



# General Assembly

Seventy-second session

**71<sup>st</sup>** plenary meeting  
Monday, 11 December 2017, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Barros Melet (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

## Agenda item 3 (continued)

### Credentials of representatives to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly

#### (b) Report of the Credentials Committee (A/72/601)

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution entitled “Credentials of representatives to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly”, recommended by the Committee in paragraph 12 of its report.

I now give the floor to the Chair of the Credentials Committee, Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland, to introduce the report of the Credentials Committee.

**Mrs. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): On behalf of the Credentials Committee, I have the honour to introduce the report of the Committee concerning the credentials of the representatives of Member States to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, contained in document A/72/601.

Having considered the credentials of the representatives at its meeting on 4 December, the Credentials Committee adopted without a vote a draft resolution accepting the credentials. The Committee also recommended to the plenary of the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution concerning

credentials of representatives to the current session of the General Assembly, contained in paragraph 12 of the report of the Committee.

The General Assembly is therefore requested to adopt the draft resolution approving the report of the Credentials Committee. I would like to note that after the meeting of the Credentials Committee, the Secretary-General received formal credentials in the form required by rule 27 of the rules of procedure from Turkey.

Finally, I would like to express my own gratitude to the members of the Committee and the Secretariat for facilitating our work.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled “Credentials of representatives to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly”, recommended by the Credentials Committee in paragraph 12 of its report. The Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 72/135).*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor to delegations that wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, I would like to remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

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>).



**Mr. Dibaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation joined the consensus on resolution 72/135, just adopted. However, I would like to express my delegation's reservations about the parts of the report contained in document A/72/601 and in the resolution that could be construed as recognizing the Israeli regime.

**Mr. Habib** (Indonesia): The Republic of Indonesia, as a State Member of the United Nations, has contributed to multilateral activities in complete harmony with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and pursuant to the relevant resolutions and guidelines of its principal bodies. We hold dear all the norms and standards of international law and all their ramifications, while greatly revering the sanctity of the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity on which the Organization rests.

To that end, the Republic of Indonesia would like to draw the attention of the full membership of the United Nations and the entire United Nations system to the unfriendly action of Vanuatu during the high-level segment of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, when it included in its delegation non-citizens of Vanuatu who have supported or been active in the separatist movement in West Papua, Indonesia. Those people have malicious intentions. They have spread vicious rumours and hatred and should not be granted credentials in the Assembly. Vanuatu's action, as reflected in its credentials, has violated common decency and shown ill intentions towards a friendly Member of the United Nations by supporting separatist movements and their intentions, which runs contrary to the principle of friendly relations among States.

Indonesia categorically objects to that act and roundly rejects whatever message it was intended to convey. We underline that among other things it violates the norms of multilateral conduct, as well as the rights of a fellow Member State. We are confident and believe that it is evident that the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of its principal bodies advocate firmly and affirmatively friendly relations and cooperation among States and the inviolability of their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Against that backdrop, it is the position of Indonesia that the accreditation of separatists by Vanuatu, while knowing full well the mindset of those individuals, is a hostile act directed against Indonesia and aimed at dividing or destabilizing Indonesia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We believe that Member States

should not play into the hands of separatists or provide opportunities and grant privileges that could be misused by those interest groups with separatist intentions.

To that end, my delegation asks the Assembly and Vanuatu whether such an action is in line with the spirit and the letter of the Charter of the United Nations, which is based on respect and good neighbourly peaceful coexistence. We request an explanation from the Permanent Mission of Vanuatu to the United Nations concerning its accredited list of delegates.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 3 and of agenda item 3 as a whole?

*It was so decided.*

## **Agenda item 15 (continued)**

### **Culture of Peace**

#### **Draft resolutions (A/72/L.29 and A/72/L.30)**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of the Philippines to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.29.

**Mr. Locsin** (Philippines): It is my honour and privilege to join the Permanent Representative of Pakistan in introducing the draft resolution entitled "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace", contained in document A/72/L.29.

This draft resolution is sponsored by a number of friends and partners from across the regions of Asia and the Pacific, Africa, the Americas and Europe. We thank all Member States for their active participation and constructive input during the five informal consultations and intensive bilateral negotiations conducted over the past two weeks. Both the Philippines and Pakistan have endeavoured to accommodate the views, concerns, contributions, suggestions and inputs provided by many delegations in consultations conducted in an open, inclusive and transparent manner.

Since 2004, Pakistan and the Philippines have co-sponsored such resolutions under the agenda item "Culture of peace". This year, the draft resolution's objectives are twofold: first, to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue to achieve peace and

stability and as the most promising course for realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and, secondly, to strengthen mechanisms and take appropriate action to promote sincere and constructive dialogue across cultural and religious divides. The first reduces the material causes of conflict arising from the frustration of basic human needs. The second reduces the intellectual obstacles to mutual understanding, thereby fostering mutual respect and tolerance despite continuing disagreement.

Today the world faces seemingly intractable conflicts and complex challenges that not only cause immense human suffering and economic loss but also hinder greater socioeconomic cooperation and the pursuit of inclusive societies. We also continue to witness a growing trend of xenophobia and religious intolerance, underpinned by identity politics, as well as the emergence of extremist ideologies in different parts of the world. Suspicion and ignorance among various religions and civilizations are being exploited by extremist and terrorist groups to propagate their agenda, of which carnage is no small part.

We States Members of the United Nations share the aspiration and responsibility to achieve a world at peace through mutual respect, tolerance, acceptance, reconciliation and respect for the rule of law, whereby conflict is avoided and injustice corrected, by means conducive to peace rather than war. We therefore need to continue to build on our shared values and shared aspirations by strengthening mechanisms and actions through constructive dialogue, better understanding, moderation and a global culture of peace. In this context, we underline the important role and invaluable contributions of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue at the national, regional and international levels.

The Philippines walks and works with the community of nations, committed to securing just and enduring peace, shared prosperity and partnerships conducive to those aims. There should be no doubt in our solidarity at the United Nations to embrace a culture of peace, a culture of partnerships and a culture of inclusive societies.

On behalf of the Permanent Missions of Pakistan and the Philippines, I now humbly request all Member States to adopt by consensus draft resolution A/71/L.29,

entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”.

At this point, I wish to make two oral revisions to the text of the draft resolution, which are the result of last-minute negotiations with important stakeholders. First, in the twenty-third preambular paragraph, we wish to replace the word “acknowledging” with the phrase “referring to”; and, secondly, also in the twenty-third preambular paragraph, we wish to add the symbol “A/72/488” as a technical revision to footnote number 4, referencing the Secretary-General’s report on “Promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.30.

**Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace” (A/72/L.30).

A culture of peace is an aspiration of all humankind. Promoting and inculcating a mindset of a culture of peace is at the core of the creative management of differences and divisions. Over the past 18 years, Bangladesh has been facilitating this seminal resolution, having introduced the text on this agenda item to the Assembly since 2000. Our Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, remains personally attached to the issue and underscores the importance of a whole-of-society approach in our national context for promoting a culture of peace.

We thank delegations for their active participation in informal consultations on the draft resolution once again this year, and for their valuable inputs and cooperation, which have enriched the draft resolution.

This year, the draft resolution has four new elements worth highlighting.

First, the draft resolution acknowledges the President of the General Assembly’s high-level event on a culture of peace, held on 7 September, and its focus on early childhood development. In a separate operative paragraph, Member States and relevant United Nations entities have been urged to enhance their focus on early childhood development, in recognition of its importance and relevance for nurturing the mindset of a culture of peace.

Secondly, the draft resolution recalls resolution 70/262, on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, which introduced the notion of sustaining peace, and also recognizes that efforts towards peacebuilding and sustaining peace should take into account the promotion of a culture of peace. It builds on last year's paragraph 7, in which the General Assembly acknowledged the potential contribution of the peacebuilding architecture to promoting a culture of peace.

Thirdly, in the context of recalling resolution 70/291, on the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review, the resolution notes the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism pursuant to resolution 71/291.

Fourthly, the resolution further recognizes the work done by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting a culture of peace, and refers to the event "Youth engagement: the nexus to building inclusive societies and sustaining peace", held on 22 September. The resolution encourages the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to increase its activities focusing on peace education and global citizenship education in order to enhance an understanding among young people of values, such as peace, tolerance, openness, inclusion and mutual respect, which are essential in developing a culture of peace.

The draft resolution reiterates the request to the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session to consider convening a high-level forum devoted to the implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace in the first half of September 2018. We look forward to working together with the Office of the President of the General Assembly to make the event a success, and encourage all delegations to offer suggestions for a relevant theme for the event.

We sincerely thank those delegations that have already sponsored the draft resolution, and look forward to registering more sponsors ahead of its adoption by consensus, which will take place shortly. We must collectively uphold our commitment to this seminal resolution on a culture of peace and to our ownership of it, to reinforce our efforts to foster peace diplomacy.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.29, entitled "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace", as orally revised.

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 the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed on the document, the following countries have become sponsors of A/72/L.29: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.29, as orally revised?

*Draft resolution A/72/L.29, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 72/136).*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.30, entitled "Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace".

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 the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed on the document, the following countries have become sponsors of A/72/L.30: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, the Maldives, Malta, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, the Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Togo, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam.



**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.30?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 72/137).*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor to speakers wishing to explain their position on the resolutions just adopted, I would like to remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Margaryan** (Armenia): Armenia recognizes, supports and fully shares the basic premises and purposes of resolution 72/136, entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”.

We commend the sponsors of the resolution for their tireless efforts in bringing it to a consensual outcome. Our objections to some of the resolution’s paragraphs were based on the fact that a certain country, Azerbaijan, has developed a tradition of abusing various international forums, in particular those held in their country, by way of disseminating hate propaganda against Armenia and its people, and distorting the basic principles and the content of negotiations for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. In particular, we refer to the twenty-third preambular paragraph, which concerns the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue as a key global platform for promoting intercultural dialogue. The event is a glaring example of manipulating an international gathering into an instrument of propaganda against Armenia, as is evident from the statements of the leadership of the host country.

Due regard should also be given to Azerbaijan’s dismal record of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, intentional destruction of the cultural heritage of historical and religious significance, as was the case, for example, with the obliteration of thousands of Armenian cross stones in the medieval cemetery of Julfa, Nakhichevan. Armenia dissociates itself from this paragraph and does not consider the language contained therein to be a basis for future negotiations. Furthermore, we reiterate our position with regard to the event held in Baku in April 2016, in the aftermath of large-scale aggression against Nagorno Karabakh, in flagrant violation of trilateral ceasefire agreements and accompanied by acts of

barbarity and total disregard for international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We refer in particular to the text of a letter of 26 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia addressed to the Secretary-General (A/70/846).

**Mr. Brown** (United States of America): The United States of America is strongly committed to encouraging a culture of peace through the promotion of justice, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as by rejecting violence and addressing the root causes of conflict. Furthermore, the United States firmly supports efforts to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue and cooperation. However, while we joined the consensus on the resolutions adopted today, we would like to take this opportunity to clarify some important points.

With regard to the reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United States recognizes the Agenda as a global framework for sustainable development that can help countries work towards global peace and prosperity. However, each country has its own development priorities, and we emphasize that countries must work towards implementation in accordance with their own national policies and priorities.

With regard to resolution 72/136, we note that the word “moderation” remains undefined in international law and in our discussions. We are concerned that the implementation of moderation-focused programmes and policies will be subject to abuse. We are concerned that States can construe moderation to justify undue restrictions of expression or religion, both of which would contradict internationally recognized rights. Programmes and policies implemented in the name of moderation must respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Furthermore, with regard to language asserting that all religions are committed to peace, the United States takes no position on that statement and does not support the involvement of member States in interpreting what commitments religions may or may not make.

Finally, language in the resolution welcoming the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s Declaration on Promoting Cultural Pluralism and Peace through interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue should not be understood as acceptance of all statements made in the Declaration, in particular for those States that are not members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

**Ms. Galarneau** (Canada): I take the floor to explain our position on resolution 72/136, entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”.

First, with regard to paragraph 10, Canada would like to thank Pakistan and the Philippines for their close facilitation of the negotiations and their sustained efforts to achieve a consensus text. We are deeply committed to promoting pluralism, inclusion, respect for diversity and all human rights. That is why we have decided to support this draft resolution.

Regarding paragraph 10, Canada would like to emphasize that we understand that interventions aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism, including those that fall under the term “moderation”, are locally relevant and context-specific. We believe that in doing so, we must guarantee respect for human rights, diversity and inclusion, with a view to helping individuals and communities become more resilient to radicalization to violence. To that end, we recognize the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue with the aim of creating mutual respect and understanding, which are essential for fostering a culture of peace. It is a difficult balance but one we are committed to continuing to work to preserve with all our partners.

Our position is that a rules-based and an open, pluralistic society, characterized by a wide diversity of talk and belief, is a precondition for a culture of peace.

**Mr. De Souza Monteiro** (Brazil): I am delivering this statement as a general statement after the adoption of resolution 72/137.

We welcome the adoption of this long-standing resolution on a culture of peace and thank Bangladesh for presenting it to the General Assembly. Bearing in mind that this is the first time the resolution on a culture of peace addresses the issue of sustaining peace, we would like to make some comments.

Brazil has fully endorsed the twin resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly — resolutions 2282 (2016) and 70/262, respectively — on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, in which the concept of sustaining peace was first mentioned within negotiated documents of the United Nations. We continue to support it as an important advance for the peace and security pillar. However, the Declaration on the Culture of Peace, adopted in 1999, does not have

a focus on peace and security. It proposes a holistic approach to fostering an environment conducive to peace, which includes support for the right of development, sustainable development, gender equality and freedom of expression. While we support both the concepts of a culture of peace and sustaining peace, we believe that they should run on parallel tracks in order to avoid conflating concepts and mandates, and we caution against overemphasizing the role of sustaining peace on this agenda item.

On a more general note, we believe that the General Assembly could do more on the human rights and development elements of the culture of peace.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I give the floor to the representative of El Salvador to make a statement.

**Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): This is a general statement under agenda item 15, particularly on resolution 72/137. My delegation welcomes the adoption of the resolution, which highlights the important inclusion of the promotion of a culture of peace in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We thank the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh for its efforts in facilitating its adoption.

El Salvador acknowledges that building a culture of peace in the framework of the 2030 Agenda requires that institutions be strengthened, and therefore that various public policies designed to contribute to building a more inclusive and equitable society also be strengthened.

For El Salvador, the recovery and promotion of historic memory and a culture of peace are crucial elements in fostering a society that is tolerant and conducive to harmonious coexistence. It also offers a wide range of possibilities and capacities to promote the comprehensive transformation of an inclusive society, especially for population groups that have historically been excluded.

We believe it important that the resolution underscores the contribution of early childhood development to the development of more peaceful societies. In that connection, my Government believes it crucial to ensure that all girls and boys complete primary and secondary education, but also that this be achieved with relevant and effective school curriculums

that include the promotion of coexistence and the culture of peace.

We also underscore the important role that women play in preventing and resolving conflicts and in peacebuilding. In that regard, we highlight the creation in El Salvador of instruments such as the National Policy for Women and the Five-Year Development Plan 2014-2019, whose strategies include working to guarantee the rights of priority population groups.

We greatly appreciate the call in resolution 72/137 for the United Nations peacebuilding architecture to continue to promote post-conflict peacebuilding activities at the country level. El Salvador, as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission and an active participant in the General Assembly's discussions on the Secretary-General's proposed reform of the peace and security pillar, hopes to actively promote a culture of peace as a cross-cutting issue in those discussions.

The resolution is a framework of reference for the implementation of actions and decision-making in countries, such as El Salvador, that have overcome internal conflict to enjoy peace. El Salvador reached an agreement on reform, particularly in the political sphere, that was able to overcome armed conflict, but 25 years later we are aware that a political agreement is not enough and that we must seek a national socioeconomic agreement that includes all sectors of the population.

Our Government acknowledges the importance of building a culture of peace in the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In that regard and taking into account SDG 16, El Salvador is already part of a global working alliance that saw a 21.39 per cent national decline in the homicide rate between 2015 and 2016, thanks to policies, plans and institutions dedicated to security and civic coexistence, which assigned leading roles to women, focused on broad alliances with non-State actors and increased statistical capabilities.

As part of the establishment of an inclusive and participatory society, we value the creation and establishment of strong institutions with the purpose of disseminating and promoting the culture of access to information and the accountability of the Governments. El Salvador has established a secretariat for civic participation, transparency and corruption in order to

promote initiatives aimed at reducing corruption and bribery in all its forms.

El Salvador, as this year's President of the UNESCO Group of 77 and China chapter in Paris, highlights UNESCO's efforts to mobilize stakeholders and synergies in support of a culture of peace. We deem it important for all Member States to support UNESCO in its endeavours to actively implement a culture of peace and its links to the various Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, as well as to the associated events taking place here in New York.

In that regard, we underscore paragraph 15 of the resolution that we have just adopted, and reiterate our call to the President of the General Assembly to convene a high-level forum devoted to the implementation of the Programme of Action in September 2018, in the context of its follow-up and links with the sustainable development frameworks that have been in force since 2015.

In conclusion, we believe that peace cannot be reductively considered as the mere absence of war and violence. That is why peacebuilding cannot be seen as a unilateral responsibility; rather, it must be seen as a shared responsibility that we must take on and build together at the domestic and international levels.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker under this agenda item.

The representative of Azerbaijan has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I would like to remind him that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan): Azerbaijan attaches primary importance to the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue at the national and international levels. Multiculturalism and tolerance are a long-standing tradition in my country that help to consolidate our multiethnic and multicultural society.

We welcome the adoption by consensus of resolution 72/136, entitled "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace." We thank the delegations of Pakistan and the Philippines and the co-facilitators for their efforts and for skilfully leading the negotiations on the resolution.

The resolution welcomes the declarations adopted by the Global Forums of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, among them the Baku Declaration of the seventh Global Forum. The resolution also refers to the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, organized biennially by Azerbaijan, in cooperation with UNESCO, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the World Tourism Organization, the Council of Europe and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as a key global platform for promoting intercultural dialogue. We welcome this acknowledgement of the Global Forum by the General Assembly and by the Secretary-General in his latest report on the promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace (A/72/488). The forum is part of the broader Baku process which, as the Secretary-General notes in his report, has been at the forefront of advocating for dialogue among cultures since 2008.

There is nothing surprising in the inadequate and irrelevant attempts of Armenia to once again politicize the process of negotiations on the resolution and its adoption at today's plenary meeting. The fact is that the objectives of the resolution on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace are alien to Armenia, or it would not have become a uniquely monoethnic State pursuing a policy based on exclusion, discrimination and incompatibility on ethnic and religious grounds.

In his statement of 16 October, the Secretary-General encouraged the sides to build on the positive momentum created by the summit held earlier the same day in Geneva between the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia to reach a peaceful negotiated settlement of the conflict. However, by obstructing the efforts to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue and challenging the various global initiatives to that end — solely because of their relation to Azerbaijan — immediately after the Geneva summit and the meeting between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of our countries last week in Vienna, Armenia has shown that the prospects for its engagement in good faith in ongoing efforts towards the earliest resolution of the conflict are faint.

The comments made by the representative of Armenia about human rights and international humanitarian law, as well as about so-called hate propaganda against Armenia, are not worthy of

comment. Suffice it to say that unlike Armenia, which has implemented a policy of total ethnic cleansing in both its own territory and in the Nagorno Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan has preserved its ethnic and cultural diversity to the present day.

The relevant United Nations bodies and other international organizations have more than once expressed their serious concern about the spirit of intolerance prevailing in Armenia. Thus, for example, in its latest report on Armenia, adopted on 28 June 2016, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance particularly noted intolerant statements against the Azerbaijanis. The list of such examples is obviously not exhaustive and can be continued. I am confident that the international community would be more interested in hearing from the delegation of Armenia about the real problems that its country and people are facing in political, economic, social and humanitarian spheres, rather than its comments on human rights in other countries.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 15.

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

#### **Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections**

##### **(a) Election of twenty members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450, of 17 December 1987, and upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

In this connection, the Assembly has before it document A/72/612, containing the nomination of the Economic and Social Council to fill the outstanding vacancies on the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a term beginning on 31 December 2017, as the terms expire for Saudi Arabia, Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cuba, the United States of America, Equatorial Guinea, Iraq, Italy, Namibia, Pakistan, Portugal, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ukraine and Uruguay.



Those States can be re-elected immediately. I wish to remind members that after 1 January 2018, the following States will continue to be members of the Committee: Argentina, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Eritrea, the Russian Federation, France, Haiti, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the United Republic of Tanzania, Senegal and Zimbabwe. Consequently, those 13 States will not be eligible for the election.

I wish to inform the members that the following States have been nominated by the Economic and Social Council: Botswana, Burkina Faso and Cameroon to fill three of the four seats for African States; India, Japan, Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran to fill the four seats for Asia-Pacific States; Belarus, Bulgaria and the Republic of Moldova to fill the three seats for the Eastern European States; Brazil, Chile and Cuba to fill three of the four seats for the Latin America and the Caribbean States; and Germany, the United States of America, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to fill four of the five seats for Western European and other States.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on the basis of dispensing with the secret ballot?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The number of nominated States among African, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western European and other States corresponds to or is less than the number of seats to be filled in each of those groups.

May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare those States nominated by the Economic and Social Council — Germany, Belarus, Botswana,

Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Cuba, the United States of America, India, Japan, Pakistan, Portugal, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Republic of Moldova and the Islamic Republic of Iran — elected as members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a three-year term, beginning on 1 January 2018?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I congratulate those States that have just been elected members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Members are reminded that the Economic and Social Council decided to further postpone the nomination of one member from the African States, one member from the Latin America and the Caribbean States and one member from the Western European and other States for a three-year term, beginning on 1 January 2018.

Members are also reminded that two vacancies remain for Western European and other States for two terms, beginning on election day and expiring on 31 December 2017 and on 31 December 2018, respectively. The General Assembly will adopt measures to fill those vacancies once the Economic and Social Council presents its nominations.

We have thus concluded the current stage of consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 114.

#### **Agenda item 115** (*continued*)

#### **Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments**

##### **(f) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my understanding that the President of the General Assembly is continuing to consult with the Presidents of the regional groups. Therefore, the consideration of sub-item (f), “Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences”, of agenda item 115 has been postponed to a later date.

*The meeting rose at 4 p.m.*