



General Assembly

Seventy-sixth session

74th plenary meeting
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Official Records

President: Mr. Shahid (Maldives)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kridelka (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 7 (continued)

Organization of work

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of agenda item 26 at its 54th plenary meeting, on 17 December 2021. In order for the Assembly to take action on the draft resolution, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 26.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of agenda item 26?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Members will also recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2021, the General Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 26 to the Second Committee to enable the Assembly to take action expeditiously on the draft resolution it has before it today.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider agenda item 26 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided (decision 76/506 B).

Agenda item 26 (continued)

Agriculture development, food security and nutrition

Draft resolution (A/76/L.55)

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now resume its consideration of agenda item 26 to take action on the draft resolution issued as document A/76/L.55.

I would like to inform the Assembly that introductory statements may be delivered from national seats or the rostrum, as delegations prefer.

I now give the floor to the representative of Lebanon to introduce draft resolution A.76/L.55.

Ms. Mudallali (Lebanon): This sheaf of wheat represents a loaf of bread for a poor family somewhere in the world. This holy plant, wheat, is a source of life, abundance and resilience for 35 per cent of the world's population, or 2.7 billion people, especially in Asia and Africa. Now, however, wheat is becoming scarce for millions. That is why we are here today. If we can adopt draft resolution A/76/L.55 and make sure that food and bread are available for millions, we will be working for peace.

As I said, our world is facing yet another crisis. This one has the potential to threaten every home and to have long-lasting effects. It is a crisis of food insecurity and a threat of hunger for millions of people around the world, especially in developing and vulnerable countries. We are gathered here because we have

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decided to face this challenge together, as we should. We came here united in our purpose of saying that we, the people of the United Nations, will work in solidarity to prevent hunger. We have put that determination in one document that expresses our hopes for unity and solidarity, and we vow to win this new battle. This is a draft resolution that represents our desire to ensure that we never see a child, or any human being, go hungry anywhere in the world. It is born of the fear that long breadlines could lead to extended periods of pain, inequality and instability.

I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.55, entitled “State of global food insecurity”. Who could have imagined that in 2022 we would be here to talk about a threat of mass hunger and even famine for millions all over the world? That is simply unacceptable. The cover of the latest edition of *The Economist* deserves mention in our discussions today. Its portrait of human skulls as wheat kernels is a terrifying reminder and an alarming warning of the global food crisis that is hitting our world. People everywhere are facing multiple crises, a perfect storm. The three Fs, as they are now being called — the crises of food, fuel and fertilizer — are compounded by the climate crisis, the coronavirus disease pandemic and now, conflict. People are tired, exhausted, scared and hopeless. The last thing they need is to have no food on the table. Our multilateral system is being stretched to the limit. Developing and vulnerable countries, especially indebted countries, are being tested as never before. This global multidimensional crisis needs global solutions, with the multilateral system at the heart of every solution and every aspect of the recovery.

Rising food prices and inflation have historically been catalysts for social upheaval. We are beginning to see social unrest and protests in various parts of the world in response to the surge in food prices. Instability is rearing its head in many places, and time is of the essence. If we fail to act now, the situation will only worsen, and social unrest will lead to instability and conflict. As the Secretary-General reminded us last week (see S/PV.9036), if we do not feed people, we feed conflicts.

These are the drivers that have brought us together to work on this draft resolution. We wanted a non-politicized, focused, neutral and action-oriented document. The draft resolution before us is the outcome of an initiative by Lebanon and the efforts and hard negotiations of a core group of countries that saw the

seriousness of the issue and decided to do something about it. In addition to my country, Lebanon, the core group members are Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Qatar, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the United States of America and Uruguay. I am happy to report that they have been actively trying to find solutions to this crisis and raise awareness of its seriousness. The United States held a ministerial meeting here at the United Nations last week presided over by Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and ministers from around the world, and the Security Council convened a meeting this month under the United States presidency to discuss food security (see S/PV.9036). Another member of the group, Italy, will hold a Mediterranean ministerial dialogue on the food security crisis in early June. That is in addition to many efforts by others to extend support to countries hit hard by the food crisis.

Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the United Nations has done a great job of confronting the challenges born of this crisis. We support the many steps it has taken, especially the Secretary-General’s launch of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have also been at the forefront of this battle, finding solutions and lending a helping hand to vulnerable countries in particular.

With the adoption of this draft resolution, the General Assembly will send a strong message of unity and solidarity, the two ingredients we need to face this crisis. It will show the world that we are still united in our purpose, and that what unites us is greater and stronger than what divides us. We also wanted this draft resolution to be a resolution for peace. It will be a bridge for peace, and it will show that multilateralism is alive and resilient. It will signal to the world that when it comes to tackling hunger, we are one.

I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the core group for their work and efforts on the draft resolution. I also thank all the Member States that have already sponsored the draft resolution and invite others to join them. We look forward to seeing this draft resolution adopted without a vote, and to seeing the General Assembly send a strong message of unity, compassion and solidarity.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A.76/L.55, entitled “State of global food insecurity”.

I now 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 draft resolution A/76/L.55, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Andorra, Angola, Austria, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cap Verde, Canada, the Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Türkiye, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Yemen.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/76/L.55?

Draft resolution A/76/L.55 was adopted (resolution 76/264).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor for explanations of position after adoption, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Bratchyk (Ukraine): With regard to resolution 76/264, which we have just adopted, I would like to reiterate the position of the delegation of Ukraine on the issue of food security.

As a reliable contributor to global food security and one of the world's main food suppliers, Ukraine

fully shares the commitment to acting with urgency, at scale and in concert to respond to the urgent food security and nutrition needs of millions of people worldwide. In recent years the food-security situation has worsened for the most vulnerable, especially owing to the effects of the coronavirus disease pandemic and climate change. But this year the world has faced a new and unprecedented threat — a full-fledged war of aggression unleashed by Russia on Ukraine.

Along with international law and the rules-based order, Russia has also affected global food security, because about 400 million people all over the world, but mostly in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, depend on grain and oil supplies from Ukraine. Now, thanks to Russia's blockade of Ukrainian seaports, we have almost stopped exporting grain. Large areas of eastern and southern Ukraine continue to be combat zones or under temporary occupation. That is why we expect this year's harvest to be just half of last year's yields. Russia's efforts to seize Ukrainian grain for its own consumption or to sell it illegally in international markets represent another threat. The Russian occupiers have already stolen between at least 400,000 and 500,000 tons of grain. Almost all the grain ships leaving the temporarily occupied port of Sevastopol are loaded with stolen Ukrainian commodities. We demand that Russia stop its illicit stealing of grain, lift its blockade of Ukrainian ports, restore freedom of navigation and allow the passage of commercial ships.

We strongly reject any manipulative narratives saying that sanctions on Russia make it impossible to effectively address the issue of agricultural exports. As soon as Russia is compelled to stop the war, the looming threat of hunger will be over, particularly for the most vulnerable. Otherwise, it will continue to be totally responsible for the famine and suffering of millions.

Mr. Chumakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank the group of countries that initiated resolution 76/264 for drafting the text. We welcome the fact that it is dedicated to the issue of ensuring global food security, which has traditionally been one of Russia's priorities, and we are therefore pleased to join the consensus on this important document. However, we also have a number of comments.

We share the concern about the deteriorating situation in this area and the fact that the spike in prices and the instability in the energy, fertilizer and food markets in the past six months have naturally affected

the general food security situation. In that regard, we are pleased with the resolution's comprehensive approach to the reasons for the problem. Our delegation has already presented a detailed analysis of the factors in the current situation, specifically through our distribution of General Assembly document A/76/798 and our statement in the Security Council's meeting on 19 May (see S/PV.9036). We only hope that this material will be duly studied and used by the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance set up by the Secretary-General. While we understand the need to establish this mechanism for the United Nations system's comprehensive consideration and response to multifaceted challenges, we have been obliged to conclude that the analysis and recommendations in the Group's first report are unfortunately not comprehensive. In particular, for all practical purposes they ignore the serious role played by the illegal sanctions, including those imposed on Russia.

The fact is that the sanctions and restrictions have destabilized and continue to destabilize the energy markets. It is the sanctions that are interrupting supply chains and established transport routes. They make it difficult to insure and charter merchant ships and their bans threaten ships' entry into ports. Some transactions cannot be paid for. Excuses about exemptions and the targeted nature of the sanctions do not stand up to scrutiny. Even Western analysts and international structures have recognized the sanctions' impact on the food market, and that is why it is particularly sad that the Global Crisis Response Group, which was set up precisely to resolve this crisis, did not dare to talk about it. If the Group genuinely wants to work impartially in order to achieve a real resolution of these issues, it is important to understand that ignoring one of the main factors will only worsen the situation. That is why we are obliged to dissociate ourselves from the words "takes note with appreciation" in paragraph 3 of the resolution, regarding the Group's first report. We trust that its second report will be balanced and take into account various points of view.

For our part, we affirm that Russia remains a responsible supplier of both energy resources and of food. We believe that from 1 August and until the end of the year we will be able to offer about 20 million tons of grain for export through the port of Novorossiisk. We are also prepared to discuss other purchases, including fertilizers, whose export potential from June to December of this year is estimated at about 22 million tons.

We are once again being obliged to refute accusations against us and attempts to shift the responsibility to Russia for the difficult global food security situation. It is not we but Ukraine that is blocking vessels in the ports and mining its maritime waters, while Russia is opening humanitarian corridors on a daily basis for vessels to move in a south-westerly direction from Ukrainian territorial waters. However, Ukraine is continuing to export food, although in smaller amounts, by rail and on barges along the Danube. According to the data from the relevant Ukrainian ministries, 1.4 million tons of corn and wheat were exported in March and 1 million tons of grain were exported in April. Their destinations would be better clarified with our Ukrainian colleagues. We merely saw the data from Bloomberg about supplies through the Romanian port of Constanta to one European Union country. We know that fields are being mined, but it is the Ukrainian armed forces that are doing it. And it is they who are shelling territory that they do not control in places where farmers have begun working in the fields. In the south of the Kherson district, Russian servicemen have deactivated more than 12,000 explosive objects during their humanitarian demining of farmland.

Finally, to those colleagues who today and on other occasions have accused us of undermining efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, I would like to recommend that they first look at their own track record. First and foremost, they should ask themselves whether pumping tens of billions of dollars' worth of weapons into Ukraine, money that they could not previously find for sustainable development, is helping to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Mrs. Sandller (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I want to thank the countries that promoted resolution 76/264 on the state of global food insecurity, which we have just adopted. This is an issue of particular relevance to Argentina. We understand that the current situation is creating even more pressing challenges that make it difficult for us to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, on ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. That is why Argentina, in line with its historical stance in defence of multilateralism, actively supports all initiatives to address food insecurity that are promoted in forums such as the one we are in today. It is precisely because of the relevance that my country attaches to the issue of food security and to the building of consensus that we would have liked the process that led to the drafting of this resolution to have been

more open and inclusive, ensuring the constructive participation of all Member States.

We regret that a final text was presented on food security, a subject and discussion to which Argentina has much to contribute since it is one of the largest food producers in the world and was an active participant in the Food Systems Summit that took place last year in the General Assembly. However, despite the drafting process, and taking into account the enormous importance that my country attaches to food security, we decided to join the consensus on its adoption.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Argentina's willingness to work constructively, as we have always done, on any initiative that promotes progress towards a world without hunger.

Mr. Segura Aragón (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The issue of food security is a top priority for El Salvador. At the national level, we have undertaken various efforts to ensure the right to food and nutrition from early childhood and throughout people's lives. El Salvador is committed to improving health conditions through such initiatives as the Grow Together programme, which fosters early childhood development by supporting breastfeeding, nutrition and early care, as well as our national food and nutrition security policy, our Master Plan to Rescue Agriculture and our Healthy and Sustainable School Meals Strategy, along with our Rural Adelante, RECLIMA and Sowing Life programmes, among others.

Aware of the effects of climate change on food security, we are taking measures to increase our resilience. Such actions have become extremely urgent, as we are in one of the areas most vulnerable to climate change and are part of the dry corridor in Central America. High-impact climatic events are taking place with greater frequency and intensity, as demonstrated by tropical storms Amanda and Cristóbal and hurricanes Eta and Iota, which hit Central America hard. The increase in temperature, floods and droughts, among other things, affects food security and nutrition, particularly for families that depend on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods.

This is also a highly relevant issue on the international agenda, especially because, according to *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021*, hunger around the world increased during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, affecting between 720 and 811 million people. Similarly, the

most significant increase in moderate or severe food insecurity was recorded in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Africa.

Therefore, El Salvador considers that addressing food security is urgent, especially in the context of the multiple crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as evidenced through challenges such as supply chain interruptions, the lack of basic products, price increases and job losses, among other things.

All of that demonstrates the need for States and actors to join collective efforts to deal with food insecurity. Accordingly, my country supports all efforts in this area, both in the General Assembly and in other United Nations organs, bodies, agencies and programmes.

That is why we regret that resolution 76/264, on the state of global food insecurity, was not the product of an open, transparent and inclusive consultation process. My country calls on the States Members of the United Nations to undertake processes in such a way that it is possible to effectively and transparently discuss such issues, resulting in action-oriented documents that take into account the views of the Members of the Organization. We trust that such exclusionary methods will not become a recurring practice in the Organization, which would undermine its inclusivity and legitimacy.

Nevertheless, El Salvador joined the consensus on resolution 76/264.

Mrs. Kavaleuskaya (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus shares the concerns of the States that co-sponsored resolution 76/264, with respect to the potential threat of global hunger. We also understand the reasons for introducing the resolution at this time, even though the issue of hunger was also very pertinent during the coronavirus pandemic. In that regard, we would like to highlight the following.

Unfortunately, the resolution does not take into consideration one important issue that has a serious impact on food security and that many delegations have not mentioned. That is the issue of unilateral coercive measures, which has had a significant impact on the food situation in the world. One example is the ban on the export of Belarusian potassium fertilizer, which represents about 20 per cent of the world market and has had a significant impact in terms of the spike in the prices for inorganic fertilizer in 2021. That ban has also

had a significant impact on food security and efforts to eradicate hunger in vulnerable countries.

We would like to point out that that thoughtless ban was introduced by the West against Belarus before the start of the conflict in Ukraine. We have no doubt that unilateral coercive measures have a pernicious impact on food security in the world. The Secretary-General has repeatedly highlighted that recently. The imposition of sanctions unquestionably leads to a breakdown in global trade, which has a significant impact on financial stability and the trading potential of the countries on which restrictions are imposed. The use of sanctions is pointless and counterproductive and should not be used in intergovernmental relations.

We are also disappointed by the attempts of countries that actively use sanctions to mislead the global community and to reject the real reasons for food shortages. They are pinning all responsibility for the increase in food insecurity on others. Belarus is prepared to continue its efforts to guarantee and strengthen global food security.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position on resolution 76/265.

We will now hear those delegations wishing to make statements after the adoption of the resolution.

I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

Mr. Skoog (European Union): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

The mounting global food crisis requires our urgent, coordinated and unified action. Today we demonstrated that we can unite on the most crucial challenges of our time. The EU welcomes the adoption by consensus of resolution 76/264. To demonstrate their full support, our 27 member States co-sponsored the resolution. I would like to thank Lebanon for taking this important initiative at this make-or-break moment.

Food security, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable countries, remains a top priority for the European Union and its member States. That is why, in these times of acute global food crisis, we are determined to advance responses at all levels, including the multilateral level. That is also why, while fully supporting this important resolution, we would have welcomed a clear contextualization on the major accelerating factor of this global food security crisis.

An effective global response implies a precise and factual identification of the causes. Let us be clear: climate change, environmental degradation, the coronavirus disease pandemic and conflict situations all play a part in driving hunger, inflation and poverty. However, it is Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine — one of the major breadbaskets of the world, especially for the global South — that has disrupted global food chains and blocked the export of food from Ukraine to the rest of the world.

That is a fact. It is supported by evidence and is widely documented, including in the brief of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, established by the Secretary-General. It was also further highlighted last week during the Food Security Call to Action ministerial meeting and the Security Council open debate on conflict and food security (see S/PV.9036).

Let us not therefore become victims of Russia's use of information manipulation, including disinformation. Russia's unjustified, unprovoked, illegal war on Ukraine has caused those devastating effects. Blaming sanctions for increased global food prices is a weak attempt to conceal the truth and divert action from where it is needed. The sanctions target the Kremlin's ability to finance its aggression against Ukraine and its people. They are carefully crafted in a way so as to avoid any effect on the agricultural sector.

I have spoken about the causes; let us now look at the response. The EU has been a leading humanitarian and development donor in support of food and nutrition assistance. We will accelerate our work at this critical time. We have ramped up our humanitarian assistance, leveraging the collective action of the European Union and its member States.

Just last month, we raised a total of €10 billion for the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Syria. We focus on doing everything in our power to keep markets and trade flows functioning. We call on all concerned to take action to facilitate the export of food from Black Sea ports. As those efforts continue, we are doing all we can to help Ukraine to export — and the world to get access to — the grain that is stuck in Ukraine due to the Russian war. We are launching the Solidarity Lanes to that effect in Ukraine as we speak.

Emergency assistance to vulnerable population groups will be complemented by support to partner countries on the sustainability and resilience of

agri-food systems. We must continue to work on the transformation towards sustainable agriculture and food systems in order to secure global food security in the long term, in line with the 2021 Food Systems Summit, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, with respect to EU initiatives, the EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategies. We strongly support the role and leadership of the United Nations in responding to the global food security crisis in a comprehensive way by bringing together key United Nations agencies. We welcome the work of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. We also support the Group of Seven Global Alliance for Food Security, including in its objective to ensure partnerships and outreach to the most vulnerable regions, such as Africa and the Mediterranean.

Finally, we strongly support effective multilateralism and remain committed to anchoring the global food security response in the multilateral system. The Assembly will find in the EU a reliable ally and partner. Our solidarity will continue to be there, in Ukraine and the rest of the world, including in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, wherever needed.

Mr. Mills (United States of America): On behalf of the United States Government, let me start by thanking Lebanon for the successful shepherding of resolution 76/264 to adoption by consensus. The United States remains actively engaged in the work of addressing global food insecurity through significant humanitarian and development assistance, and we strongly support the objectives of the resolution.

As others have mentioned, on 18 May Mr. Antony Blinken, the United States Secretary of State, convened a Global Food Security Call to Action ministerial meeting at the United Nations here in New York. Several dozen ministers exchanged views on what needs to be done to address the recent spike in hunger and malnutrition around the world. The ministerial meeting was followed by a Security Council open debate on conflict and food security (see S/PV.9036), and all of that was part of the Days of Action on Global Food Security. At the conclusion of the ministerial meeting, Secretary Blinken publicly released a Chair's summary, which is entitled "Road Map for Global Food Security — Call to Action", and which outlines the principal steps that countries can take to respond to this crisis. The Road Map includes such actions as bolstering agricultural supply, meeting immediate humanitarian

needs, keeping food and agricultural markets open, boosting fertilizer production and strengthening long-term agricultural resiliency. Today I would like to invite all the delegations in this Hall to also sign on to the Road Map. Doing so would demonstrate global solidarity in the fight against hunger and help to build momentum to implement solutions.

While we are proud to be a sponsor of resolution 76/264, I must note with regret, as others have, that the text does not address the most important factor increasing food insecurity and commodity prices globally. That is Russia's brutal, unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine. It is Russia's destruction of Ukrainian farms, its agricultural sector and food destined for export that is directly contributing to hunger and malnutrition around the world. The United States reiterates that it is not a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and underscores that today's resolution is non-binding and does not change the current state of conventional or customary international law regarding human rights, including food. We understand abbreviated or other modified references to certain human rights in the resolution to be references to the more accurate and widely accepted terms used in applicable treaties or in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We also take note that States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights undertook to progressively realize the rights contained in the Declaration and, consistent with that, we maintain the position that there is no separate right to access safe and nutritious food. The United States firmly acknowledges the right to adequate food as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and we maintain that as part of the progressive realization of that right, States have an array of policies and actions that may be appropriate. We therefore do not interpret this text as prescribing particular obligations or defining the scope of how States progressively realize that right.

Regarding language in the text promoting a universal and equitable system of global trade under the World Trade Organization (WTO), it is our view that United Nations bodies must respect the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including trade agreements, and must not involve themselves in decisions and actions in other forums, including at the WTO. It is our strong position that the phrase "fully respecting planetary boundaries" is vague and ill-defined in the text. The United States has opposed this idea since its inception in 2009, given our

continued emphasis on science-based decision-making. Furthermore, planetary boundaries references are not contained in the instruments referenced in the resolution such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

With that general statement, the United States is pleased to join as a sponsor of resolution 76/264.

Mr. Woodroffe (United Kingdom): As others have done, I would like to start by congratulating Lebanon, and in particular the Permanent Representative of Lebanon, for her leadership on resolution 76/264 and on the critical issue of food security.

The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of the resolution by consensus as a strong sign of the international community's determination to address the urgency of the crisis now facing the world. At the start of the year, the Global Humanitarian Overview warned of unprecedented levels of global food insecurity, driven by a perfect storm of the coronavirus disease, the climate crisis and conflict. That of course has been further exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which, as the Secretary-General himself has said, threatens to tip tens of millions of people over the edge into food insecurity, followed by malnutrition, mass hunger and famine. The impact of the crisis could last for years.

During last week's meetings, as just described by my colleague from the United States of America, the United Kingdom was clear that it stands in solidarity with those who are now suffering. We will also play our part in addressing this crisis. We will support the most vulnerable countries with more than \$3.5 billion worth of humanitarian aid over the next three years. The United Kingdom will press the World Bank to deliver swiftly on its plans to strengthen fragile economies by distributing \$170 billion in aid over the next 15 months. We will keep food and agricultural markets open, predictable and transparent. British International Investment, the United Kingdom's development finance institution, will scale up high-quality and sustainable investments, including in the food and agricultural sector.

This global crisis requires a collective global response, and today's resolution is one important element of that. But of course, and as we all know, the most urgent response lies simply with one country. It may dress this up in as many excuses and as many falsehoods as it likes — as we have heard this

morning — but in reality, all of us in this room know one simple fact, which is that Russia can end the global crisis by ending its conflict in Ukraine.

Mr. Hauri (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland sponsored and joined the consensus on resolution 76/264 on the state of global food insecurity, and we welcome its adoption. Since global food security is a major concern for Switzerland, even beyond today's resolution, I would like to make the following additional remarks.

Today's numerous conflicts, in particular the war in Ukraine, combined with other already existing crises, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity and droughts, increase the pressure on food systems and have negative consequences for global food security in the world. We must improve the basic conditions for food and nutrition security for all and in particular support the most vulnerable countries and people, who are disproportionately affected by this situation. Switzerland will remain a reliable partner in honouring its commitments in Ukraine and in every other conflict zone where it provides support. For example, my country recently allocated more than CHF10 million to support populations in the Horn of Africa, which has been hit by one of the worst droughts in its history. Switzerland also plans to increase its financial assistance to fragile and vulnerable countries, particularly in Africa. We will continue to support the development of resilient local food systems by encouraging diversified governance actors, production methods that preserve natural resources and healthy and balanced diets.

Switzerland is concerned about the destruction of production, processing and trade capacities, which harms the availability of quality food that is affordable and reliably accessible to all. In order to alleviate the uncertainty of international markets, we call on States to refrain from imposing export restrictions and bans. Predictability and transparency in agricultural trade are more crucial than ever. In this environment of continual shocks and crises, we welcome the Road Map for Global Food Security — Call to Action and the recommendations of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance of the United Nations Secretariat.

Switzerland firmly believes in the importance of furthering the transformation of food systems with a view to achieving greater sustainability, equity and resilience in every value chain, from production to consumption. We are pleased that the international

community, in a spirit of effective multilateralism, has adopted the resolution that brings us together today and that every State has undertaken to do everything in its power to contribute to reducing global food insecurity.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): I would first and foremost like to express my deep appreciation to Lebanon for taking the leading role in this effort, for bringing us together and for keeping us honest throughout. It is developing countries that are the worst affected by the rise in global food insecurity, so it is only fitting that they should be the ones to bring resolution 76/264 forward in order to address our current challenges on this front, using a technical, politically neutral and development-oriented approach.

During this morning's debate we heard a number of statements that underscore that the approach proposed by the core group from the outset, of keeping this project politically neutral, was the right one. We do not deny the number of factors that are contributing to the global food insecurity crisis, but this is not a time for finger-pointing for political ends. I will give an example. There have been very clear statements that sanctions have no impact, and Brazil made that point in the Security Council last week (see S/PV.9036). We acknowledge very firmly that sanctions have not been applied to food and fertilizer. That is a fact. But it is also a fact that sanctions have secondary effects with respect to the financial and logistical aspects of agricultural trade, affecting the availability and price of foodstuffs. We would therefore have preferred to avoid political elements here today, as the resolution itself has succeeded in doing.

Brazil is honoured to have contributed to a text that has such broad-based sponsorship. We have been a consistent advocate of agriculture, food security and nutrition as top priorities on the multilateral agenda. As one of the biggest global agricultural exporters, our country provides food for more than 700 million people, or around 10 per cent of the world's population, and is dedicated to contributing even more through agricultural trade and the sustainable intensification of our crops, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are also making efforts to provide humanitarian and emergency food assistance in accordance with our national capacity, as we did with our recent in-kind donation of more than 400,000 meals for those affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

Nevertheless, even agricultural powerhouses are not immune to the situation we are facing today. Food

prices are reaching record highs and the access to markets of two of the most important global breadbaskets is severely constrained, either because of conflict or because of the secondary impact of sanctions adopted in response to it. Inflation is rising, and with it political and social instability. If the international community does not step up and make coordinated and collective efforts to provide emergency assistance for those in need and to stabilize the markets for agricultural inputs and products, the situation is likely to further deteriorate as price instability and a reduced supply of fertilizer hamper planning and production in the next few years. Today's resolution aims to tackle the situation through three main objectives — raising awareness among all stakeholders about the dire and worsening situation of food insecurity; recognizing and supporting the actions taken by the Rome-based agencies and the United Nations system to address immediate and long-term obstacles to food security; and advancing sound and reasonable policy recommendations for tackling the rise in prices and stabilizing agricultural markets.

Lastly, we understand that this resolution is also aimed at the more general but equally important goal of unity. In recent years we have seen growing polarization and shrinking consensus at the United Nations even though our internationally agreed goals need exactly the opposite. It would have sent an even more powerful message if the resolution could have been adopted with the same sense of urgency with which the Secretary-General responded to the crisis in establishing the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. Faced with a crisis that could lead millions of people into acute food insecurity or worse, it is imperative that we reverse the trend and act together in favour of multilateralism, enhanced cooperation and open, transparent and equitable agricultural markets. The Assembly can count on Brazil for that.

Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand): If climate change is considered to be fast approaching red-alert status and the Sustainable Development Goals are seen as fast requiring intensive care, then the current crisis in food security, if unaddressed, may ultimately require cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. The latest data should keep us awake at night. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), 811 million people are already hungry, and 276 million are already facing severe food insecurity. Meanwhile, the average food price index of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the first four months of this year is at one of its highest levels ever recorded.

With rising agricultural and energy prices, weather extremes, the pandemic, geopolitical tensions and conflicts, we are facing a perfect-storm scenario in which the situation is likely to get worse before it gets better, unless we act decisively and in unity. Thailand therefore welcomes the initiatives and concrete actions undertaken by the United Nations system to address this food crisis, from the Secretary-General to the WFP and FAO, from the Security Council, with its timely debate last week (see S/PV.9036), to the General Assembly, with today's resolution 76/264 on the state of global food insecurity, just adopted by consensus. In the months ahead, the Economic and Social Council should likewise be focusing on how to turn the food crisis around and thereby help rescue sustainable development. That should be a priority at the high-level political forum.

As one of the world's largest food producers and thirteenth largest food exporter in the world, Thailand believes that concerted multilateral action, anchored in the United Nations system and complemented by regional cooperation, is essential to leading humankind out of this crisis. For the Asia-Pacific region, for example, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council Trade Ministers just met in Bangkok this past weekend and reiterated their commitment to helping one another achieve food security, supporting the WFP's efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition and calling for a trade and investment environment that supports increased food security.

What are the priority steps ahead, in our view? The first is for the immediate term. There must be urgent action to get food to the starving and those on the threshold of starvation. Meanwhile, concessional financing and other support should be directed to those who need it most — the low-income food-deficit countries, the small-scale farmers and the groups most vulnerable to price shocks, especially women and girls. As the Secretary-General said, there is no answer to the food crisis without an answer to the finance crisis.

The second step is for the short term. Global supply chains for food and agricultural products need to be secure and open. Countries should refrain from banning food exports and keep supply chains open for the unimpeded movement of essential goods, food, fertilizer and agricultural products. One fifth of all fertilizer exports are currently restricted, for example. Any such emergency trade measures should be targeted, proportionate, transparent and temporary, without

creating unnecessary barriers to trade, and should be consistent with World Trade Organization rules. The relevant international organizations should facilitate policy dialogue and coordination to ensure efficient movement of food, grains, oil seeds, animal feed, fuel, fertilizer and agricultural commodities.

The third step is for the medium-to-longer term. The sustainable production of food and agricultural products, for example through sustainable farming, should be more vigorously promoted. Science and technology should be mobilized to increase yield, enhance efficiencies and improve food storage. Looking down the road to 2050, it is envisaged that the world will have to feed 2 billion more people and therefore double crop production. Humankind is currently 90 per cent dependent for its nutritional needs on a total of 15 crops, so to keep up with that pace we may ultimately have to diversify.

In conclusion, we will never achieve the level of food security in the biblical Garden of Eden, before Adam ate the apple and departed from paradise. However, we will need to come together if we are to rescue millions of people from the purgatory of starvation and hunger. People deserve one of their most basic human rights — the right to adequate, safe, affordable and nutritious food.

Mr. Ladeb (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to thank all the States that supported resolution 76/264, and we welcome its adoption by consensus. Today we need that consensus, united efforts and renewed hope in the effectiveness of multilateral action, in addition to enhanced cooperation and solidarity. Today's consensus reflects our joint recognition of the difficult situation the world is facing in the light of a food crisis that needs no further diagnosis or proof. It has become a tangible danger that threatens the food security of millions, and not only those in areas of conflict or difficult humanitarian situations. However, those vulnerable groups will also surely be the worst affected in many developing countries and even in some middle-income States.

This international crisis is compounding the already-existing difficulties that those countries are facing, especially the repercussions of the coronavirus disease, climate change and other factors that have exhausted their capacities and financial abilities and weakened their ability to recover and make progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The crisis is even threatening to

destabilize social peace and political stability in many countries, especially in the light of the record inflation that the world is experiencing, with rising interest rates, increases in debt and limited sources of finance.

We are running out of time. We need to announce a state of alert for this global food security crisis. We must take exceptional and urgent measures to limit its repercussions, confront rising energy prices and facilitate access to funding before matters get worse. In that context, Tunisia renews its call to the international community, especially the Group of Seven, the Group of 20 and the international financial institutions, to prioritize global food security and support multilateral efforts to confront the food security crisis. That includes providing urgent support to the countries affected, especially those that are heavily indebted, by accepting delays in debt repayment. We also urge all Member States to avoid storing basic supplies and food products and to keep markets and trade channels open for the flow of food, fuel and fertilizer. We hope that resolution 76/264 will pave the way for a new stage of cooperation, solidarity and united efforts to prevent the worsening of hunger and further disruption in global food security.

In conclusion, we welcome the efforts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme. We also renew our appreciation and support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and the work undertaken by the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Amal Mudallali, Permanent Representative of Lebanon, for her very constructive and leading role in coordinating the efforts of the core group and drafting resolution 76/264, which we just adopted by consensus. I would also like to express our appreciation to all the Member States that joined the list of sponsors of this important resolution. Egypt is also pleased to be among the members of the core group drafting the resolution.

Today food insecurity is a real threat that is affecting most nations in the developing world, including my own country, Egypt, which is the largest importer of wheat in the world and one of the largest net food-importing developing countries. Reaching a consensus on resolution 76/264 is proof of our joint commitment to working together to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, on ending hunger and achieving food security, using a comprehensive and holistic approach that takes

into consideration the needs of developing countries. In that regard, we welcome and support the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, established by the Secretary-General, and its steering committee, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General. We look forward to its work and outcome.

I understand that the Group's second brief is about to be issued. We therefore do not see resolution 76/264 as the end of the road but rather as the beginning of wider international attention and efforts to address the issue of global food insecurity. We expect that the issue of food security and the challenges associated with it will receive much-needed attention during the high-level segment of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. That is what we want to see. I see no global issue more deserving of broad attention than this one, and no issue more pressing than that of ensuring that every human being is guaranteed a dignified share of food and access to it. It is vital to end hunger and remain on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, which we all agreed to a few years ago.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker on this item. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 26?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 7 (continued)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Reports of the General Committee

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 117 at its 35th plenary meeting on 16 November 2021. In order for the Assembly to consider the report of the Committee, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 117.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 117?

It was so decided (decision 76/506 B).

Agenda item 117 (continued)**Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments****(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions****Report of the Fifth Committee (A/76/516/Add.1)**

The Acting President: The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Committee before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position. In paragraph 5 of the report, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Evgeny Kalugin of the Russian Federation as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning on 21 August 2022 and ending on 31 December 2023.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Evgeny Kalugin as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning on 21 August 2022 and ending on 31 December 2023?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I therefore take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 117?

It was so decided.

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.56)**

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.56.

Mr. Pieris (Sri Lanka): Sri Lanka is pleased to submit draft resolution A/76/L.56, entitled “World Seagrass Day”, for the consideration of the Assembly under agenda item 15. We thank delegations for their constructive engagement throughout the intergovernmental consultations, which have enabled this draft resolution to be adopted by consensus today. We further thank the Member States that have sponsored the draft.

Seagrasses are one of the most valuable marine ecosystems on earth, covering around 300,000 square kilometres in 159 countries and on six continents. They provide a range of critical environmental, economic and social benefits, of which the most significant is their enormous carbon-sequestration potential, capable of storing up to 18 per cent of the world’s oceanic carbon. That is greater than the carbon-sequestration potential of rainforests, making the restoration and maintenance of seagrass a vital tool in our efforts to adapt to and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. The vital functions of seagrasses include their role in stabilizing the sea bottom and providing ecosystem support via food and shelter for a number of marine creatures, including commercial and recreational fish species, turtles, dugongs and manatees. Seagrasses also provide protection from coastal erosion, which is one of the main reasons why Sri Lanka, a littoral State, is introducing this draft resolution.

It is also a fact that seagrasses are being destroyed at a rapid pace as a result of human activity. Coastal development, pollution and certain types of fishing activities are among the key drivers contributing to the destruction of this delicate marine environment. The United Nations Environment Programme publication *Out of the Blue: The Value of Seagrasses to the Environment and to People*, states that we are losing 7 per cent of seagrass marine habitat worldwide per year, which is equivalent to a football field of seagrass lost every 30 minutes.

My delegation is therefore pleased to take this small step forward towards their preservation, along with other States Members of the United Nations, by adopting this draft resolution to declare 1 March as World Seagrass Day. We expect that this small but significant step will help raise the level of awareness needed to conserve and restore seagrass ecosystems, which are an integral part of our march forward to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We reiterate our appreciation to all the sponsors and delegations that

engaged with us during the informal consultations in arriving at a consensus on the draft resolution. We also wish to thank the World Seagrass Association for the support and encouragement given during this whole process. We call on all Member States to support and adopt this draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President: We will now take a decision on draft resolution A/76/L.56, entitled “World Seagrass Day”.

I now 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 draft resolution A/76/L.56, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guyana, Indonesia, Madagascar, Maldives, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Timor-Leste and Uganda.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/76/L.56?

Draft resolution A/76/L.56 was adopted (resolution 76/265).

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

Agenda item 78 (continued)

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/76/838)

Draft decision (A/76/L.46)

The Acting President: The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft decision A/76/L.46 is contained in document A/76/838.

I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore to introduce draft decision A/76/L.46.

Mr. Khng (Singapore): On behalf of Ambassador Rena Lee, the President of the Intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, I have the honour of introducing draft decision A/76/L.46, on the convening of a fifth session of the conference.

In its resolution 72/249 of 24 December 2017, the General Assembly decided that the conference should initially meet for four sessions. The fourth session of the conference took place from 7 to 18 March 2022, after having been postponed twice due to the global coronavirus disease pandemic. At the end of the fourth session, the conference considered that an additional session was required as soon as possible to make progress, and requested that the President of the conference take the necessary steps to that end.

Draft decision A/76/L.46 is based on the recommendation of the conference, which was adopted by consensus. It proposes that the General Assembly decides to convene a fifth session of the conference for a period of 10 working days in August 2022, with full conference services, including documentation, provision for parallel meetings and overtime, webcast, and press and meeting coverage, as required for the duration of the conference. We hope that the General Assembly will adopt the draft decision without a vote.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A.76/L.46, entitled “Intergovernmental conference on an internationally legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/76/L.46?

Draft decision A/76/L.46 was adopted (decision 76/564).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 78 and its sub-item (a).

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.