages to strengthen their spirits through discipline, recreation and mental and physical development in an ideal environment of harmony and progress. It is therefore an urgent responsibility of States to encourage sporting practices in their societies, including high-performance sports, which have proved to promote collective health, sustainable development, conflict prevention and a culture of peace.

Even amid the complex context of the current pandemic and the historical inequalities between countries of the North and the South, Venezuela continues to move forward in promoting its sports policies, broadening their scope, encouraging various activities and making them accessible as a way to bring both amateur and professional athletes together. Together with the determined effort and passion of sportspersons and athletes, that has contributed to the country's sustained growth over the past five years.

An outstanding example of that can be found in the Venezuelan delegation at the Olympic Games in Tokyo last summer, comprising 43 athletes and led by the two-time karate world champion Antonio Díaz and the Pan-American judo medallist Karen León, who competed in 14 disciplines and achieved the most prominent participation in our country's history at the Olympic Games.

The entire Venezuelan people joyfully celebrated the silver medals won by Keydomar Vallenilla and Julio Mayora in weightlifting, the silver medal of Daniel Dhers in BMX freestyle and the gold medal of our top athlete and national sports heroine Yulimar Rojas Rodríguez, who also broke the Olympic and world records in the triple jump. She also won six Olympic diplomas in karate, judo, weightlifting and pole vaulting in historic days for Venezuelan sport.

All our Olympic athletes are a source of pride and inspiration for children, young people and adults. We thank and pay tribute to them for the joy and hope that they brought to Venezuela, and we aspire to replicating their example in the years to come.

Given the importance of sport as a promoter of development and peace, the Bolivarian Republic of

Venezuela has had the honour to co-sponsor draft resolution A/76/L.13, "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", as part of its ongoing international commitment to developing sport, exchanges and cooperation with sport organizations and federations, as well as the Olympic ideal as the supreme expression of coexistence and peace amid differences.

Venezuela recognizes and congratulates the historic work done by the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee and calls on them to continue their role in developing sport at the highest level, especially in developing countries.

We also support the continuation of, and respect for, the Olympic Truce, or *ekecheiria*, as a sacred space for guaranteeing coexistence and ensuring the smooth holding of the Games and its successful results for the promotion and maintenance of peaceful coexistence.

For its part, Venezuela would also like to express its most heartfelt wishes for the success of the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and the XIII Paralympic Winter Games, to be held in Beijing in February and March 2022. We are confident of the great organizational, technological and sporting capabilities that have always characterized that sister nation. It can count on our country's support for those two Games.

Similarly, Venezuela expresses its appreciation to the organizers of the Tokyo Olympic Games, held in a difficult context due to the pandemic. We also wish the greatest success to the Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in Paris in 2024 and to the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Milan and Cortina in 2026.

In conclusion, Venezuela reaffirms its strongest commitment to continuing to promote sport in all its forms as an agent for development and peace, convinced that the complex challenges facing our troubled world today, including the crisis of values, the need for social inclusion and justice and the fight against discrimination and poverty, find in sport policies, physical education and the spirit of fair play and healthy competition one of the most noble expressions of human greatness, which the United Nations must continue to tirelessly promote as part of its purposes and principles and the spirit enshrined in its founding Charter.

Mr. Ke (Cambodia): I would like to begin by extending my delegation's congratulations to the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China

for initiating and facilitating draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”. My delegation is pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution, and we welcome its upcoming adoption.

Sport means to everyone sport for life or life for sport and is embedded in their daily activities. Sport provides an opportunity to meet new people, as well as having fun and making friends. Sport helps to build a person through its unique way to keep a person active. Sport contributes to improving physical, mental and emotional health.

Sport continues to contribute to a better world and sustainable development. Its alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development could be further developed to achieve recovery from the coronavirus disease and beyond. In that regard, the work of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is a critical component of the strengthening and improvement of sport. We believe that coordination among the host country, the IOC and Member States, inter alia, are vital to promoting the Olympic spirit. While the host country maintains a legacy in realizing its mission in delivering a fantastic, extraordinary and excellent outcome, Cambodia wishes the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing great success ahead.

Last but not least, Cambodia will proudly host the 32nd Southeast Asian Games in 2023, with a total of 41 sports to be considered, comprising the two mandatory sports of athletics and aquatics, 29 Olympic or Asian games and another 10 more regional sports. We are confident that that biennial Southeast Asian Games will further promote friendly relations among the participating countries of the region. Cambodia will continue to further promote sport to advance its contributions to global peace and development.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this annual debate on agenda item 12, entitled “Sport development and peace”. I would also like to thank the People’s Republic of China for introducing draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”. The Kingdom of Morocco is a sponsor of this very important draft resolution, and we already welcome its adoption at the end of this debate, hopefully by consensus. Allow me to also thank the Permanent Representatives of Monaco and

Qatar, co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace. We join other speakers in commending the role of sport not only in advancing development, peace and social progress, but also in providing vital support to physical and, above all, mental health.

We welcome the recognition of sport as an important factor for sustainable development, which contributes in particular to the empowerment of women, young people and people with disabilities. Sport is also a vehicle for peace, tolerance and mutual respect.

Today sport as a vehicle for humanistic values, such as tolerance, coexistence, accepting each another and understanding among peoples, is an indispensable element and an ongoing school for life that we must continue to cultivate to promote peace and solidarity at the international level. It is also a fundamental factor in protecting young people from certain ills that plague various societies, including violence, extremism and drug use.

During this difficult period of the coronavirus disease, many people turned to sport to overcome the difficulties caused by the uncertainty of the pandemic, which had led to the closure of many sports and recreational facilities. However, the celebration of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace in April 2020 amid the lockdown allowed all stakeholders to innovate and act to promote sport and its contribution to people’s development and well-being. As a result, we have witnessed a change in the definition of sport that goes beyond the competitions and sporting events to include creating social bonds.

The social and universal dimensions of sport have been repeatedly emphasized by His Majesty the King Mohammed VI, who has always sought to provide the sports sector with the appropriate conditions to cope with the various challenges and excel in major events. Moreover, sport is not only about training champions, but it also requires setting up the necessary infrastructure and passing the relevant laws. In line with the guidelines of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, sport is therefore not only a tool for entertainment, well-being, enjoyment and participation in regional, continental and international competitions, but it also depends on construction sites and major structural development projects. It is a contributor to the socioeconomic development of Morocco.

The multidimensional role of sport is at the heart of the King's letter addressed to the participants at the National Conference on Sport, held in Bouznika on 24 October 2008, which emphasizes the need to broaden access to sport for men and women from all sectors of society, describing sport as a strong lever for human development, inclusion, social cohesion and the fight against poverty, exclusion and marginalization.

The 2011 Constitution has given new impetus to the momentum set in motion by the King's guidelines by endorsing sport as a right to which access must be ensured for citizens by the authorities, thereby providing a new benchmark for the national strategy to promote of practice of sport.

Given the importance that Morocco attaches to sport, an annual open race, entitled "10 km for peace", has been held every 6 April since 2007 in celebration of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

At the global and continental levels, Morocco has successfully organized a large number of sports activities. I would like to point out that Morocco organized the largest sporting event in Africa, namely, the 12th African Games in 2019, by establishing the most modern sports facilities and infrastructure, in line with international standards, to meet the expectations of the athletes of our continent.

Moreover, the drive to educate and protect young people so that they can contribute to building a better and peaceful world is a noble objective to which the Kingdom of Morocco has always been committed by co-sponsoring the various draft resolutions on the topic.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government and the people of China. After hosting the Summer Olympic Games in 2008, they are now preparing to hold the Winter Olympic Games in 2022, which will make Beijing the first city to have hosted both the Summer and the Winter Olympic Games. My delegation is convinced that the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to be held in China, a great country with a civilization that has existed for millenniums, will be a success and will provide an opportunity to reiterate our commitment to the Olympic values and spirit and will unquestionably contribute to their revival.

I would also like to congratulate Japan for its great success in hosting the Olympic Games last summer. I also take the opportunity to wish every success to the

State of Qatar, the upcoming host of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup in 2022, which will be the first of its kind in the Middle East and in the Arab world. The great success that the 2021 FIFA Arab Cup is currently seeing, with the warm welcome of the host country, Qatar, its magnificent stadiums and high-level of infrastructure, are a prelude to a very high-level 2022 World Cup that will be historic.

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): Dating back to the eighth century B.C.E., the ancient Olympic Games were a force for peace, stability and solidarity among Greek city-States. The ideal of the Olympic Truce was also of great importance for the revival of the Olympic Games in the modern era, in Athens, in 1896, as an invaluable tool to advance international cooperation and promote world peace.

Mr. Turay (Sierra Leone), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Olympic Truce is an integral part of the values and principles of Olympism, which celebrates noble competition and the peaceful meeting through sport of all peoples and cultures. Aiming to inspire humankind and create a much-needed window of opportunity for dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflict, the Olympic Truce is a vital part of the spiritual dimension of the Games. In 1992, the International Olympic Committee renewed this tradition by reintroducing the Olympic Truce to protect the interest of athletes and sport and to pursue peaceful and democratic solutions to resolve global conflicts.

The General Assembly has repeatedly expressed its support for the International Olympic Committee by unanimously adopting, every two years, one year before the opening of the Olympic Games, a resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal". Through the resolution, the United Nations invites its Member States to observe the Olympic Truce and to seek the settling of all international conflicts through peaceful and diplomatic means, recognizing the importance of the International Olympic Committee initiatives for human well-being and international understanding.

Although the idea of the Olympic Truce was born in the eighth century B.C.E., nowadays it is becoming more and more relevant. The Olympic Truce may sow the seed and instil the conviction that only peaceful nations can prosper and thrive. We strongly hope that the young

athletes who will make their honest and ethical efforts during the Games will be heralds of the Truce notion worldwide and spread the message of tolerance, good will and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In 2022, China will host the Winter Olympic Games, and Beijing will become the first dual Olympic City, the first city in the world to host both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games. We take this opportunity to congratulate and wish China every success. Let us all find inspiration in Beijing's Winter Olympic Games and reflect on how sports can be a tool to reduce tensions and build bridges and provide fertile ground for dialogue against civilizations. It is our task to observe the Olympic Truce, thereby making international cooperation and peace an attainable vision.

Mrs. Mozgovaya (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus welcomes the upcoming adoption of draft resolution A/76/L.13, which was introduced by the delegation of China and negotiated with Member States through an inclusive and transparent process.

The national Olympic team of Belarus is looking forward to the start of the Winter Olympic Games in Beijing and to competing for Olympic medals in fair competition. We are convinced that, thanks to the exceptional hard work, dedication and perseverance of the Chinese people, the Beijing Olympics will be held at the highest level and China will reaffirm its status as a great sports Power.

We consider the calls to boycott the Olympic Games unacceptable. Attempts by certain politicians to stage a show and spread demagoguery in the context of an upcoming major sporting event are totally unacceptable. All of this fundamentally contradicts the principles of Olympism and erodes the unity and solidarity of peoples within the Olympic movement.

Sport is an ambassador for peace, friendship and the unity of nations. In today's context of international instability and division, sport is one of the only resources that promotes the ideals of peace, friendship and mutual understanding. Politics must stay out of sports — that message is at the heart of the Olympic Charter. But, alas, that tenet is increasingly being violated by contemporary politicians.

Sport is referred to as the people's diplomacy. It is even said that athletes and sports teams sometimes do more for their countries with their victories than some politicians and diplomats. But the influence of politics

on sport is unacceptable, and the politicization of sport is not in line with the philosophy of sporting competitions.

Unfortunately, this year, Belarus has witnessed how the political intrigues of various political figures have trampled upon sports ideals. Our country, which has repeatedly and successfully hosted global and regional sports competitions, was deprived the right to host the Ice Hockey World Championships this year for political reasons. For the same reasons, the MAZ-SPORTauto team was unexpectedly barred from participating in the Dakar Rally 2022, 33 days before its start; and that is a competition where the Belarusian racing team has often been a prize winner. These dangerous precedents are prime examples of how easily sporting events that are meant to unite countries and peoples become an instrument of discord, pressure and political intrigue in the hands of unscrupulous politicians.

Sport as a form of public diplomacy opens up broad avenues for rapprochement among peoples and countries. And our country is committed to the development of international sports cooperation and the strengthening of friendly relations among peoples on the basis of the humanistic ideals and principles of Olympism.

Mrs. Tra Phuong Nguyen (Viet Nam): At the outset, I would like to thank China for its successful efforts in coordinating draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal". As one of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution, the Vietnamese delegation takes this opportunity to wish China every success in hosting the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and the XIII Paralympic Winter Games, which will take place in February and March 2022 in Beijing. In that connection, we congratulate Japan for organizing the Tokyo Olympics 2020 in an amazing manner, despite the tremendous challenges presented by the pandemic.

Viet Nam attaches special importance to sport, in the belief that it can create positive social change that enhances peace and development. Sport is also an important factor in social development and human progress. The Olympics are among the most remarkable global events through which peace and development can be promoted. The Olympic spirit is the common aspiration of people around the world, as it fosters friendship, peace and exchanges among countries, the integration of civilizations and harmonious coexistence.

The Olympics unites people from all around the world, regardless of culture, religions or ethnicity.

In our region, Viet Nam is proud to be hosting the thirty-first Southeast Asian Games in 2022, one year before Cambodia. We are confident that the Southeast Asian Games will promote solidarity and friendship among the peoples in the South-East Asian region.

Before I conclude, I would like to emphasize that the promotion of sport for development and peace needs support from all stakeholders, be they Governments, organizations or individuals worldwide.

Once again, we congratulate China and reaffirm our steady support for the success of the coming Olympics. We wish our athletes around the world all the best. We know that they will make us all proud.

Mr. Fernández De Soto Valderrama (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to greet the President of the International Olympic Committee, Mr. Thomas Bach, and my countryman and friend Mr. Luis Alberto Moreno, who are joining us today at this meeting. I thank them for their continued efforts in promoting the Olympic ideal.

Barely a week ago, the Secretary-General visited Colombia on the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which brought hope to the Colombian people. Draft resolution A/76/L.13, on the Olympic Truce, reflects the hope that many peoples currently in situations of conflict harbour to live in peace, even if it is during the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The idea of exchanging war fighting for sporting competitions was the idea that, 28 centuries ago in ancient Greece, led to the fundamental concept of Olympism, which we promote today as the Olympic Truce. As a long-standing co-sponsor of this draft resolution, Colombia is a firm believer in the power of sport to promote development and peace. The Government of Colombia sees sport an ideal tool to contribute to the healthy coexistence and social reintegration of Colombians and to strengthen the skills of children, adolescents and young people in vulnerable situations.

Sport as a driver of peace in Colombia has benefited approximately 4 million people in almost all of the 170 municipalities prioritized in the implementation of the agreement that are part of the

development programmes with a territorial focus. In 2021 alone, close to \$55 million has been invested in 43 of those municipalities, improving and adapting sports infrastructure. Indeed, sports infrastructure is one of the ways in which we can best understand the close link between sports and peace and development. In that regard, I would like to acknowledge the valuable efforts of the International Olympic Committee to take steps to enable the Olympic and Paralympic Games to reap lasting benefits for host communities.

Finally, Colombia reaffirms its conviction in sport as a means to advance towards peace and development and wishes China every success in organizing the upcoming Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

For all those reasons, it was a great honour for my country to become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution that we will adopt today.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): My delegation is pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled “Sport for development and peace: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”. We congratulate China for the overwhelming support for the draft resolution.

As mentioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, sport is an enabler in achieving development and peace. It is a linchpin in reaching important Sustainable Development Goals and targets, such as on health, education, gender, equality and social inclusion. Sports have a unique capacity to bring people together from different societies, cultures and backgrounds. Sports gatherings such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games are important for recognizing the hard work and achievements of athletes. Pakistan attaches great importance to sports and recognizes their valuable contribution in promoting education, health, peace, cooperation, solidarity and sustainable development.

My country is committed to promoting sports among youth and has launched youth-centred initiatives such as the Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive to make its youth physically and mentally healthy. The programme also attaches great importance to the participation of women and girls in sports. Therefore, we strongly believe that we should utilize a maximum potential of sport in making a positive contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of peace.

We also look forward to the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and the XII Paralympic Winter Games, which are scheduled to take place in 2022. We wish the host country, China, all the best for a successful sports event, like the 2008 Summer Olympics, which were also hosted by China.

Ms. Alhosani (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to take part in this important debate on sport for development and peace, which comes after a period of isolation for humankind due to the spread of the coronavirus disease pandemic. The pandemic has had adverse effects on physical and psychological well-being. Sport plays a pivotal role in promoting the values of respect and tolerance at a time when we need to intensify activities for cultural exchange and promote positive values to advance development and peace.

Based on its conviction that sport is important as a powerful and effective tool to promote understanding and solidarity among societies and achieve the goals of sustainable development and peace, the leadership of the United Arab Emirates — since its establishment in 1971 — has devoted its attention to sport of all kinds. We have institutionalized and developed sport as part of an integrated sport strategy until 2032. The strategy focuses on encouraging community-based and competitive sports among diverse societal, religious and ethnic groups, as the United Arab Emirates hosts nationals from more than 200 countries living in peace. Last month, we organized the Dubai Run 2021, the largest competitive running event in the world, with the participation of more than 140,000 individuals — citizens, residents and visitors alike.

My country's efforts in that regard are not only domestic. We have also been very active in organizing regional and international sports competitions. For example, in November we hosted the Abu Dhabi World Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship, with the participation of more than 2,000 athletes from 65 countries, making it the largest Jiu Jitsu event since the start of the pandemic.

The United Arab Emirates believes that sport can help empower and integrate many groups in society, including people with disabilities or, as we call them in the United Arab Emirates, "people of great courage". My country therefore attaches special importance to sporting events for persons with disabilities. In 2018, we hosted the largest sports and humanitarian event

of its kind, with the participation of more than 7,000 athletes with disabilities from over 190 countries, and we will continue our efforts in that direction.

Recognizing the important role of women in achieving development goals and promoting peace and security, the United Arab Emirates has promoted the active participation of women and girls in sports. In that regard, we have made major progress at the local, regional and international levels. We have organized many sporting tournaments for women. For example, the Fatima bint Mubarak International Sports Award in 2022 will honour a number of women from around the world for their achievements in the field of sports. My country urges a comprehensive approach to empower women to enhance sports. All societies would benefit from such an endeavour.

My country is currently hosting the Expo 2020, a platform for organizing many sporting events. Athletes from more than 190 countries will promote their country booths, resulting in increased investment in sports, which in turn will enhance solidarity among cultures and help achieve development sustainable.

In conclusion, we in the United Arab Emirates believe that sport is one of the most effective and least expensive tools for promoting the values of the United Nations, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and spreading a culture of peace and tolerance. We call for international consensus and a clear vision among Member States with regard to enhancing the role of sports in the global recovery from the pandemic in order to ensure the rebuilding of a better and safer world for future generations.

Mr. Sharma (India): We welcome the General Assembly's emphasis on sport as an agent of peace and development. Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community has aptly recognized sport as an important enabler of sustainable development. We firmly believe that sport is an inalienable part of the educational process and a factor for promoting peace, friendship, cooperation and understanding among peoples. In fact, it is hard to imagine a more powerful medium than sport to inspire and bring people together for a common purpose.

Swami Vivekananda, the great philosopher from India, when approached by a young man to explain the meaning of the Bhagavad Gita, is reported to have looked at his physique and advised him to first go play football. "Develop your body and mind," Swamiji told

this young man “and then you will be better fit to study and understand the Gita.” Swamiji was clear that a healthy body and mind are fundamental in our quest for peace. Sport indeed plays a critical role to that end.

Ever since the dawn of human civilization, the intrinsic link between sport and the human pursuit of excellence has been recognized. India has a long tradition of sport and physical education. Ancient Indian scriptures and literature describe the important place of sport in education. A mastery of sport was considered as important as the knowledge of scriptures. In Indian tradition, exercise, which is at the heart of sport, is considered an inseparable part of good health. There is an old proverb in Sanskrit that says that exercise results in good health, long life, strength and happiness. Good health is the greatest blessing. Health is the means to everything.

The education system in modern India continues that heritage and instils respect for sport and physical education. Sport development is a national priority in India. It promotes an active lifestyle, child and youth development, social inclusiveness, employment opportunities, peace and development and, above all, a sense of belonging and national pride.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports provides the policy framework and institutional support for sport-related activities. The Sports Authority of India was established by the Government in 1984 to achieve the twin objectives of broad-basing of sport and nurturing talent in children of different age groups by providing them with the necessary infrastructure, equipment, coaching and other facilities.

The Khelo India National Programme for Development of Sports scheme, launched in 2017, is being implemented across the country in order to promote sporting culture and encourage sport all over the country. The scheme has one major vertical — sport for peace and development. Under that vertical, sporting activities and competitions are organized at village, block and district level in various states. Particular emphasis has been placed on women’s development through sport by including it as a special vertical in the Khelo India scheme. Various tournaments have been organized to promote the participation of girls and women in sport.

The Government has also undertaken special activities to promote traditional sports such as Mallakhamb, Thang-Ta, Kho-Kho and Kabaddi, among

others. The Government of India launched the FIT India Movement in August 2019 in order to encourage people to remain healthy and fit by including physical activities and sport in their daily lives. Under that movement, the Government organizes various programmes throughout the country with an aim of bringing about behavioural changes and move towards a more physically active lifestyle. Associating sporting personalities with the United Nations, with the objective of creating public awareness about education, health and development issues and promoting tolerance, understanding and peace within and between communities and cultures, is praiseworthy. Several Indian sporting personalities have associated themselves with United Nations entities in order to promote peace and protect the environment.

India firmly believes that sporting activity is integral to the overall development of the human personality. We support efforts by the United Nations system to generate awareness among youth through such initiatives. It must be our collective endeavour to promote sport and a culture of sport in our countries. That can only contribute to promoting development, peace, friendship, cooperation and understanding among peoples.

Mr. Hadjichrysanthou (Cyprus): Cyprus maintains strong links with the Olympic ideal, formed through my country’s participation in the Olympic Games since their inception in antiquity. I would like to thank China for bringing forward the draft resolution (A/76/L.13) on the Olympic ideal this year. We wish China every success in hosting the 2022 Winter Olympic Games. Cyprus once again co-sponsored this year’s annual draft resolution, thereby reaffirming our commitment to the principles and ideals it stands for.

While lauding the core values and principles of Olympism — excellence, fair game, friendship, respect and solidarity — on a global scale, we need to single out the one hallowed principle most relevant to us here at the United Nations: the sacred tradition of the Olympic Truce. The cessation of hostilities before, during and after the Games in order to ensure the safe passage of athletes was underpinned by the superiority of pursuits that bring people together. Attaining peace through the creation of a peaceful environment in the service of collective values and goals that transcend individuals and nations is a paradigm that the United Nations can learn from.

Beyond the peace and security pillar, sport can teach us a lot about equality at a time when inequalities are growing both within and among nations. The Olympic arena is the great equalizer, where success is based only on hard work and personal sacrifice, not race, gender, wealth or disability. We must extrapolate that to create a similar level playing field in our societies as well and among our nations. We can start by granting our young people full and equal access to sport. Sport is unique in its capacity to bring people together. Due to its universal appeal, its convening power and its sheer force to unite people and overcome barriers, sport is a tool whose social potential is largely untapped. Mainstreaming sportsmanship into culture and education, well beyond allegiance to specific teams, can help promote Olympism as a philosophy and a way of life, shaping the ethos of each of our nations.

Fully cognizant of that, Cyprus has long been organizing an Olympic education programme aimed at encouraging children's participation in sport in order to foster a positive attitude towards physical activity, while educating them about the Olympic ideal and derivative values. Furthermore, Cyprus has developed the Pierre De Coubertin programme to advance Olympic values, focusing on the promotion of peace through sport.

Cyprus also implemented a code of conduct for its national sport federations that aims to promote good governance in sport, the fundamental principles and values of Olympism, transparency, social responsibility, gender equality and the development of a healthy and safe environment in sport so as to contribute to the social and professional future of athletes and to address social inequalities. In addition, our long-running national Sports For All programme provides access for all to every sport, irrespective of age, gender, income or disability. Cyprus remains committed to developing even more policies and programmes in our efforts to promote peace and conflict resolution through sport, education, culture, sustainable development and wider public engagement.

In conclusion, I wish to call our attention to what the ancient Greeks themselves saw in the Olympic Games — special potential for the promotion of peace among their often-warring city-States, one that can advance international understanding and the cause of world peace.

Mr. Senbeta (Ethiopia): Let me start by expressing our appreciation to the People's Republic of China

for its initiative and effective coordination, and to all delegations for the work leading up to impending adoption of draft resolution A/76/L.13.

The Olympics are an embodiment of the power of sports to bring people together in a joyous atmosphere in order to reach the goal we all strive towards — peace. Through the principles of Olympism, we celebrate human dignity, social responsibility, joy in effort, the harmonious development of humankind and the creation of a peaceful society. References to the Olympic Truce are additional reminders that the Olympic Games mean much more than sports competitions.

With its long and decorated history of participation in the Olympics Games, Ethiopia stands as a witness to the values of Olympism. From Melbourne in 1956 to Tokyo in 2021, Ethiopians peered into the global event with great passion and enthusiasm. Our athletes have proudly hoisted the Ethiopian flag and made not only their country but also their continent proud.

The Olympics are a true convention that brings societies together from all corners of the world. It represents the potential of humankind and, at several junctures in history, they have awakened us to faulty divides we created based on race, religion, class and ideology. That is why we are particularly pleased to be part of adopting draft resolution A/76/L.13, which captures the ideals of the Olympics.

Finally, I wish to conclude by congratulating China for the magnificent preparations it is making prior to hosting the Winter Olympics in 2022. As it marks the first time China has hosted the Winter Olympics, we convey our best wishes for safe, festive and peaceful Games.

Mr. Kuzmenkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Sport is a paramount achievement of human civilization, a universal language of human communication. The well-known expression “sport is an ambassador of peace” acquires particular significance when it is sanctified by the noble traditions of the Olympic truce. The need to raise future generations in the spirit of a culture of peace, tolerance, mutual respect and recognition and non-violence proves once again that Olympic ideals are far from being outdated. Indeed, they are as relevant as ever.

International cooperation in sport contributes to overcoming ethnic and religious hatred, fosters mutual understanding and strengthens intercivilizational

dialogue and harmony. We are convinced that support for sport, including at the State level, is an important factor that brings the global community together and advances the ideals of sports movements throughout the world. We attach great importance to the International Olympic Committee's call for an Olympic truce in order to achieve reconciliation in regional conflicts during and after the Games.

We express deep gratitude to our Chinese partners for the preparation of this timely and important draft resolution to be adopted today (A/76/L.13). The Russian Federation is traditionally a sponsor of this draft resolution and fully supports it. We would particularly like to emphasize the idea of the independence and autonomy of sport as well as the mission of the International Olympic Committee in leading the Olympic movement. We call on everyone to observe the Olympic truce.

The development of cooperation through sport occupies an important place in the Russian Federation's system of foreign-policy priorities. It is the subject of ongoing attention by our leaders. The mission of promoting physical activity and sport in our country is to provide comprehensive spiritual and physical development for our citizens, instil the culture and values of an active lifestyle as the basis for sustainable development, and bolster the authority of our State in the international arena.

We attach the utmost importance to involving as much of the population as possible in sports. It is a powerful tool for educating young people in a spirit of mutual respect, tolerance and rejection of xenophobia. It can shield youth from destructive forces that provoke negative phenomena, including terrorism.

We believe that sport should be independent of the political context and not become a tool of intrigue or blackmail. We oppose doping in sports and intend to fight it by all available means. We are open to honest, professional dialogue with interested and competent sports authorities.

Much is done in our country to support the national and international Olympic and Paralympic movements and ensure the broad participation of national athletes in major international competitions. We are developing cooperation with international and regional sports federations and clubs. This provides additional momentum for the development of sport in our country.

We believe that only intergovernmental entities have the right to monitor States' efforts to combat doping. We oppose granting such powers to technical bodies and categorizing States as good and bad, with the introduction of sanctions against the latter. Attempts to use sport as an instrument of pressure in international politics are unacceptable.

Under the pretext of alleged human rights violations, some countries are calling for boycotting international sports forums and are promoting the unacceptable principle of the collective punishment of athletes. Interference in the activities of international independent sports organizations is also unacceptable.

We believe that the upcoming Winter Olympic Games in Beijing will become a truly global celebration of sport, delighting fans with new major sporting achievements and bringing light and joy to every home on the planet.

Mr. Al Khalil (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Syrian Arab Republic supports the draft resolution on the Olympic truce resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" (A/76/PV.13), as it represents a call for justice to all countries. We are glad to be one of the sponsors of this draft resolution, and we wish the Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics a complete success.

Beijing will be the first city in the world to host both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games. We are glad to see that important progress has been made in stadium and infrastructure construction and that event organization and services have been carried out in an orderly manner.

We believe that the Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics will be a grand gathering for countries and a fair stage for athletes from all over the world to compete. We also believe that the Olympic Games should be free from political interference. We call on all countries to demonstrate together the Olympic spirit and show the value of unity, resilience and international cooperation.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a privilege for me on behalf of Ecuador to sponsor the draft resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" (A/76/L.13).

Ecuador does not have a tradition in winter sports, but it will probably be present next year in Beijing with a small delegation, which will allow us to share the passion of hundreds of millions of people around the world. And even if this were not the case, even if we were not present with athletes in Beijing, we would still urge respect for the truce proposed in the draft resolution under consideration by this General Assembly, with a view to seeing the orderly holding of the twenty-fourth Winter Olympic Games and the thirteenth edition of the Winter Paralympic Games, to be held in February and March, respectively. In this context, we thank the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China for its leadership during the negotiations of the draft resolution.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges the contribution of sport to the promotion of education to sustainable development, peace cooperation and solidarity, to equity, social inclusion and health — and all of this at the local, regional and international levels. Sport sows tolerance and respect. It is a catalyst for important key issues on the international agenda, for the empowerment of women and of people with special abilities, and for the protection of human rights.

For this reason, we stress the importance of cooperation among States to collectively, as an international community, implement the values of the *ekecheiria*, that spirit which, as the Permanent Representative of Greece reminded us, dates back centuries. We also emphasize the transcendental role that the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee and the United Nations system as a whole play in this joint endeavour.

The Government of Ecuador is co-sponsoring the draft resolution because it is in full agreement with the principle of the Olympic truce, which outlaws interfering with travel to and from the site of the Olympic Games, in the broad scope and sense proposed by this draft resolution that the General Assembly is preparing to adopt — a scope that has been clearly expressed by the representative of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Jiménez Echegoyen (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Nicaragua is proud to co-sponsor the draft resolution submitted by China (A/76/L.13), which emphasizes the contributions of sport in promoting education, sustainable development, peace, cooperation, solidarity, gender equity, social inclusion and health

in all societies of the world, at the local, regional and international levels. We also congratulate China, which will host the twenty-fourth Winter Olympic Games from 4 to 20 February 2022, and the thirteenth Winter Paralympic Games from 4 to 13 March 2022, respectively, in Beijing.

We join in the wish that the holding of the Olympic Games in Beijing will provide a meaningful opportunity to harness the power of sport to bring about positive developments in our international community by promoting an atmosphere of peace, development, resilience, tolerance and understanding. We emphasize that sport is the United Nations, that it is a universal language that does not discriminate and that promotes love, solidarity, cooperation, unity, friendship, education, health and tolerance, which are indispensable requirements for a more humane world.

Nicaragua recognizes the role that sport plays in the lives of our young people, in the prevention of the crime that brings radical and criminal behaviour to our societies, and in our Government. Sport is also a State policy that allows us to have a healthier, more active and more secure population.

Mr. Hassan (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation emphasizes the importance of sports in achieving sustainable development, strengthening the abilities and capabilities of youth and promoting the values of mutual understanding and communication among peoples. These concepts are increasingly important in the context of the extreme challenges our world is currently facing.

Egypt is pleased to join the list of sponsors of the draft resolution submitted by China entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" (A/76/L.13). We congratulate China on hosting both the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. We also value the constructive consultations on the draft resolution and hope that it will be adopted by the General Assembly.

International sporting events are an important opportunity to promote solidarity and international interdependence. Egypt's hosting of the world championship of table tennis in June was the first grand championship tournament to be held since the start of the coronavirus disease pandemic, which demonstrated the world's ability to show solidarity through a sporting event and triumph over current challenges.

In conclusion, my delegation expresses its wish for a successful holding of the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing.

Mr. Changara (Zimbabwe): I thank the President for affording me the opportunity to contribute to the debate on the Olympic Truce resolution entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal” (A/76/L.13), which the General Assembly considers every two years, ahead of the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

Sport is an important vehicle that unites people from diverse backgrounds around a common goal. It transcends cultural, religious and language barriers and has the potential to change the world for the better. It also provides societies and communities with a platform to forge cooperation, develop friendships and help people focus more on their commonalities than on their differences.

It is clear that sport promotes, *inter alia*, good health, teamwork, friendly competition, fair play, and a healthy mindset. In that context, it is important that we harness the power that sport possesses as a force for good.

Considering that the coronavirus disease pandemic affected major sporting events, the holding of the twenty-fourth Olympic Winter Games and the thirteenth Paralympic Winter Games, scheduled to take place in Beijing from 4 to 20 February 2022 and from 4 to 13 March 2022, respectively, could not have come at a better time. The games will present an opportunity for us to demonstrate the importance of unity, resilience and the power of international cooperation to overcome global challenges, including the pandemic.

In conclusion, given the great power of sport to build a peaceful and better world, Zimbabwe co-sponsored and fully supports the adoption of the draft resolution that is before us. We wish the Government and the people of the People’s Republic of China every success in organizing the Games. We have confidence in the organizational prowess of our Chinese brothers and sisters.

Ms. Alalawat (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, let me thank the President for convening this important debate on sport for development and peace. Linking sport with development and peace sends a noble international message to make them a key part in the promotion of development and peace. That has

been deeply entrenched in many of the Kingdom’s policies and initiatives with regard to the international community and has led to the Kingdom’s promotion of a very active sporting programme. We have hosted many sporting events, including for youth.

In order to achieve peace and development in the world through sport, the Kingdom of Bahrain supports all United Nations initiatives to achieve lasting peace through sport. We believe that sport is an effective means to strengthen social ties and the lofty ideals of peace, brotherhood, solidarity and tolerance. We therefore thank the Permanent Mission of China for introducing draft resolution A/76/L.13. We stress the importance of sport and its role in promoting cooperation and solidarity. It encourages tolerance, respect and the empowerment of women and youth and contributes to the areas of health, education and social integration, particularly in the context of the current coronavirus disease pandemic.

In conclusion, we reiterate that we will continue to shoulder our responsibility vis-à-vis the international community to strengthen the link connecting sport with peace and development, as well as promote peace, peaceful coexistence and development throughout the world

Ms. Motte (France) (*spoke in French*): In Paris in 2024, France will be the next country to host the Olympic Games. The Paris Olympic Games will be centred on three key pillars — engagement, celebration and legacy. We believe that sport is a vector for peace, development and solidarity. We sincerely hope that the pandemic will be behind us in 2024. France wishes China every success in organizing the 2022 Winter Olympic Games.

The Acting President: In accordance with resolution 64/3, of 19 October 2009, I now give the floor to the observer of the International Olympic Committee.

Mr. Moreno (International Olympic Committee): Please let me convey to the General Assembly the greetings and best wishes of the President of the International Olympic Committee (OIC), Mr. Thomas Bach. He would have loved to have been here today; however, the pandemic situation prevented him from coming. President Bach asked me to deliver his statement on his behalf, which I am honoured to do.

“Please let me express my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the States Members of the General

Assembly for supporting the Olympic Truce draft resolution (A/76/L.13). In particular, I would like to thank the President. My thanks also go to the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China for submitting the text in the tradition of previous Olympic Truce resolutions. I would also like to thank the co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Sport for Sustainable Development — Qatar and Monaco — as well as the many Member States that have supported the draft resolution as co-sponsors.

The President returned to the Chair.

“By adopting the draft resolution, the Assembly will be supporting the mission of the Olympic Games to unite the best winter-sport athletes of the entire world, without any discrimination whatsoever, in a peaceful and respectful competition. That bond of our shared humanity is even more relevant in our polarized world today. We can accomplish that mission only if the Olympic Games stand above and beyond all political, cultural and other differences. That will be possible only if the Olympic Games are politically neutral and do not become a tool to achieve political goals.

“The ancient Greeks understood that already 3,000 years ago. They established the *ekecheiria* — a sacred truce — which enabled the participation of all athletes and spectators from Greek city-States, which were otherwise almost constantly engaged in conflict with one another. In that way, there was born from the very beginning an inseparable link between the Olympic Games and peace, which allowed the ancient Olympic Games to take place for approximately 1,000 years. Just a couple of weeks ago, the original parties to the *ekecheiria* — the cities of Olympia, Ilida and Sparta — solemnly renewed their pledge to uphold their Olympic Truce declaration. I hope that that meaningful initiative is an encouragement for all Member States.

“History also shows us what happens if the political neutrality of the Olympic Games is not respected. The ancient Olympic Games came to an end when the Roman Emperor Theodosius I effectively abolished them for political reasons. It took almost 2,000 years before the Olympic Games could be revived by our founder, Pierre de Coubertin. I very much hope that we all take that history lesson to heart.

“Members may ask why that lesson continues to matter today. The answer is that the Olympic athletes demonstrate to the entire world that, yes, it is possible to be fierce rivals and engage in intense competition, while at the same time living peacefully and respectfully together. In the Olympic Village, the athletes from every corner of the world are living together in harmony. In the Olympic Games, we are all equal, irrespective of social background, gender, race, sexual orientation or political belief. In the Olympic Games, everyone respects the same rules, which are set by the IOC and the Olympic Charter.

“In that spirit, the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 will be an important moment. They will be the start of a new era of global winter sport, with 300 million Chinese people engaging with sport on snow and ice. Global participation in winter sports will be taken to new levels. Already, engaging in sports is greatly contributing to physical and mental health in China. Beijing 2022 will also show the way forward, with all Olympic venues being powered by renewable energy. Most venues in Beijing are a legacy of the Olympic Games Beijing 2008. The millions of new winter-sports enthusiasts will ensure the use of the Olympic venues for the future.

“The 2022 Winter Olympic Games will also be a great demonstration of the safe organization of such a global event in the context of the zero-coronavirus disease strategy, which has proven to be very successful for China. In that regard, I would like to express my gratitude to the Beijing 2022 Organizing Committee, which is preparing the 2022 Winter Olympic Games with such a great degree of efficiency and dynamism.

“All the recent test events have highlighted the outstanding state of preparations. In that regard, we greatly appreciate the excellent cooperation with the Organizing Committee in line with the Olympic Charter and the host city contract.

“The efforts of the IOC to strengthen sport as an important enabler for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) do not end there. In our Olympic Agenda 2020+5 strategic road map, we highlight how we will fulfil the enabling role that United Member States have assigned to sport. With the Olympic Truce resolution, Members

recognize the contribution of sport to peace, health and many other SDGs. Please let me highlight just one: climate action.

“The IOC is already a carbon-neutral organization, and we are even committed to becoming climate positive by 2024. We are partnering with the United Nations to plant an Olympic forest in sub-Saharan Africa to overcompensate for our emissions and improve lives and livelihoods in 90 villages in the region. The pandemic, the Sustainable Development Goals and all of the challenges that we are facing today have taught us one lesson: We can go faster, we can aim higher, and we can become stronger, only if we work together. That is why we have amended our Olympic motto to, “Faster, Higher, Stronger — Together”. The word “together” tells us that we need more solidarity — more solidarity within societies and more solidarity among societies — because there is no peace without solidarity.

“In this Olympic spirit, I invite members to join hands by adopting draft resolution A/76/L.13, as we work together to accomplish the mission of the Olympic Games to unite the world in peaceful and respectful competition.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/76/L.13, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/76/L.13: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Iceland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius,

Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Samoa, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Vanuatu and Zambia.

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/76/L.13?

Draft resolution A/76/L.13 was adopted (resolution 76/13).

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I give the floor to the representative of the United States.

Mr. Messenger (United States of America): The United States believes that sport should transcend all perceived barriers among race, ethnicity, age, gender, identity, sexual orientation, religion and ability and can be a valuable means to strengthen cultural relations among all nations. For those reasons, the United States Government has long supported international athletic competitions. Sport should remind us of our common humanity and provides a universal language that contributes to building on universal values of respect, diversity, inclusivity, tolerance and fairness. Those are the highest ideals of Olympic competition, although not every Olympic Games achieves them.

In joining the consensus on resolution 76/13, we understand that the host country has the prerogative to choose the themes and goals of a specific Olympic Games, but do not consider the inclusion of the language in preambular paragraphs 12 and 15 as precedential or intergovernmentally agreed language. As such, we must dissociate from those paragraphs.

More broadly, we wish to underscore operative paragraph 6, which recognizes the important role that sport and the Olympic and Paralympic Games play to promote human rights and strengthen universal respect for such rights worldwide. In that context, we remind the host country and all Member States of the need to comply with their human rights obligations and commitments, including those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and use the Olympic and Paralympic Games to take steps to build a peaceful and better world.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda 12.

Agenda item 15 (*continued*)

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

Draft resolution (A/76/L.12)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Honduras to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.12.

Ms. Cerrato (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): Under agenda item 15 and with the support of a vast number of co-sponsors, Honduras is pleased to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.12, entitled “International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, 2022”.

The draft resolution was prepared pursuant to the mandate of the UNESCO General Conference, which, at its fortieth session on 25 November 2019, unanimously adopted a resolution proposed by its Executive Board in favour of declaring the year 2022 as the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development by the United Nations General Assembly.

The ongoing coronavirus disease pandemic dramatically demonstrates the need for society to develop the necessary scientific knowledge to tackle similar emergencies and to assist Governments and Parliaments in taking difficult decisions. The need for humankind to both maintain and develop high levels of interest and participation in basic sciences calls for regular initiatives to avoid a decreased awareness of basic sciences.

In that connection, now is the time to hold an international interdisciplinary year for basic sciences for sustainable development. Declaring the International Year has made it possible to identify interested partners and parties, including the scientific community and political leaders, to develop synergies and initiate joint action in line with the vision and objectives of the plan of action, as well as civil society, particularly national and international non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Moreover, the initiative has been spearheaded by a tenacious coalition of scientists and partners, including the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics and the European Laboratory for

Particle Physics, as well as science academies around the world.

We are sure that the International Year will further encourage Governments to promote campaigns, activities and practices in favour of achieving those objectives. In addition, the support of other parties, such as the media, private companies and the general public, could enable an acceleration in its preservation and good use. The final outcome that we are introducing for the General Assembly’s consideration today demonstrates the commitment of all delegations to promoting basic sciences for humankind and to strengthen the teaching of basic sciences to achieve sustainable development and improve quality of life for people all around the world.

We are grateful for the constructive contributions of those who supported us in crafting a robust draft resolution to highlight the importance of expanding activities related to the promotion of basic sciences. We are further thankful for the guidance provided during the process by those countries supporting us through co-sponsorship of the draft resolution. We further thank UNESCO and the steering committee established to promote the International Year.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/76/L.12.

Before giving the floor for explanations of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Téllez Alonso (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation takes the floor to make a general statement on draft resolution A/76/L.12, entitled “International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, 2022”.

The year 2022 will be declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development today, 2 December. We are thereby recognizing the utility of science in the development of society in general. However, it is relevant that that vision receive more robust and unanimous support from multilateral bodies. We applaud the fact that more than 100 organizations from around the world — including science academies, scientific societies and institutions for international cooperation — as well as UNESCO, the World Academy of Science and the International Council

for Science have all endorsed the proposal that we are putting forward today.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has presented an unprecedented global health, economic and social challenge. It has made blatantly clear the need for solidarity international cooperation and multilateralism as the only way to tackle the common challenges facing humankind and our planet. We have also borne witness once again to our capacity to respond to those common challenges through the sharing of knowledge and more advanced resources. However, this is all the more evident when those benefits are not shared between all of us as a consequence of the unequal and asymmetric yet interconnected and interdependent world in which we live.

In that context, ensuring that multinationalism and the role of the United Nations in promoting science for sustainable development is more relevant than ever. The year 2022 will therefore constitute the ideal opportunity to promote and foster basic sciences and the crucial role they play in terms of sustainable development, with a focus on training future generations of scientists and citizens. We therefore call on all people to seek to gain awareness and work for the sustainability of the planet.

In Cuba, significant progress has been made in various sectors, including biotechnology and genetics. Those advances have enabled the development of three vaccines and two candidate vaccines against COVID-19. That is also the result of our Government's political will, as illustrated through the development achieved in basic sciences.

In that connection, and as a member of the international committee established to hold the event, Cuba supports and welcomes the declaration of 2022 as the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/76/L.12, entitled "International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, 2022".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce

that, since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/76/L.12: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, Thailand and Ukraine.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/76/L.12?

Draft resolution A/76/L.12 was adopted (resolution 76/14).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 15.

Programme of work

The President: Before adjourning, and in reference to my letter dated 30 November 2021, I would like to draw the attention of members to the date of recess of the current session. Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September (see A/76/PV.2), the General Assembly decided that the seventy-sixth session would recess on Monday, 13 December 2021 and that the Fifth Committee would complete its work by Friday, 10 December.

However, I have been informed by the Chair of the Fifth Committee that the Committee requests an extension of its work to Thursday, 23 December. Such an extension would facilitate a comprehensive consideration of the important agenda items before it.

In that connection, and in view of the work that remains to be completed for this part of the session, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to postpone the date of recess to Thursday, 23 December 2021?

It was so decided.

The President: May I also take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Fifth Committee until Thursday, 23 December 2021?

It was so decided (decision 76/505).

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.