



# General Assembly

Sixty-third session

**69<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting

Monday, 15 December 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

*Official Records*

*President:* Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann ..... (Nicaragua)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.*

## Specific meeting focused on development

### Agenda item 107 (*continued*)

#### Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda item 107, entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit", to hold, in accordance with Assembly resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006, a specific meeting focused on development, including an assessment of progress over the previous year.

I now give the floor to Her Excellency Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General.

**The Deputy Secretary-General:** We gather at a time when the world's peoples face multiple crises involving food, fuel and finance. These crises threaten to upset poverty reduction efforts and our development objectives. Therefore, this year's meeting of the General Assembly on development takes on special significance.

The expected recessions in most developed economies are likely to slow the robust growth experienced by developing countries during the past five years. There is already evidence that the financial crisis is proving contagious, as exports from and remittance flows into many developing countries are diminishing.

Moreover, the slowdown in developing countries is coming before many of them have had a chance to recover from the shocks of the food and fuel price hikes of 2007 and 2008. The prospects for the least developed countries are deteriorating rapidly.

Even as we grapple with the causes and consequences of these crises, the threat of climate change is also upon us. Our immediate efforts to manage the impacts of recent crises must not deflect our attention from tackling this challenging problem. The international community must work together simultaneously on poverty, hunger, disease and finding an acceptable path of sustainable development.

Poverty eradication is a top priority. Lack of progress in achieving this goal could undermine efforts to realize other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We have made some progress, but the latest data show that much more needs to be done.

Creating jobs and accomplishing the goal of creating decent work for all are crucial targets. According to the International Labour Organization, more than 20 million people are likely to lose their jobs because of the current crisis.

In the area of health, significant but slow progress has been made in reducing child mortality. However, major differences remain between the regions. Gains that have been made in the treatment and prevention of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria need to be sustained. There has been little movement on maternal and newborn mortality. The strengthening of health systems remains a challenge.

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We have also made some gains in establishing sustainable development as a primary objective of development strategies. The challenges posed by climate change are being acknowledged widely. There is now a growing recognition that development is not attainable if it is not sustainable. Thus, we face heightened challenges as progress slows. We must act decisively to stop any further reversals.

We know that people and countries plagued by poverty will be hit hardest by the crisis. That is why aid flows have to be sheltered from its impact. Some important steps have been undertaken to strengthen international development cooperation, but there is a growing fear of setbacks if the recessions in developed countries deepen.

The commitments to increase the volume of official development assistance and improve its quality and impact, reiterated at the Doha Conference just a couple of weeks ago, must be honoured. The Doha Review Conference has resulted in a firm recommitment to the global partnership for development.

A successful conclusion to the Doha Round of trade negotiations is essential. Doha should give new impetus to efforts to realize the MDGs, but it must not erode the developing countries' policy space. A new trade agreement must ensure that poor countries have access to cheaper drugs to fight deadly diseases such as AIDS. They must also have access to cleaner technologies that will enable them to develop without aggravating climate change.

In times of crisis, global solidarity is vital. I was heartened by the display of political will and pledges of support at last September's high-level event on the MDGs. The United Nations must continue to mobilize all its mechanisms to maintain and enhance progress towards development. I would like to stress the important role played by the Economic and Social Council in this regard.

The United Nations Development Cooperation Forum, convened by the Economic and Social Council for the first time last July, demonstrated its potential role in promoting mutual accountability on aid issues. In the current crisis, the Forum can also work towards more effective approaches to development cooperation. Moreover, it is well placed to forge greater coherence between aid policies and other development-related

policies, such as trade policies and those that aim to promote investment and other resource flows.

The Economic and Social Council's annual ministerial reviews are also important for their ability to facilitate exchanges of information and lessons learned. They have paved the way towards mutual accountability in the fulfilment of international commitments in development cooperation and aid assistance. These new functions can enhance collaboration, cooperation and coherence within and beyond the United Nations system in the area of development.

The financial crisis has made it clear that our destinies are deeply interconnected. We have to work together to ensure that our gains are not lost. The global mobilization behind the Millennium Development Goals has been inspiring. Let us not go back on the promises made. This is a time to come together. We should use every opportunity in 2009 to ensure that these trying times do not distract us from our commonly shared goals, particularly the goal of pursuing peace and prosperity for all.

**Mr. Delacroix** (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of taking the floor on behalf of the European Union.

The efforts of the international community to ensure the follow-up of the texts arising from the Millennium Summit, particularly in the area of sustainable development, are of particular importance at this time when, as Ms. Migiro pointed out, the financial crisis, the impact of climate change and attacks on the environment, and the increase in food prices and energy costs could jeopardize the progress made in the area of economic growth and the improvement of living conditions in a number of countries, particularly affecting the poorest and the most vulnerable.

The work of this sixty-third session of the General Assembly, marked by the seriousness of the situation, has benefited from the positive results of the international meetings that have been held throughout the year, including the first meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum; the twelfth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in Accra; the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, also held in Accra; the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs; and

the High-Level Event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

These major meetings have shown us how much work remains to be done by all participants in order to achieve the goals set by the international community at the Millennium Summit. The dynamism from which these events benefited was useful for the very important meeting in Doha early this month: the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development.

The European Union participated very actively in the drafting of the Outcome Document of the Doha Conference and is happy to see its success. The Conference was the opportunity for the European Union, the leader in official development assistance, to strongly reaffirm its solidarity with its partners in the South and its commitments in the area of official development assistance. The European Union will continue to spare no effort to help the international community to meet its commitments, in particular with regard to sub-Saharan Africa, where there are serious delays.

Strengthened cooperation at all levels is also indispensable if we are to pool our energies for sustainable development and the protection of the environment.

Climate change is a reality today, and everyone is feeling its effects. We must intensify our efforts to fight against this phenomenon, which affects in turn our ability to achieve our environmental, economic and social goals, and which has an impact on peace and security. The European Union has placed climate change at the heart of its action. The European Union intends to maintain its level of ambition and commitment. The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poznan last week has placed us on the right track for the Copenhagen Conference next year.

Climate change is inseparable from other threats to the environment and sustainable development. Thus, the loss of biodiversity, which we undertook in Johannesburg to reduce significantly by 2010, must be seen together with problems such as desertification, deforestation and climate change.

We must also remain very attentive to the social aspects of development and create conditions that allow for the full development of every individual: respect for the rule of law, the promotion of human

rights, gender equality, the protection of children, education, health care and the fight against the major pandemics, economic and social rights and decent work, particularly in the face of the growing migration flows, as well as a number of other challenges.

In seeking to meet these numerous challenges, we should look to the future work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the entire United Nations system with a will to rationalize agendas, to make our work effective and complementary with the decisions of other institutions and intergovernmental bodies, and to ensure the coherence of the system at Headquarters and in the field.

In this respect, we welcome the adoption at the end of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly and during the current session of consensual resolutions on the operational development activities of the United Nations system that will allow us to make significant progress in the rationalization of the operational activities of the system for the benefit of our partners.

More generally, we welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 62/277 on system-wide coherence within the United Nations system, and we are happy to see that the current session, as well as the Doha Conference, has already enabled us to consolidate some of the achievements of that resolution.

We also welcome the initiatives taken over the past two years in the organization of the work of the Economic and Social Council. We feel that the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum are very promising mechanisms. We must also benefit as far as possible from the Council's spring session, which is an occasion to strengthen our partnership with the Bretton Woods institutions — a partnership that is particularly needed, given international reflections currently taking place on the financial crisis and its impact on development.

However, we would like to express a degree of concern at the accumulation of numerous proposals for new summits and high-level meetings in future years. It seems to us very important for the very credibility of our Organization and for its budgetary stability that we think more strategically with regard to the areas in which the United Nations can really add value as compared to other international forums, and with regard to the deadlines that it seems truly important for

our leaders to meet, using existing structures insofar as possible, so that, within the framework of the United Nations, we can provide genuine dynamism and real added value to our common action for the implementation of the texts adopted at the Millennium Summit.

**Mr. Reina Idiaquez** (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to commend your efforts and to congratulate you, Mr. President, on having organized this meeting to discuss the Millennium Development Goals and the world economic crisis, which also enables us to consider in depth the need for genuine democratization of the United Nations and the international economic system.

We have entered a period of history from which we will not emerge the same. Something will change, and we will emerge well or not well, according to how we act. Much will depend on what we do, how we do it and when we do it.

I am duty-bound to appeal to the international conscience regarding the negative impact of the current crisis, which is hindering the access of millions of people in our region to the most basic services and products for human consumption. They are victims of the inequities of the international market and of this global crisis, which is aggravating the situation of the most vulnerable populations in our countries and forcing them to survive by fighting fierce daily battles to find food.

This crisis requires immediate responses, and we cannot, through neglect and indifference, overlook the neediest in our societies. That is why it is important that the General Assembly play a more dynamic and active role in preparing short- and medium-term strategies that offer viable and lasting solutions.

The financial and economic crises of the past sent us a very clear message, although we did not know how to interpret it. The crises began in the United States, a symbol of wealth and development, and spread suddenly, like a tsunami.

At the dawn of United Nations history in the mid-twentieth century, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were created at Bretton Woods, as we all know. Ever since then, it has been assumed that the main goals of the United Nations would be shared by all States and organizations and by the entities created at Bretton Woods. They were not

two separate organizations; it was a single international community which needed to harmonize its criteria for assisting countries. As a consequence, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund fall within the worldwide structure that is the United Nations.

*Mr. Jeenbaev (Kyrgyzstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Our historical experience holds many lessons for us, among which is the need to evaluate, with an eye to the future, the viability of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as they work at the moment in order to determine whether they require major changes. It is clear that their viability will depend on their being brought up to date and made more democratic. Democratization has taken hold in almost all of the countries of the world, but not in all of the organizations in which those democratic countries participate. The economic and financial objectives of these institutions must maintain a relevant relationship with democratic structures across the globe. This is an aspiration shared by all countries, all peoples and all human beings.

Experience also teaches us that, while the United Nations drafts plans for attaining the Millennium Goals and reducing poverty, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have adopted policies that diverge from and contradict those goals. This divergence results in a shock when such policies conflict with the policies of human and democratic development designed by the United Nations. Experience also tells us that, if we seek to resolve economic problems, we cannot choose solutions that promote greed. Privatizing profit and socializing loss, as stated by President Lula of Brazil at the general debate of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, is a path at odds with ethics and is, furthermore, unsustainable.

The weakness of the existing institutions highlights the need for change to update and democratize the entire architecture of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods agreements. The recent meeting of the Group of Twenty, held in Washington, D.C., on 15 November, underlined the importance and necessity of revising the structure and sustainability of these institutions and, above all, the need for their reform. Honduras adds its voice to the call for the necessary consultations to be held at the very highest level in order to achieve, as soon

as possible, the appropriate strengthening of the aforementioned institutions.

Following consultations with Member States, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon laid out at those meetings some steps to be followed. He has our full support in his initiatives. Other initiatives have been suggested by the President of the General Assembly on more than one occasion.

The Presidents of Central America, organized in the Central American Integration System, which I have the honour of chairing until the end of December, raised the issue of the need for the General Assembly to assess the consequences of the economic crisis on the Millennium Development Goals in terms of food, climate, energy and health needs. Following up on this decision, the countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, with our co-sponsorship, agreed on the preparation of a draft resolution that has been submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly with a view to organizing a world summit in order to reach consensus on common solutions between countries, rich and poor, large and small, in the pursuit of common benefits in the interests of all humanity. This same idea, with some variations, was raised by the Group of 77 and at the recently concluded Doha Summit. There can therefore be no doubt that a global consensus has been formed on this historic matter.

The strength of this meeting convened by our illustrious friend, the President of the General Assembly, lies in its timeliness and its potential historic impact if we are able to update and adapt the United Nations and to recast the Bretton Woods institutions, which are in urgent need of democratization and rejuvenation, with a democratic vision.

We must construct a world of peace and development with the support of all. That has been and continues to be not only the founding but the lasting dream of the United Nations and of all the peoples of the world. When we say that we need the support of all, we are referring to specific situations in which, in the ideal vision of a just and fair world, such goals could be achieved with relative ease. By way of example, I note that, if trade barriers no longer existed, our exports would reach the market in more competitive circumstances, allowing our productive sector to be much more profitable. If the increasing distortion of agricultural trade caused by production

subsidies were brought to an end, our economies, which rely strongly on the primary sector, would likely be strengthened, opening up greater opportunities for employment generation. If migration were no longer considered a crime and migrants no longer treated as international criminals but as human beings, then development, progress and harmony among nations would very likely make it possible to bridge the gaps between developed and developing countries.

Perhaps these proposals may seem unattainable, but Honduras, its President and its people will never renounce our dream of a just world where there are opportunities for everyone and where solidarity and democracy are the norms governing relations among human beings and the members of the international community.

**Mr. Khan (Pakistan):** We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this specific meeting of the General Assembly focused on development, as decided in resolution 60/265. As we deliberate this important issue today, the world is in the throes of a development emergency triggered by multiple crises of finance, food and energy and a looming global recession. Clearly, these crises seriously threaten the efforts of developing countries like Pakistan to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It is particularly alarming when we also know that poverty is more widespread than previously estimated and that it is rapidly increasing.

Earlier this month in Doha, our review of the implementation of the development commitments made in Monterrey also confirmed the existence of a serious deficit in their implementation. More notably, as reflected in the continuing decline in official development assistance flows, there are also distortions in the global trade regime and a continued exclusion of low-income countries from global economic governance and decision-making. All signs indicate that the present crises will only make the implementation shortfalls more pronounced and real.

Happily, in Doha, we were able to rekindle the Monterrey spirit and recommit to a genuine global partnership for development — a partnership that is rooted in the belief that, as members of humanity, our destiny is interwoven and that peace and development are inseparable. That partnership is premised on mutual trust and the common pursuit of agreed goals.

We particularly welcome the Doha decision to convene a United Nations conference on the world financial and economic crisis. The conference, we believe, will provide a good opportunity, at the highest political level, to fully assess the impact of the financial crisis on the efforts of the developing countries to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development. It should also offer specific recommendations on how best to address the challenges and underlying factors that triggered the crisis. We look forward to an early convening of the conference and to working closely and cooperatively with the President of the General Assembly in defining the modalities for the conference.

Pakistan is also delighted at the agreement reached in Doha to have a strengthened and more effective intergovernmental process to follow up on the implementation of the Doha Declaration. Pakistan has long pushed for effective implementation mechanisms to monitor development commitments under United Nations auspices. We see this decision as an important step in the right direction and will be working closely with Member States for its early realization.

We would have liked to have used this specific development-focused meeting to carry out a serious, comprehensive and in-depth review of the global economic situation and to make concrete recommendations on how best to tackle the multiple crises, including the global economic meltdown. As pointed out this past year as well, this meeting would have better served its original purpose if it had been scheduled at the beginning of the General Assembly session rather than towards the end of the main part of its work. Convening this meeting earlier, during the general debate of the Assembly, we believe, would have allowed our leaders to collectively reflect on the global economic trends and prospects and to assess progress in the implementation of the development goals and commitments on an annual basis. We realize that this important role, on account of the extraordinary circumstances that we face this year, will be played by the United Nations conference that we have all agreed to convene soon.

The dwindling interest in this meeting, which is marked by limited participation, as reflected in the short speakers' list this morning, particularly with regard to speakers from the developed countries, speaks volumes about why the timing and scheduling

of this meeting are not appropriate and need to be revisited.

Before I conclude, Pakistan, for its part, will continue to work closely with our partners in a constructive and creative manner to address some of the key challenges that we face globally and in the context of our work in the United Nations in advancing the implementation of the global development agenda.

**Ms. Alzhanova** (Kazakhstan): This sixty-third session of the General Assembly, from day one of the general debate, has been marked by deliberations on the world economic and financial crisis, volatility in food and fuel prices and the adverse impacts of climate change and the costs of its mitigation, all of which represent challenges to efforts to create environments conducive to development in any State in the world.

We strongly believe that the United Nations is the one truly global venue where the world can unite and hear deliberations by representatives of all Member States and by the world's leading experts. Therefore, Kazakhstan highly welcomes the decisions to hold a United Nations summit and a high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council in 2009 to examine the underlying causes of the financial crisis, present recommendations, undertake a comprehensive review of the financial institutions and articulate a policy framework for making the international financial system more inclusive, democratic and development-oriented.

We are concerned by the far-reaching impact and multidimensional effects of the crises on the global economy and financial system, yet we fully recognize that the core and primary responsibility of any State is to be engaged in development processes through the exercise of ownership and the effective implementation of national policies and development strategies, thus realizing its respective commitments towards its own people.

Without waiting for the results of the international deliberations on global economic and financial governance, which could ensure a more effective and coordinated management of the aforementioned global issues, Kazakhstan is already participating in the process by mitigating setbacks to our own development objectives and finding solutions to strengthen our economy, maintain our growth and sustainable development and protect our citizens, especially by empowering marginalized groups in

society in order to shield them from the severe impacts of the crises. We are doing so on the basis of our strong belief that each country's individual development at the national level contributes to the foundation of international financial and economic well-being.

This is why Kazakhstan has undertaken a series of measures to stabilize its internal market through sound economic and financial policies and structural reforms. To sustain our current level of socio-economic development, my Government has chosen to mitigate the negative consequences of the crises through measures of unprecedented scale, including the adoption of an economic and financial system stabilization plan and the use of a national fund to ensure that there are effective mechanisms to respond to economic instability, modernize our economy and manage risks in both the public and the private sectors.

To support the economic and financial sectors, \$15 billion was allocated towards stabilizing the housing market, supporting local small and medium-sized enterprises, and enhancing the incomes of socially marginalized groups through increases to social benefits and pension payments. \$5 billion will be channelled to the Samruk-Kazyna National Welfare Fund and other funds allocated to recapitalizing the major banks and injecting money into the national financial securities market. The rest will be provided as liquid assets to private companies financing the real sectors of economy, especially our "leap forward" innovation and infrastructure projects.

We are all aware that the "three f" crises and the subsequent cuts in foreign direct investments and official development aid have had a particular impact on the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Kazakhstan was the venue for the first ministerial conference that raised the issue of the economic vulnerability of landlocked countries and called for worldwide attention to them. As such, my country highly values the broad recognition of the needs of landlocked developing countries and stronger engagement by donor countries to the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action through the adoption of new modalities and concrete measures of assistance to landlocked developing countries and the redressing of trade imbalances for this group of countries, thus ensuring their stable economic growth.

In his 2008 annual address to the nation, the President of Kazakhstan called on the business community to fully commit to the realization of the State's social policy through the integration of environmental and social partnerships and the inclusion of community relations issues in corporate strategic business plans and everyday operations.

Furthermore, we will follow the United Nations recommendation that governmental solutions be aligned with the Millennium Development Goals. The Government of Kazakhstan strongly adheres to efforts to mainstream environmental sustainability into all socially oriented development policies in all national, sectoral and local strategic programmes and action plans.

For example, implementing the national sustainable development concept at the local level provides for the establishment of transboundary sustainable development zones on the basin principle, which contributes to the resolution of environmental and socio-economic problems.

Furthermore, in keeping with the renewed priority placed by the Government of Kazakhstan on strengthening its social development policy and with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Kazakhstan 2009-2014, our country will rely on best foreign practices and on the technical assistance of United Nations programmes and specialized agencies in formulating a people-oriented economic policy, developing a socially responsible private sector and improving our public administration system.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Secretary-General and his staff for all the work done by the United Nations to promote the implementation of the outcomes of the Millennium Summit. We express the hope that these multilateral deliberations will maintain the momentum and will increase opportunities to enhance global development processes and resolve today's acute problems in a concerted manner.

**Mrs. Núñez Mordoche** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The efforts of the nations of the South to achieve their sustainable development are being seriously threatened today. The high-level dignitaries attending the recent Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Doha, acknowledged that fact in the outcome document of that event, the Doha Declaration. While it contains

important statements on the current economic and financial context, the document does not provide a comprehensive and accurate diagnosis as to the seriousness of the situation that the world is experiencing or its implications for the poorest countries. It merely reiterates old commitments, which still require the political will of the most powerful in order to be met.

Every day, we continue to receive all manner of analyses and forecasts concerning the repercussions of the current financial and economic crisis on the weakest economies. At the same time, there is sufficient evidence of the negative impact of climate change and environmental degradation, whose main victims continue to be the poor and most vulnerable countries. In the particular case of small island States, the devastating paths of hurricanes and other climate-related phenomena in recent months have caused extensive economic losses, including resource losses of every kind, that have set us back years in terms of development. Foreign indebtedness continues to deepen the structural crisis of our economies, and the stalemate in the Doha Round of trade negotiations — which were supposed to have been focused on development — completes the discouraging scenario that we have described.

Regrettably, urgent solutions to address those issues are still not being provided. Rich countries and the international institutions representing their interests do nothing more than offer us palliatives and temporary remedies, often marred by onerous conditionalities, instead of seriously committing themselves to finding and implementing effective measures that will finally provide the radical changes we so sorely need.

Today, it is more urgent than ever to establish an international order based on solidarity, social justice, equity and respect for the rights of peoples and of every human being. We do not need more rhetoric or empty promises. The question is whether those responsible for the chaotic and unequal world in which we live today are willing to give up at least some of their privileges and their wastefulness.

Such change will occur only through a profound transformation of the current economic, commercial and financial system, resulting in more just regulations that truly facilitate the sustainable development of our peoples. The need to continue to strive for a new

international economic order was acknowledged a few days ago by the 115 nations that voted in favour of a draft resolution under this item presented by the Group of 77 and China in the Second Committee of the General Assembly. Other important ongoing initiatives will give pre-eminence to the role of the Assembly in discussing these issues and, in particular, in establishing new international institutions that meet the true needs and priorities of our peoples.

At the current international juncture, we hope that the Organization can play its historic role and that it can become, as has been said, the most legitimate defender of the rights of the world's dispossessed and marginalized, in particular their most urgent right: the right to development.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Russian*): We have heard the last speaker for this specific meeting focused on development. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 107.

#### **Agenda item 114 (*continued*)**

#### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations**

##### **(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization**

##### **Draft resolution (A/63/L.39/Rev.1)**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Russian*): Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 114 and its sub-items (a) to (u) at its 36th and 37th plenary meetings, on 3 November 2008.

Before we proceed to consider draft resolution A/63/L.39/Rev.1, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Cambodia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/63/L.39/Rev.1?

*Draft resolution A/63/L.39/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 63/144).*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Russian*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 114?

*It was so decided.*



**The Acting President** (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to appeal to those Member States intending to submit draft resolutions on the remaining sub-items to do so as soon as possible.

*The President in the Chair.*

### **Programme of work**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to draw the attention of members to the date of recess of the current session. Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, held on 19 September 2008, the General Assembly decided that the sixty-third session would recess on Tuesday, 16 December 2008. However, in view of the work that remains to be done in this part of the session, I would like to propose that the Assembly postpone the date of recess of the current session to Monday, 22 December 2008.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to that proposal?

*It was so decided.*

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): In addition, I should like to consult members regarding an extension for the work of the Fifth Committee. Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, held on 19 September 2008, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the General Committee that the Fifth Committee complete its work by Friday, 12 December 2008. However, I have been informed by the Chairperson of the Fifth Committee that the Committee was not able to finish its work on Friday, 12 December, and would need additional meetings until Monday, 22 December 2008. May I therefore take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Fifth Committee until Monday, 22 December 2008?

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at noon.*