



General Assembly

Seventy-sixth session

93rd plenary meeting

Monday, 11 July 2022, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Shahid (Maldives)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 115 (continued)

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(b) Election of members of the Economic and Social Council

The Acting President: Since no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority in the previous ballot, there remains one seat to be filled from among the Eastern European States. We shall therefore proceed to the fifth unrestricted ballot. In accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure, this twelfth round of balloting shall be unrestricted.

May I remind the Assembly that any Member State from among the Eastern European States may be a candidate except those that will remain members of the Economic and Social Council as of 1 January 2023, as well as those that were already elected for a term beginning on 1 January 2023. The following members can therefore not be voted for in the present balloting: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers will now be distributed.

Members are requested to put an "X" in the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper or to write the name of another eligible State on the blank line. If the box next to the name of a State is checked, the name of that State does not have to be repeated on the blank line. There should not be more than one checked box or handwritten name for the vacant seat to be filled. Accordingly, members can check only one box or write one name of an eligible State from among the Eastern European States in the space provided.

If the ballot paper contains a vote for a Member State that will remain a member of the Economic and Social Council as of 1 January 2023 or that was already elected for a term beginning on 1 January 2023, the ballot paper will be declared invalid. Finally, if a ballot paper contains any notation other than a vote in favour of an eligible Member State, those notations will be disregarded.

At the invitation of the Acting President, the representatives of Ecuador, Hungary, Japan, Mozambique, New Zealand and Timor-Leste acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The Acting President: In the interest of time, the General Assembly will now proceed to consider the other items announced in *The Journal of the United Nations* while the ballots are being counted.

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

22-41797 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 115.

Agenda item 7 (continued)

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

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 74 at its 54th plenary meeting, on 24 December 2021. To enable the General Assembly to take action on the draft resolution, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 74. May I take that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 74?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2021, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (b) of agenda item 74 to the Third Committee. To enable the Assembly to take action expeditiously on the draft decision, may I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider sub-item (b) of the agenda item 74 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 74 (continued)

Promotion and protection of human rights

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Draft decision (A/76/L.69)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/76/L.69, entitled “The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity”. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision A/76/L.69?

Draft decision A/76/L.69 was adopted (decision 76/571).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 74?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 20 (continued)

Sustainable development

Draft resolution A/76/L.68

The Acting President: I give the floor to the Special Representative of the President of Uzbekistan on Foreign Policy to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.68.

Mr. Kamilov (Uzbekistan): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/76/L.68, entitled “Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia”. At the outset, I would like to thank all Member States for their active and constructive engagement in the negotiation process, as well as for their valuable input and proposals for the text of the draft resolution.

Central and South Asia are two regions that are closely connected historically, given the similarities in their economic, social and cultural dimensions. Located at the crossroads of the Great Silk Road, they have contributed to active dialogue between peoples and civilizations for many centuries.

In recognition of the fact that connectivity plays a key role in trade, economic growth and sustainable development and also contributes to strengthening regional cooperation and developing friendly relations among nations, at the initiative of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan, on 15 and 16 July our country hosted a high-level international conference, entitled “Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities”. The conference, which was attended by many high-level delegations from all over the world, provided a unique opportunity and platform for discussing a wide range of important topics related to development and the strengthening of regional connectivity in Central and South Asia. Secretary-General António Guterres, who sent a video message to the conference participants, highlighted the crucial role of connectivity in trade, economic growth and sustainable development, and expressed the full commitment of the United Nations to supporting efforts to strengthen connectivity in the region.

In recent years, the concept of connectivity has become an essential item on the agenda of the United Nations and plays a key role in a human-focused approach that leaves no one behind. The Charter of the United Nations encourages measures to establish regional cooperation in advancing the purposes

and principles of the United Nations. In practice, the implementation of infrastructure projects such as the Mazar-e-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, as well as the Central Asia-South Asia-1000 power transmission and trade project and the Surkhan-Puli-Khumri power transmission line, will promote the consolidation of connectivity between the two regions. In that regard, the draft resolution before the Assembly recognizes the importance of regional connectivity in promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and emphasizes the key role of transport and transit corridors in accelerating economic growth and increasing the efficiency of trade and economic ties between the countries of Central and South Asia, as well as cooperation in the field of energy.

In Uzbekistan, we consider Afghanistan to be an integral part of Central Asia. The proposed draft resolution therefore recognizes the importance of Afghanistan's potential role in connecting Central Asia and South Asia, as well as the importance for lasting peace and stability of its economic development and integration into interregional economic processes. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that the Government of Uzbekistan is planning to hold a high-level international conference on Afghanistan in Tashkent on 25 and 26 July, to discuss ways to find a consolidated approach to the peace process in that country.

From Uzbekistan's perspective, the adoption of draft resolution A/76/L.68 will be an important milestone in promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development in Central and South Asia and strengthening relationships between the regions and its peoples in the areas of education, science and technology, innovation, tourism, culture, art and sports, as well as accelerating trade and economic ties. We firmly believe that connectivity between Central Asia and South Asia will be key in ensuring stability and sustainable development, as well as improving the living standards and well-being of the peoples of the two regions.

In conclusion, I would once again like to thank all delegations for their support throughout the negotiation process, and to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to those countries that have already sponsored our resolution and encourage other Member States to do so.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/76/L.68, entitled "Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/76/L.68: Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Burundi, the Central African Republic, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Türkiye, Uganda, Vanuatu, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/76/L.68?

Draft resolution A/76/L.68 was adopted (resolution 76/295).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to delegations in explanation of position, I would like to 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 Czech Republic.

Mr. Kulháněk (Czech Republic): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

We welcome the adoption by consensus of resolution 76/295, entitled "Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia". We thank Uzbekistan, especially our colleagues Mr. Laziz Karaev and Mr. Gulyamjon Pirimkulov, for their skilled facilitation of the negotiation process.

I would like to make a few comments relevant to the EU in the context of the resolution. With regard

to Afghanistan, and paragraph 5 of the resolution in particular, the EU is very concerned about the humanitarian, economic, security and political situation in Afghanistan, which has deteriorated significantly since the Taliban took over in Kabul on 15 August 2021. The EU would like to emphasize that the long-term stabilization and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan will take place only if various political and security requirements are fulfilled.

The EU's assistance in Afghanistan has significantly increased to cover the country's huge humanitarian needs, as well as to address fundamental needs of the Afghan population such as basic services, livelihoods, displacement and human rights, with a particular focus on the rights of women and minorities. The EU's engagement with the *de facto* authorities continues to take place based on five criteria defined by the EU and its member States in the European Council's conclusions of 21 September 2021. Security Council resolution 2593 (2021) reaffirmed the importance of those five areas and called for action to be taken in that regard. The criteria, which are meant to fulfil the expectations of the people of Afghanistan with regard to peace, security, justice and development, are an essential prerequisite for the successful completion of paragraph 5 of resolution 76/295, and as such should have been included in the text.

On another note, we appreciate the fact that the resolution emphasizes the importance of effective border management in promoting connectivity. That is key to ensuring security and stability, facilitating trade and cross-border cooperation among countries, thereby promoting sustainable development in Central and South Asia. In that regard, the EU has contributed and shared its best practices in Central Asia for 20 years through the flagship Border Management Programme in Central Asia. We would have welcomed a reference to that in the resolution.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position. We will now hear statements after the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Pakistan is grateful to the Government of Uzbekistan for proposing this important resolution (resolution 76/295) on strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia. We welcome its introduction today by Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, the former Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan and currently the Special Representative of the President of

Uzbekistan on Foreign Policy. Pakistan is honoured to have been a sponsor of this timely resolution.

Regional connectivity in road, rail, energy, trade, ports and shipping is a vital accelerator of economic production, growth and prosperity. Regional connectivity and cooperation can also contribute to building and sustaining peace, stability and security. The ancient silk route that connected the East and the West across the Eurasian heartland was a prime historical example of the benefits of regional connectivity. It unleashed an era of prosperity in the West, the East and in Central Asia. China's Belt and Road Initiative and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor are contemporary initiatives aimed at reviving the prospects of prosperity through regional connectivity and cooperation.

The regions of Central and South Asia, both adjacent to Pakistan, are among the world's least economically integrated areas. Unlocking the potential of their integration can therefore provide a significant impetus to economic growth, productivity and prosperity in both regions and beyond. Relations between the peoples of Central and South Asia are rooted in a shared historical and cultural heritage, a foundation on which the two regions can build connectivity and cooperation in trade, investment, transport, energy, tourism and other sectors. For the landlocked Central Asian States, Pakistan can serve as a gateway not only to South Asia but to global markets. We have traditionally engaged in close cooperation with the countries of Central Asia, and that has deepened in recent years. Pakistan and the Central Asian States have concluded several multilateral and bilateral trade agreements, including the Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement.

As Mr. Kamilov mentioned, we are working on several specific connectivity projects. The first seeks to enhance energy connectivity through the Central Asia-South Asia-1000 project, which would supply surplus electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The second enhances transport connectivity through the Termez-Mazar-e-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway project, which will provide Central Asian States with access to deep-sea ports in Gwadar and Karachi. The third provides gas connectivity through the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. There is also an emerging consensus on extending the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to Afghanistan.

For the success of connectivity and integration between Central and South Asia, it will be vital to ensure

durable peace and security in Afghanistan. Today, after 40 years of conflict, there is an opportunity to bring peace and development to Afghanistan. To that end, it is essential to establish sustained engagement with the de facto Afghan Government, especially for the forum of its six neighbours plus Russia.

The greatest challenge to full connectivity with and within South Asia arises from the tensions between Pakistan and India over Jammu and Kashmir. That festering dispute must be resolved in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Ms. Ershadi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, let me express my appreciation to Mr. Bakhtiyor Ibragimov, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan, and his colleagues for their tireless efforts in preparing the text of this important and timely resolution. I would also like to express my gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Special Representative of the President of Uzbekistan on Foreign Policy and former Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, for his presence here today and for introducing resolution 76/295.

My delegation attaches great importance to the issue of connectivity between Central and South Asia, as well as to the comprehensive and consistent development of ties in all areas between the States of Central and South Asia, based on the spirit of traditional friendship between the peoples of the two regions, with the purpose of strengthening historical and cultural bonds. On the other hand, we want to stress the need to increase cooperation in all the relevant arenas, especially in the fields of economic production, investment, energy, transport and technological innovation.

My delegation also underlines the importance of strengthening regional and interregional connectivity and joint action on infrastructure-development policies, energy and unimpeded trade and financial cooperation. We are of the view that connectivity plays a key role in trade, economic growth and sustainable development, enhances regional cooperation and fosters friendly relations between neighbouring States. In this regard, we highlight the important role of such regional organizations as the Economic Cooperation Organization in enhancing interregional and intraregional connectivity.

My delegation also encourages the continuation and advancement of Central and South Asian cooperation by

expanding transport and communication infrastructure and international transport corridors that open such convenient, commercially and safe routes to seaports as those linking Termez, Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Zahedan and Chabahar as well as the Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Pakistan railway system. We also highlight the importance of multimodal transport for connectivity of the Central and South Asian regions, and in this context underline the crucial role of such ports as Chabahar. With its unique capacities, potentials and capabilities and as an important connecting bridge between Central Asia and South Asia, Iran is ready to help promote the connectivity between these two important regions.

In conclusion, I would like to add that the negative impacts of unlawful and unilateral coercive measures, illegal unilateral sanctions and the politicization of the vital issue of connectivity in this area should be taken into account.

Mrs. Kasymalieva (Kyrgyzstan): At the outset, let me thank and congratulate our colleagues from Uzbekistan for the initiative and the successful adoption of resolution 76/295, entitled "Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia".

We warmly welcome the presence of Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Deputy Secretary of the Security Council under the President of Uzbekistan in charge of Foreign Policy and Security Affairs.

From the very beginning, Kyrgyzstan supported the idea and promotion of resolution 76/295 and became one of its main sponsors. The resolution reaffirms that regional cooperation is an effective form of multilateralism and international cooperation, contributing to the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. It emphasizes the importance of the comprehensive and consistent development of relations among the States of Central Asia and South Asia in all areas.

My country is interested in continuing to work on the development of regional connectivity to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is focused on the need to consolidate efforts in the fight against common challenges and threats to stability and security in Central and South Asia. In this regard, Kyrgyzstan welcomes the adoption of this important and timely resolution.

Mr. Ren Hongyan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Connectivity is a very important driver for development and revitalization of various countries. China

commends and supports Uzbekistan's initiative in presenting the draft resolution entitled "Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia" in the General Assembly, just adopted as resolution 76/295. This resolution emphasizes the importance of intraregional and interregional connectivity and will contribute to the international community's support for regional connectivity to maintain the stability of global industrial and supply chains. It will also lend impetus to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In 2013, President Xi Jinping put forward the Belt and Road Initiative. Since then, China has developed closer ties and better cooperation with countries of the Central Asia and South Asia regions. Many pragmatic projects have been making steady progress, and economic ties and trade have been deepened. In June this year, the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of China and five Central Asian countries adopted a new "China+5" connectivity initiative. In September 2021, President Xi Jinping solemnly put forward the Global Development Initiative at the General Assembly general debate (see A/76/PV.3, annex VI), committing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and making connectivity in the digital era an important area of cooperation.

China is ready to work with countries in the two regions as well as all parties to strengthen the Belt and Road Initiative and cooperation under the framework of Global Development Initiative and to help countries in the two regions transform landlocked countries into land-connected countries, so that we can have a partnership with closer connectivity and build a global community of shared development.

Mr. Annaberdiyev (Turkmenistan): At the outset, we would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Bakhtiyor Ibragimov, Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations, and his team for the tireless work on resolution 76/295 and congratulate them on its successful adoption by the General Assembly. We also would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, for introducing the resolution.

We are convinced of the importance and relevance of strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia in the light of the present circumstances and trends. We thank the Government of Uzbekistan for holding a high-level international conference entitled "Central and South Asia: regional connectivity — challenges and opportunities" in Tashkent on 15 and 16 July

2021. Turkmenistan participated at a high-level in this conference. As the representative of Uzbekistan expressed in his introductory statement today, the conference served as the basis for today's resolution.

Turkmenistan views Central and South Asia as a geostrategic space, given the importance of both regions' economic potential for the sustainable development of the countries in Central and South Asia, particularly in terms of strengthening the regional connectivity with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of trade and economic relations, a cultural humanitarian collaboration among the States of the two regions and their unique transport, transit and investment potential.

Turkmenistan advocates the consistent development of transport and trade links, including cooperation mechanisms, as well as the implementation of the principles of modernization, harmonization and digitalization in the fields of transport, logistics and management of trade-supply chains at both the regional and international levels. In this regard, in November 2016, Ashgabat hosted the first United Nations Global Conference on Sustainable Transport, which is reflected in the sixth preambular paragraph of resolution 76/295.

In conclusion, we appreciate the initiative taken by the delegation of Uzbekistan in presenting this resolution. From our perspective, strengthening connectivity between the countries of Central and South Asia will contribute to the fulfilment of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, deepen relations among the countries in both regions and enhance the contribution of the countries of Central and South Asia to the knowledge and understanding within the United Nations system of the vast areas they comprise.

Mr. Hikmat (Tajikistan): At the outset, let me join my colleagues in commending the Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan, in particular His Excellency Mr. Bakhtiyor Ibragimov, for introducing and advancing this very important initiative, in particular, resolution 76/295, entitled "Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia". We also commend Mr. Ibragimov's able team for facilitating the informal consultation on this important text leading to its successful adoption by the General Assembly.

We recognize and welcome the presence of His Excellency Abdulaziz Kamilov, Special Representative of the President of Uzbekistan for Foreign Policy.

The Republic of Tajikistan is honoured to be among the main co-sponsors of the resolution. We

acknowledge the importance of transport and transit corridors for accelerating economic growth, increasing the efficiency of trade and economic ties among the countries of Central and South Asia, and we recognize the importance of cooperation between Central and South Asia in finding ways to enhance and strengthen collaboration between those two important regions. We also realize the importance of exchanges of experience between those two regions in promoting sustainable development, including through access to clean energy technology and disaster risk reduction strategies and enhancing cooperation, including through initiatives that address environmental challenges and contribute to the protection of the environment and ecosystems.

Tajikistan therefore welcomes the adoption of this relevant resolution and looks forward to joining hands with Uzbekistan and other relevant partners in the implementation of this important resolution.

Mr. Chumakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, we would like to thank our colleagues from Uzbekistan for having taken the initiative to propose and agree upon resolution 76/295, adopted today, as well as for holding an international conference in 2021 entitled “Central and South Asia: regional connectivity — challenges and opportunities”.

Russia supports the very useful document that we adopted today, of which we are a co-sponsor.

We view the issue of connectivity between Central and South Asia first and foremost from the standpoint of integrational processes, which have become very active throughout Eurasia. We have consistently supported the creation of the Greater Eurasian Partnership, a unifying integrative framework that should be as free as possible for the movement of goods, capital, labour and services. That format would be open to all countries and integrational bodies on the continent, including the Eurasian Economic Union.

In that connection, we welcome the provisions contained in the resolution about the importance of developing regional and interregional economic integration. We also have a positive view of the documents targeting the practical development of connectivity between the two regions in terms of transport, energy, digitization, culture and humanitarian cooperation.

In that broad context of increasing connectivity between Central and South Asia, we can see new opportunities for developing trade and economic and investment processes in Eurasia. We support

the call contained in the resolution for the economic development of Afghanistan. A peaceful, developed Afghanistan that is free from terrorism and drugs is in the interest of all States in the region as well as all its neighbours. That is the key to stability in the region as a whole.

Collective efforts to achieve a comprehensive resolution and national reconciliation in the country as well as its social and economic recovery would facilitate increasing cooperation as much as possible between Central and South Asia. That is the only way to successfully implement economic projects and initiatives with the participation of Kabul.

Russia is working to fully implement interregional transit and logistical initiatives such as the International North-South Transport Corridor, which goes from Europe to the Indian Ocean, as well as the Europe-Western China transcontinental transport corridor. We are also updating the Russian port infrastructure on the Caspian Sea. We are continuing to contribute to enhancing mutually beneficial connectivity between Central and South Asia and neighbouring countries in order to develop historic business ties with the use of modern technology in the interests of all of Eurasia, founded on equality, mutual respect and seeking a balance of interests.

Ms. Dubey (India): We thank the delegation of Uzbekistan, the facilitator of resolution 76/295, for all its efforts.

We joined the consensus today on the resolution but would like to make an explanation of position.

Robust connectivity within and between Central and South Asia is rooted in history. Connectivity with the Central Asian countries remains a key priority for India, and our focus in the last few years has been to rebuild links that were diminished by the colonial period.

India is a member of both the International North-South Transport Corridor and the Ashgabat Agreement. Since 2016, India has taken practical steps to operationalize the Chabahar port in Iran. That provides secure, viable and unhindered access to the sea for Central Asian countries.

The working group on the joint use of Chabahar port is a welcome development. Economic growth is universally driven by three “C’s”: connectivity, commerce and contacts. All three need to come

together to ensure regional cooperation and prosperity. Connectivity projects deserve priority attention and could be a force multiplier for trade and economic cooperation and contacts between countries and people.

While expanding connectivity between Central Asia and South Asia, we need to address not just physical infrastructure but all its accompanying facets. Tourism and societal contacts can create a fostering, enabling environment. Connectivity has acquired particular salience in the context of post-coronavirus disease recovery, as there is a widespread realization of the need for more resilient and reliable supply chains.

Development and prosperity go hand in hand with peace and security. Peace and security in Afghanistan are critical imperatives that all of us need to collectively strive for. India will continue to play its role towards the pursuit of that objective. The interests of the Afghan people will continue to be at the heart of our efforts in Afghanistan.

Connectivity initiatives should be based on certain principles. Building connectivity is an act of trust and must, at a minimum, conform to international law. Connectivity initiatives that straddle national boundaries must be pursued in a manner that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations. They should promote trade, not tension. No country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Connectivity efforts must be based on economic viability and financial responsibility. They should promote economic activity and not create debt burdens. Connectivity must be consultative, transparent and participatory, focusing on local priorities. Ecological and environmental standards, as also skill and technology transfers, are imperative.

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

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 20.

Agenda item 115 (continued)

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(b) Election of members of the Economic and Social Council

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Eastern European States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	170
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	170
Abstentions:	4
Number of members present and voting:	166
Required two-thirds majority:	111
Number of votes obtained:	
Russian Federation	94
North Macedonia	72

Since no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority in the previous ballot, there remains one seat to be filled from among the Eastern European States. We shall therefore proceed to a sixth unrestricted ballot. In accordance with rule 94 of the Assembly's rules of procedure, this thirteenth round of balloting shall be unrestricted.

I would like to remind the General Assembly that any Member State from among the Eastern European States may be a candidate except those that will remain members of the Economic and Social Council as of 3 January 2023, as well as those that have already been elected for a term beginning 3 January 2023. The following members can therefore not be voted for in the present balloting: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Before we begin the voting process, I would like to remind members that in accordance with rule 88 of the rules of procedure, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of voting.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers will now be distributed.

Members are requested to put an X in the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper or to write the name of another eligible State on the blank line. If the box next to the name of the State is checked, the name of that State does not have to be repeated on the blank line. There should not be more than one checked box or handwritten name for the vacant seat to be filled. Accordingly, members can check only one box or write one name of an eligible State from among the Eastern European States in the space provided.

If the ballot paper contains a vote for a member State that will remain a member of the Economic and Social Council as of 3 January 2023 or that has already

been elected for a term beginning 3 January 2023, the ballot paper will be declared invalid.

Finally, if a ballot paper contains any notation other than a vote in favour of an eligible member State, the notations will be disregarded.

At the invitation of the Acting President, the representatives of Ecuador, Hungary, Japan, Mozambique, New Zealand and Timor-Leste acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and resumed at 4.25 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Eastern European States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	176
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	176
Abstentions:	3
Number of members present and voting:	173
Required two-thirds majority:	116
Number of votes obtained:	
Russian Federation	99
North Macedonia	74

Since no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority in the previous ballot, one seat remains to be filled from among the Eastern European States. We shall therefore proceed to the seventh restricted ballot.

In accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure, this fourteenth round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Eastern European States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous unrestricted ballot, namely, the Russian Federation and North Macedonia.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of voting.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers will now be distributed.

Members are requested to put an "X" in the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper. There

should be no more than one checked box for the vacant seat to be filled. A ballot will be declared invalid if both boxes are checked. Any notation other than a vote in favour of an eligible Member State will be disregarded.

At the invitation of the Acting President, the representatives of Ecuador, Hungary, Japan, Mozambique, New Zealand and Timor-Leste acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.50 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Eastern European States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	175
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	175
Abstentions:	3
Number of members present and voting:	172
Required two-thirds majority:	115
Number of votes obtained:	
Russian Federation	99
North Macedonia	73

Since no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority in the previous ballot, one seat remains to be filled from among the Eastern European States. We shall therefore proceed to the eighth restricted ballot.

In accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure, this fifteenth round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Eastern European States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous unrestricted ballot, namely, the Russian Federation and North Macedonia.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of voting.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers will now be distributed.

Members are requested to put an "X" in the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper. There should be no more than one checked box for the vacant seat to be filled. A ballot will be declared invalid if both

boxes are checked. Any notation other than a vote in favour of an eligible Member State will be disregarded.

At the invitation of the Acting President, the representatives of Ecuador, Hungary, Japan, Mozambique, New Zealand and Timor-Leste acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m. and resumed at 5.15 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Eastern European States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	177
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	177
Abstentions:	4
Number of members present and voting:	173
Required two-thirds majority:	116
Number of votes obtained:	
Russian Federation	99
North Macedonia	74

Since no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority in the previous ballot, one seat remains to be filled from among the Eastern European States. We shall therefore proceed to the ninth restricted ballot.

In accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure, this sixteenth round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Eastern European States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous unrestricted ballot, namely, the Russian Federation and North Macedonia.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of voting.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers will now be distributed.

Members are requested to put an "X" in the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper. There should be no more than one checked box for the vacant seat to be filled. A ballot will be declared invalid if both boxes are checked. Any notation other than a vote in favour of an eligible Member State will be disregarded.

At the invitation of the Acting President, the representatives of Ecuador, Hungary, Japan, Mozambique, New Zealand and Timor-Leste acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 5.25 p.m. and resumed at 5.45 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Eastern European States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	177
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	177
Abstentions:	3
Number of members present and voting:	174
Required two-thirds majority:	116
Number of votes obtained:	
Russian Federation	101
North Macedonia	73

The restricted ballot has again been inconclusive.

One seat remains to be filled from among the Eastern European States. In accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure, we shall continue with this series of balloting.

In view of the lateness of the hour, further balloting will take place on a day to be determined.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 115.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.