



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

63rd plenary meeting

Friday, 4 September 2020, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 121 (continued)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Draft resolution (A/74/L.90)

The President: In connection with this agenda item, the Assembly has before it a draft resolution issued as document A/74/L.90.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/74/L.90?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 74/303).

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

Mr. Licharz (Germany): I am delivering this explanation of position on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

The European Union attaches great importance to revitalizing the General Assembly with a view to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of this organ by streamlining the work and agenda of the Assembly and its six committees. We consider this to be

particularly important in the year of the Organization’s seventy-fifth anniversary, which we wanted to use to further shape the United Nations we need. This having been said, we fully recognize that the constraints imposed by the coronavirus disease pandemic did not allow for making substantial progress on this agenda item during the seventy-fourth session. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the two facilitators of this process for their tireless efforts in achieving what was achievable under difficult circumstances.

Resolution 74/303 is a technical rollover resolution that reconfirms the validity of last year’s resolution 73/341, as well as its mandates, and provides the basis for discussions at the next session, including the important analysis of how the pandemic has affected the work of the General Assembly and of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly. It is our understanding that this rollover, as laid out in paragraph 1, also reconfirms the mandate for the alignment process, which we consider to be an essential element of the overall revitalization agenda.

We feel the need to voice our disappointment over the lack of tangible results stemming from the alignment process during the session. We recognize that this is partly due to the challenges arising from the extraordinary working methods that have made systematic exchanges nearly impossible. We have also noticed the unfortunate lack of willingness among some partners to engage constructively in discussions aimed at eliminating existing and clearly noticeable duplications and overlaps in the agenda of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

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Along with a number of non-EU countries, the EU and its member States presented a constructive vision on the way forward on alignment, which we hope will be part of the basis for discussion during the upcoming seventy-fifth session. We are determined to make further progress on alignment guided by, in particular, paragraphs 28 and 29 of resolution 73/341.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position after the adoption of resolution 74/303.

I should now like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassadors Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee and Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representatives of Ghana and Slovakia, respectively, Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, who have so ably conducted the discussions and complex negotiations of the Ad Hoc Working Group. I should also like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassadors Collen Vixen Kelapile and Milica Pejanović Đurišić, Permanent Representatives of Botswana and Montenegro, respectively, who also so ably conducted the discussions and negotiations in the intergovernmental consultations on the alignment of the agenda of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies. I am sure that Members of the Assembly join me in extending to them our sincere appreciation.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 121?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 125

Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Draft resolution (A/74/L.85)

The President: The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolution A/74/L.85.

Ms. Jáquez Huacuja (Mexico) (spoke in Spanish): First of all, Mr. President, I too would like to extend my delegation's congratulations on the way you have conducted the work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session.

I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/74/L.85, on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the

Inter-Parliamentary Union. The text outlines the links between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Organization. The draft resolution lays out a noteworthy democratic vision by recognizing the importance of the collaboration of parliamentarians, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union in achieving the common goals of both organizations.

The text calls for the elimination of violence against women in politics and requests the Secretary-General to report on best practices to increase the participation of women in parliaments. It recognizes the role parliamentarians play in the response to the coronavirus disease pandemic. It underlines the importance of ensuring that our response to the pandemic is based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation, and reiterates the need to ensure the availability of and access to essential medicines and vaccines without discrimination of any kind.

In other substantive areas, the text recognizes the contributions of parliamentarians and the role they play in advancing the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals to promote human rights, including efforts aimed at eliminating racial discrimination, in empowering young people and in promoting interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue, among other important points.

The draft resolution we introduce today is the product of an open, inclusive and transparent negotiation process. Throughout this process we had five informal meetings in which the positions of all delegations were discussed and taken into account. We therefore believe that the draft resolution is balanced and relevant.

The draft text that we introduce today has been adopted without a vote for 25 years, which testifies to the importance of interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. We invite all delegations to support this draft resolution as presented and proceed to its adoption.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/74/L.85, entitled "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union".

I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America to introduce an amendment to draft resolution A/74/L.85.

Mr. Simonoff (United States of America): The United States proposes the following amendment to draft resolution A/74/L.85, entitled "Interaction

between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". The United States proposes that the sixth preambular paragraph be deleted in its entirety.

Ms. Jáquez Huacuja (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We understand that a separate vote has been requested on the sixth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/74/L.85. We reject the amendment proposal. We therefore call on all delegations to support the text as a whole as it was presented. As we have already said, the sixth preambular paragraph was discussed at the informal consultations on the basis of consensus-based language previously agreed in the General Assembly. We should therefore not delete it.

We call on all representatives to support the text of draft resolution A/74/L.85, as presented. In that regard, we encourage all delegations to vote against the deletion of the sixth preambular paragraph.

The President: Before we proceed to take action on draft resolution A/74/L.85, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly will first take a decision on the oral amendment proposed by the representative of the United States of America.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

United States of America

Against:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg,

Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Benin, Brazil, Japan, Kiribati, Oman, Senegal

The draft amendment was rejected by 161 votes to 1, with 6 abstentions

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/74/L.85, entitled "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/74/L.85, the following countries have also become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/74/L.85: Andorra, Argentina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chad, China, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/74/L.85 as a whole?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 74/304).

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

Mrs. Bogay (Hungary): Hungary wishes to highlight its national position concerning resolution 74/304, entitled “Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union”.

Hungary regrets that the text refers to the Global Compact for Migration, which has not been accepted by all countries. Hungary, among others, voted against it.

Also, Hungary cannot support the reference to orderly, safe and regular migration and mobility of people at the current time of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused serious changes in the economic and labour market for all countries. The massive job losses are a worrisome development in the labour market situation. Hundreds of thousands of citizens have lost their jobs since the crisis began. It is more than obvious that we cannot continue the approach we have taken so far. In the medium term, and possibly in the long term, the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic may result in changes in the structure of the labour market and could trigger a decrease in the need for a new workforce in destination countries as well. Consequently, Hungary has emphasized that, instead of promoting or facilitating migration, the focus should be on providing assistance to third countries locally by creating local conditions that are more conducive to stable growth and development, thereby allowing everybody to stay at home in peace and prosperity.

Currently, Governments have to handle not only health challenges but also economic problems, and have to immediately provide support to assist their own citizens in overcoming challenges by providing new or alternative job opportunities and ensuring safe economic, living and health conditions.

Based on all this, Hungary stresses that any form of migration or mobility, in particular the planned or managed forms of them, is not desirable under our current circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, as

both pose serious security and health risks, which could cause the virus to re-emerge.

For those reasons, Hungary disagrees with operative paragraph 14 of the resolution.

Mr. Simonoff (United States of America): The United States would like to clarify its views on several elements in resolution 74/304 and state for the record its dissociation from consensus on two paragraphs.

The United States dissociates from the sixth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 6 and does not concur with the references to the World Health Organization in this resolution. While the United States supports access to safe, effective, affordable and quality essential medicines, vaccines, testing and diagnostics, personal protective equipment and medical equipment for addressing the coronavirus disease, that access should not undermine incentives for innovation.

The United States objects to the language calling for continued and enhanced cooperation in supporting Governments in the facilitation of the “orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people”. The resolution is silent on whether such movements are consistent with national immigration laws, nor does it advocate for the need of such movements to be in accordance with law. The way the Assembly talks about crossing international borders should reflect the centrality of law.

Regarding the position of the United States on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the United States raised its concerns in its global explanation of position delivered on 21 November 2019. The United States submitted formal notification of its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to the United Nations on 4 November 2019. The withdrawal will take effect one year from the delivery of the notification. Therefore, references to the Paris Agreement and climate change are without prejudice to United States positions.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, who has asked to make a statement after the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Kuzmin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation welcomes the adoption of resolution 74/304, on the interaction

between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. We would like to also thank the delegation of Mexico for the efforts it made to agree the text of the resolution.

Our delegation is a co-sponsor of this important document, which will become yet another contribution towards the strengthening of interaction among the organizations and the national parliaments mentioned therein and will contribute towards the development of parliamentary diplomacy. We are convinced that a non-politicized, mutually respectful and constructive exchange of opinions among parliamentarians enables us to come up with decisions for serious international problems.

As a host country of the world conference on interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue, which is mentioned in operative paragraph 23 and is scheduled take place in 2022 in Russia, we would like to announce that its title will be “World Conference of Heads of State, Parliamentarians and Representatives of the World Religions on Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue for the Benefit of Peace and Humankind”.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 125?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 31

Prevention of armed conflict

(b) Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this sub-item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with this item, I have received a letter dated 6 July 2020 from the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Turkey to the United Nations, as co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Mediation, requesting the inclusion of this sub-item in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of this sub-item and to include it in the draft agenda of its seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/577).

The 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 31?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 33

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with this item, I have received a letter dated 27 August 2020 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations requesting that the item be included in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to include this item in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/578).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 33?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 37

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with this item, I have received a letter dated 3 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations requesting that consideration of this item be deferred to the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly and that the item be included in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session.

I give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Knyazyan (Armenia): My delegation would like to disassociate itself from the decision to include agenda item 37 on the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of this

item and include it in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/579).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 37?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 38

Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte

The President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session, with the understanding that there would be no consideration of this item by the Assembly. In connection with this item, I have received a note verbale dated 15 April 2020 from the Permanent Mission of the Comoros to the United Nations requesting the inclusion of this item in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to include this item in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/580).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 38?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 63

The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine

Letter dated 28 July from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly (A/74/972)

The President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with the item, an identical letter dated 28 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly has been issued

as document A/74/972, in which it is requested that the item be included in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly.

I now call on those members who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Licharz (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries of the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania; the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union reaffirms its resolute support of Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. We reiterate that we do not recognize and continue to condemn the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation, which is a violation of international law. It remains a direct challenge to international security, with grave implications for the international legal order that protects the unity and sovereignty of all States.

The European Union continues to call for full compliance with international human rights standards on the Crimean peninsula. All pending cases of human rights violations and abuses, such as enforced disappearances, torture and killings, should be thoroughly investigated. International human rights observers must be granted full, free and unhindered access to the whole territory of Ukraine, including in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

The European Union recalls all General Assembly resolutions on this topic from the past few years and calls for their full implementation, including of Russian Federation's obligations under applicable international humanitarian law. The European Union reaffirms its full support, through the endeavours of the Normandy format, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), including the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and the Trilateral Contact Group.

The European Union stresses the importance of enhancing negotiation efforts aimed at the sustainable and peaceful resolution of the conflict in view of the

full implementation of the Minsk agreements by all sides and of measures aimed at rebuilding confidence by underlining the responsibility of the Russian Federation in that regard.

For all those reasons, the States members of the European Union and aligned countries decide to vote in favour of the inclusion of the item “The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine” into the regular agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Ghadirkhomi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor to explain our position on the inclusion in the General Assembly’s agenda for the coming session of the item entitled “The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine”.

We are of the view that debating a multifaceted issue of a highly political and controversial nature will not be very helpful in furthering efforts to achieve workable solutions to any issue that has been already agreed on in the Minsk agreements of 2015 and those reached in resolution 2202 (2015). When there is an agreed international mechanism in place, supported by the Security Council, inserting this dispute into the General Assembly’s agenda could emphasize existing differences and sow division among the Member States rather than bridging those differences. It could even undermine the internationally recognized and agreed framework for settlement in the Ukraine. It would be wise to give the agreed mechanism more time and refrain from making hasty decisions.

Iran’s principled position supports a peaceful resolution of the dispute between Ukraine and Russia, and we firmly believe that the issue primarily concerns the two States involved. A solution reached outside that framework will not work unless it is endorsed by both States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran does not support the inclusion of the supplementary item entitled “The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine” in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. We think it has adverse implications for internationally agreed modalities and formats for reaching the settlement of the dispute that are represented by the Minsk agreements and endorsed by resolution 2202 (2015).

Mr. Kuzmin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The General Assembly has yet again become

hostage to destructive approaches. This platform for dialogue is being used by the Ukrainian delegation and its patrons in order to put forward an artificially created agenda that has nothing to do with reality and even less with trying to find solutions for burning global issues. Member States are having an alternative reality imposed on them, in which a country that does not want to conduct a civilized dialogue with its own people presents itself as a victim of external factors.

I call on the Assembly to consider the title of the item proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session. Let me remind delegations that there have been no temporarily occupied territories in Ukraine since the 1940s. In other words, we are being asked to believe in a sham.

If the Crimea is meant in this context, then it is no secret to anyone that the peninsula became part of the Russian Federation as a result of a referendum. More than 96 per cent of the participants in the referendum voted in favour of becoming part of the Russian Federation. If what is meant in this context is the Donbas, that is a territory where, for six and a half years, Kyiv has been waging war against citizens of Ukraine, who in 2014 refused to accept the coup d’état in the country. That is very well known to the Security Council, which in resolution 2202 (2015) endorsed the specific parameters needed to resolve the situation. I am referring to the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. It is just that Kyiv is in no hurry to implement the provisions of this document.

It is well known that the key to resolving intra-State differences and disputes is an inclusive internal dialogue. This applies also to countries in Asia, in the Americas, Africa and Europe; it is only in Ukraine that the authorities continue to ignore the just demands of the people of Donbas.

The General Assembly is being dragged into a campaign against people in the east of Ukraine, and the United Nations has been led to believe a narrative developed for internal purposes, in which all of the problems of the country are attributed to the myth of Russian aggression. This deception is being actively supported by the Western patrons of Ukraine, which turn a blind eye to the obvious fact that Kyiv is sabotaging the Minsk agreements.

We hope that those present in the General Assembly Hall today will see the Ukraine’s destructive approach

for what it is and not support the proposal to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session. We request a vote on the proposal. We will vote against it and urge other delegations to do the same.

Mr. Al Arsan (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Syrian Arab Republic remains convinced that the request to include the item entitled “The situation in the temporary occupied territories of Ukraine” on the agenda of the General Assembly is a politicized request that reflects the desire of some countries to escalate the situation in that territory and put unfair pressure on the Russian Federation, to the detriment of peace, security and stability at the regional and international levels and of the well-established historical relationship between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples.

This situation is governed by long-standing legal norms, the Charter of the United Nations, international agreements and the rules of international law, which, taken together, require the total reconsideration of the inclusion of the item proposed on the agenda of the General Assembly. In this context in particular, it is important to reaffirm the fact that if the General Assembly takes up this situation on its agenda, it will be encroaching on the mandate of the Security Council, in violation of Article 12 of the Charter. We reiterate that inserting the term “temporarily occupied territories” in the title of the proposed item does not change the fact that this situation falls under the purview of the Security Council, in implementation of resolution 2202 (2015). The situation in these territories will remain governed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements endorsed by the Security Council in that resolution and in presidential statement S/PRST/2018/12 in 2018.

The implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions and the Minsk agreements requires all parties to show genuine political will and collectively work to restore peace and stability in Ukraine and normalize relations between the two neighbours, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, without any negative interference from Western Governments, which claim that they care for Ukraine, while, in reality, they aim to escalate the situation and return to a cold war reality, cultivate animosity through the use of medium- and long-range missiles, and threaten peace and security in this part of the world.

Accordingly, we consider the request to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, as set forth in document A/74/972,

to be a deplorable new attempt to undermine the Minsk agreements and relevant Security Council resolutions, weaken international efforts aimed at resolving the situation and stifle the implementation of measures adopted by the Normandy quartet.

We very sincerely advise our Ukrainian colleagues to respect the fact that there are disagreements between them and their historical neighbours. We advise them to open the door to genuine dialogue with Russia, with a view to implementing the Minsk agreements and Security Council resolutions. We advise them not to give any other State an opportunity to use these disagreements to worsen the situation between the two countries.

My country will vote against the request to include the item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. We call on everyone else to respect the rules of procedure governing this issue and join us in voting against the request.

We again ask our colleagues in Ukraine to open the door to direct dialogue with its people and with the Russian Federation. Dialogue is the only way to resolve disagreement. Ukraine must not let any other party turn the country into theatre of conflict to score points that will not work in favour of the Ukrainian people or to use it as a means to threaten security in Russia, its historical neighbour.

Ms. Agladze (Georgia): I would like to speak in support of the request for the inclusion of the item entitled “The situation in the temporary occupied territories of Ukraine” in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

The illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation constitutes a grave violation of international law and infringes upon the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, including the principles of territorial integrity, the sovereign equality of States, non-use of force or threat of force, and the inviolability of internationally recognized borders. The occupation of Crimea has also resulted in grave violations of human rights and freedoms there, in the absence of international human rights monitors on the ground. These questions are directly affecting the maintenance of regional and international peace and security.

Georgia fully supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and urges the Russian Federation to implement its international obligations. We therefore support and call for the inclusion of the item on the situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

Mr. Reed (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom supports the continued consideration of agenda item 63, “The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine”. We will vote in favour of its inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, and we encourage others to do the same.

The position of the United Kingdom is clear. We do not recognize Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and remain concerned about the situation in non-Government controlled areas of eastern Ukraine. As long as that situation continues, the United Kingdom believes that this item should remain on the agenda.

Let me reiterate: the United Kingdom stands with the international community in its unwavering support for Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr. Simonoff (United States of America): The United States supports retaining this item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. It is entirely appropriate for the General Assembly to continue its deliberations on Russia’s aggressive acts against Ukraine, including its ongoing violations of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity in the Donbas region and occupied Crimea. We urge all delegations to vote in favour.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): We welcome the successful resumption of in-person meetings of the General Assembly under your wise presidency and guidance, Mr. President. A broad range of very important decisions were adopted during the meetings, including resolution 74/300, introduced by Georgia, with a large number of co-sponsors, under agenda item 32, “Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development” (see A/74/PV.62).

My delegation very much regrets the statements of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic demanding a recorded vote on the request of Ukraine (see A/74/972) to include the item “The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of

Ukraine” in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Amid the negative but predictable position of the Russian Federation as a party to the inter-State conflict, my delegation continues to insist on a positive decision by the General Assembly on Ukraine’s request for the following reasons.

As you, Mr. President, already informed representatives, under your presidency the General Assembly has decided to include the item in the provisional agenda for the current session. I would like to highlight the fact that the decision was adopted at the beginning of the session by consensus both in the General Committee and at the General Assembly plenary meeting. We therefore consider the request for a recorded vote today as a sign of disrespect for the Assembly and its decision and an uninhibited attempt by the Russian Federation and a number of States to impede the General Assembly’s special authority, as the most representative main organ of the Organization, to continue its consideration of an issue of particular importance for the international community.

I am convinced that, as the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of our Organization, the General Assembly is entrusted to discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the Charter of the United Nations. I would like to underline that every Member State of the United Nations has the right to be heard in the Assembly. Member States should think about that when they vote. It does not matter whether they are a member of the permanent three, the permanent five, the group of eight, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Organization of American States, the Commonwealth, the Group of 77 and China or the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries — or of none of those groups. They still have the right to be heard in the Assembly. When members are called on to vote against the inclusion of an item, they are basically called on to undermine their right to be heard in the Assembly on any issue that may be of interest to their countries, whether today or tomorrow. Members should think about that.

The Assembly is well aware that, due to the military aggression in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol in Ukraine in 2014, the General Assembly, by its resolution 68/262, entitled “Territorial integrity of Ukraine”, affirmed its

commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. On 27 March 2014, 100 nations voted in support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. I call on the countries present today to vote for the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Since then, in numerous subsequent resolutions, the General Assembly has condemned the ongoing temporary occupation of parts of the territory of Ukraine. I therefore want to underline that the foreign occupation in Ukraine, which continues to this day, is not a new topic for the General Assembly. The retention of the item on the agenda has given the Assembly a much-needed framework and venue for considering the issue comprehensively and in all its complexity, encompassing its political, security, humanitarian, social, human rights, gender and other dimensions, including providing a platform for the Russian Federation to speak under the agenda item.

The consideration of the item in plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 20 February 2019 demonstrated the international community's growing significant attention to the issue of the ongoing unlawful military actions against Ukraine.

Due to the ongoing foreign aggression against my country, the Assembly's close attention to the issue must be consistently maintained.

Let me underline that today's decision is by and large a procedural step. I call on all Member States to vote in favour of the inclusion of this item in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session. I call on all Member States to vote for their right to be heard in the Assembly.

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to a recorded vote on the proposal that the agenda item entitled "The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine" be included in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia,

Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Against:

Armenia, Belarus, Burundi, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Philippines, Russian Federation, Serbia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, India, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Paraguay, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

By 81 votes to 17, with 65 abstentions, the General Assembly decided to include the agenda item entitled "The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine" in the draft agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session (decision 74/581).

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10

minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Knyazyan (Armenia): We asked for the floor to explain our vote on the inclusion of agenda item 63, on the situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, in the draft agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

We reiterate our position that a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the conflict can be achieved between the parties concerned through negotiations within the established formats and through the implementation of mutually agreed arrangements. Armenia continues to believe that there is no alternative to an exclusively peaceful settlement of the conflict.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 63?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 86

Request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/74/991)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with the item, a letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Assembly has been issued as document A/74/991, in which it is requested that the consideration of the item be deferred to the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly. May I therefore take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to include agenda item 86 in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/582).

The President: May I also take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 86?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 120

Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to include this item in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include the agenda item entitled "Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations" in the draft agenda of its seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/583).

The President: May I also take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 120?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 130

The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity

Note verbale dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Denmark addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/74/989)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with the item, a note verbale dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations, also on behalf of the Permanent Missions of Costa Rica, Croatia, Guatemala, Nigeria, Qatar, Romania, Ukraine and Uruguay to the United Nations, addressed to the President of the General Assembly, has been issued as document A/74/989, in which it is requested that this item be included in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session. May I take it that it is the wish of the General

Assembly to include this item in the draft agenda of its seventy-fifth session?

I now give the floor to those members wishing to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Licharz (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

This year the world has faced an unprecedented challenge presented by the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. COVID-19 has also impacted the work of the General Assembly, and it has not been possible for a formal debate to take place during this session.

The European Union supports the rollover of agenda item 130, entitled the “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity”, as requested in document A/74/989, in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

It is important to recall that, in the past, the General Assembly voted in favour of including the responsibility to protect on the formal agenda of its second, seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions. The highly attended formal debates of 2018 (see A/72/PV.105) and 2019 (see A/73/PV.93 *et seq.*) offered Member States an occasion to share views and promote better understanding on all sides. Similarly, we have seen how the debates have informed the work of the Secretariat in its efforts to implement the principle.

It is important to continue on this positive path and allow all Member States to forge consensus on this issue, including in the most representative organ of the United Nations, especially in our effort to build back better together after the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this reason, the EU member States will vote in favour of the rollover and call on all other member States to do the same.

Mr. Al Arsani (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): This is the third time that we have come to this Hall and witnessed disappointing actions by some States in manipulating our procedures to undermine the informal dialogue process on the responsibility to protect. Those States have requested the inclusion of agenda item 130, entitled “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic

cleansing and crimes against humanity” on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Before I elaborate further, I would like to clarify one important point. We are not against the substance of the item. We are discussing today the procedures.

Members may recall that this unfair game began three years ago, when some permanent delegations requested that this item be included on the agenda of the seventy-third session. At that time, those States pledged to request such inclusion only once. However, since then, we have seen the same game repeated every year with different players. Therefore, with all due respect to colleagues and sponsoring States that support this inclusion, allow us to call this a game and a manipulation of procedure. We wish those States would have disassociated themselves from such practice.

It has become obvious that some States still insist on this exclusionary act, which started three years ago, even at the cost of the well-established good practices of the General Assembly aimed at ensuring consensus on the agenda of each session. I remind the Assembly that over the past two years many Member States have criticized this non-transparent manner and called on the States supporting the inclusion of the item to stop playing this game before the opening of each session.

However, those States have turned a blind eye to the deep disagreements among Member States on the concept of the responsibility to protect, in particular, with regard to the third pillar. Everyone knows that this pillar remains a pretext used by some Governments for military aggression against other States. Everyone — including the Secretariat — knows that, to this day, Member States have failed to put in place real rules and limitations to ensure that the responsibility to protect is not misused by the Governments of some Member States unilaterally and without a United Nations mandate. Let us not forget that there are Governments that have carried out military aggression against other States, occupied other States and infringed upon the sovereignty and independence of other States under the pretext of the responsibility to protect.

My delegation, together with a considerable number of Member States, remains unconvinced that the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session would serve the collective free-willed discussion of the concept of the responsibility to protect, particularly in the light of the fact that the informal interactive dialogue meetings have not been

given a real opportunity to iron out disagreements on this controversial concept.

Allow me to ask the Assembly a question and call on it to think deeply about it without putting it to a vote — what is the added value of including the item on responsibility to protect on the agenda of the General Assembly, other than deepening disagreement and shaking our confidence as a result of this exclusionary practice, and giving no chance to the informal dialogue?

Legally speaking, my country reiterates that paragraphs 138 and 139 of the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit (resolution 60/1) did not establish the responsibility to protect as a principle, but reaffirmed the fundamental, inherent and well-established principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations — the principles of maintaining international peace and security, saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirming faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity of the human person and promoting social progress and better standards of life in full freedom while respecting the sovereignty of States and not interfering in their internal affairs.

In that context, we would like to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that the consensual language on the responsibility to protect adopted in the World Summit Declaration is not consistent with the title of agenda item 130, which we are discussing today. Instead, it cancels out the linkage, in substance or form, in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the World Summit Declaration and the proposed agenda item 130. It is known to all that, when we deliberate on a sensitive, serious and controversial issue, such as the responsibility to protect, it is assumed that we will demonstrate responsibility and observe political realism, which makes it incumbent upon all of us to recognize that we are not living in an ideal world, a utopia free of conflict, and that we should eschew the tendency to put narrow national interests above the common good.

To be clearer, some Governments have used the responsibility to protect in the past, some are using it today and some will continue to use it in the future as a pretext to serve their policies of military interference and aggression and to impose unilateral coercive economic measures on peoples of the world under the guise of protecting them.

I have a second question — do we, as the States Members of the United Nations, have a stake in ignoring the sharp disagreements on the concept of the responsibility to protect, and its third pillar in particular? Do we have a stake in giving the United Nations the responsibility to give legitimacy to military aggression and to punish, economically and politically, the peoples of the world by means of this very controversial concept?

We therefore hold the States that requested to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session responsible for deepening disagreements and turning this question into a divisive issue among the United Nations membership. In addition, by doing so, those States undermine the existing consensus among Member States on the agenda for the upcoming session.

In reaction to the firm position of some States, my country, together with a considerable number of other countries, has not and will not recognize any references, ill-founded claims or hypothetical pillar of the responsibility to protect, as being promoted by some Member States in an exclusionary, selective manner that threatens international peace and security.

In conclusion, the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates the fundamental importance of further deliberations on this issue in an informal dialogue. My country objects to the inclusion of item 130 on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session before reaching consensus on the notion and its pillars, as well as the controls and guarantees that prevent it from being misused to advance politicized goals, which runs counter to the United Nations Charter. We request a recorded vote on the inclusion of this controversial and non-consensual item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, and call on Member States to vote against it. Please stand for the Charter and for the rules of procedure.

Mr. Ghadirkhomi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation disagrees with the inclusion of the concept of the responsibility to protect as an item in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session — not because we oppose the basic ideas of the concept, but rather because we want to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that a formal discussion in the General Assembly is not an appropriate way to arrive at an acceptable conceptual framework for its implementation. We would like to underline that the lack of an intergovernmental agreement on the

scope of the application and definition of this initiative will increase uncertainties around the responsibility to protect and the risk of its biased interpretation and application. Discussion on this issue should therefore be devised in a way that appropriately addresses the legal uncertainties and existing conceptual differences among Member States. Formal discussion in the Assembly will only deepen the existing divisions.

In our view, continuing informal interactive dialogues on the subject, as agreed in 2009, is a more appropriate way to address those differences.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is firmly committed to respecting and protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms. That is why we reject the commission of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide and ethnic cleansing, and reiterate the role of the State as guarantor of the security of its people at all times. We also express our support for justice in cases where such crimes have been committed.

Nevertheless, the concept of the responsibility to protect is of serious concern to a significant number of States, including Venezuela. This is due not only to the lack of agreement on its definition and scope but also to the fact that it has been used in practice to promote interference and invasions. Affected peoples have never been protected because the concept has been used as an excuse to encourage unconstitutional changes of Government and plunder their natural resources. The nefarious application of the concept has meant interference in the internal affairs of States with the aim of destroying their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as is intended to be done against Venezuela.

We therefore express our rejection of the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, since it is clear that divergent positions persist on this matter. To proceed otherwise would be to further undermine the consensus that may have existed at some point between 2005 and 2017.

In conclusion, we recall on this occasion that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela cannot participate in the vote that will take place shortly on this matter because, as is well known and for reasons beyond our control, our country's right to vote has been suspended pursuant to the provisions of Article 19 of the Charter. However, we would like to put on record our rejection

and opposition of the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Kuzmin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The main outline of the responsibility to protect was initially reflected in the 2005 World Summit outcome document (resolution 60/1). As we all know very well, that document was adopted by consensus. Thereafter, States conducted an informal interactive dialogue in which they had a comprehensive discussion and expansion of the concept, clarifying details and implementation mechanisms.

Unfortunately, in 2017 the consensus was broken. A number of States decided to end the informal open dialogue and pursue the discussion within the framework of the official General Assembly agenda. Since then, we have seen serious regression on this issue. Unfortunately, consensus is no longer a subject for discussion. We can look at the minutes of plenary meetings and see the deep divergences in the positions of Member States.

We are convinced that the working method on the concept that is proposed in this context will only deepen the existing differences among States. Given this situation, we think that including this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly is not useful.

Mrs. Guardia Hernández (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation takes the floor in connection with the request for the inclusion of the item on the responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

International efforts to prevent the occurrence of acts of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity are objectives that Cuba shares. However, it is well known that, in the past, some States have manipulated the concept of the responsibility to protect, with disastrous consequences for other countries. Originally, the request for inclusion of this issue in the agenda of the General Assembly was only for the seventy-second session of the Assembly, according to the proponents of inclusion at the time. However, every year since then, there have been requests for its inclusion on the Assembly's agenda, despite the differences of opinion and doubts that persist among the Member States on the issue.

These differences of opinion have been evident in the debates that have taken place on the subject. We remain convinced that the inclusion of the concept of the responsibility to protect in the agenda of the General Assembly is a premature step, as the achievement of consensus is not guaranteed. On the contrary, it will exacerbate differences and prompt greater polarization of positions. For this reason, my delegation will vote against the inclusion of this item on the agenda.

Mrs. Azucena (Philippines): The Philippines is of the view that there is still no consensus on the concept of the responsibility to protect. We therefore support the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session because we believe there is a need for a formal and continuing discussion by the General Assembly on the concept of the responsibility to protect and on its operationalization.

It is critical that delegations be able, in a formal debate of the General Assembly, to articulate that the responsibility to protect is not a license to interfere in domestic internal affairs and that focus should instead be on coming up with a shared and agreed understanding of it. We must ensure that any understanding of the principle of the responsibility to protect is strictly in accordance with the parameters of the 2005 World Summit outcome document (resolution 60/1). My delegation will therefore vote in favour of the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Ms. Wegter (Denmark): Allow me first to thank you, Mr. President, for your work as President of the General Assembly.

Denmark, together with Costa Rica, Croatia, Guatemala, Nigeria, Qatar, Romania, Ukraine and Uruguay, has requested the item on the responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity to be included in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. We believe that it is important for the General Assembly to debate prevention of the most serious crimes and our shared, unanimously agreed responsibility in this regard.

A large majority of States Members of the United Nations has for the last three years decided to include the item in the seventy-second, seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions of the General Assembly. Regrettably, because of the coronavirus disease and its effect on the work of the Assembly, no debate has

been held on the agenda item at the seventy-fourth session. However, during previous debates, statements were made on behalf of more than 100 Member States, providing an overwhelming number of national, regional and international examples of best practices and recommendations on how to prevent these crimes. Numerous calls have also been made to maintain the item on the agenda of the General Assembly, and we have on numerous occasions stated that we wanted to resume the debate. There have been no games whatsoever.

We have listened very carefully to the voices questioning the value of the item. We remain unconvinced that it will help the prevention of the most serious crimes to stop sharing examples of prevention or looking for opportunities for the international community to work together on prevention, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. On the contrary, it is clear that these debates are useful. They inspire Member States to make a difference and they inform the work of the Secretariat. Recently, we have seen reports and recommendations from the Secretary-General on topics chosen because they were raised multiple times during these debates.

The year 2020 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the unanimous adoption by the General Assembly of the World Summit outcome document (resolution 60/1), including the principle of the responsibility to protect. Much has happened since then, but our obligation to protect individuals from the most serious crimes has not changed. Nor has our commitment to this end, as challenges in this field continue to exist. By requesting a rollover of this agenda item, we are providing Member States with an opportunity to continue to share best practices and build on the work already established. We urge all States to support this inclusion.

Mr. Guo Jiakun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We can all recall the many debates and votes that we have had in the General Assembly Hall on this agenda item over the past three years. It would appear that Member States have not reached consensus on the definition and criteria for the responsibility to protect, and have even greater differences over how to implement the concept. We therefore believe that to act in accordance with the decision of the 2005 World Summit to discuss this issue through informal dialogues of the General Assembly (see resolution 60/1) is a reasonable and constructive approach.

Further attempts to force the inclusion of the issue on the Assembly's agenda will not help Member States to increase mutual understanding and build consensus. The Chinese delegation will therefore vote against the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): Ukraine is among the countries that continuously support the consideration of the item on the responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity by the General Assembly. We hope that further discussion of the responsibility to protect will help to overcome the persistent gap between the commitments and actions of some United Nations States Members. Only by listening to each other can we reach a solution and enhance the protection of peoples from, and the prevention of, atrocity crimes.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we did not discuss many agenda items, including agenda item 130, on the responsibility to protect. Ukraine therefore supports the inclusion of the item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. We encourage all Member States to do the same.

Mr. Shahin (Egypt): Notwithstanding the fundamental responsibility of Member States to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as enshrined in numerous international human rights instruments, we nevertheless believe that the notion still suffers from a number of political and legal gaps, which, if left unheeded, will do more harm than good with regard to the universal acceptance of the responsibility to protect. It is therefore imperative that we strive to achieve consensus on the conceptual framework of the principle before continuing to mainstream it across the United Nations system. In our view, such clarifications are an essential prerequisite before we can again include the responsibility to protect on the agenda of the General Assembly, or take any practical steps towards the realization of the concept, including in the area of accountability.

I would like to reaffirm Egypt's steadfast and unwavering commitment to preventing impunity and ensuring accountability for violations of international humanitarian law.

We highlight the fact that the primary responsibility to protect populations from such crimes rests with Member States. The principal role of the international

community in that regard should focus on enabling and assisting States to develop capacities to carry out such responsibilities, while respecting the principle of national ownership of the relevant policies and programmes. The international community should therefore focus on preventive diplomacy and prevention. While we fully support the view that prevention lies at the core of the responsibility to protect, we stress that a holistic and comprehensive approach should be adopted. Such an approach should not be limited to military or security aspects but should be interpreted more broadly so as to address the root causes of conflicts, including foreign occupation, poverty, food insecurity and environmental degradation, as well as religious and ethnic discrimination and intolerance.

In conclusion, while voting against the inclusion of the item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, Egypt affirms its unwavering commitment to international norms with regard to the protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In that regard, we will continue to strive towards reaching a consensus on all outstanding aspects pertaining to the so-called responsibility to protect in a manner that would address the concerns of Member States, while providing more effective protection to populations on the ground against such violations.

Mr. Jiménez (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Nicaragua does not support the inclusion of the agenda item on the responsibility to protect on the provisional agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. Many countries, in particular small and developing countries, continue to have serious concerns over this issue. On various occasions, Nicaragua has reiterated the fact that there is not even agreement on the scope, definition and implications of the concept. That continues to give rise to a great deal of uncertainty over its application and political ends. The responsibility to protect is an item that violates the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. This issue is also being manipulated by many States to impose unilateral coercive measures and economic sanctions on free and sovereign States, which contravenes international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Nicaragua therefore does not support the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session and will vote against its inclusion.

Mr. Simonoff (United States of America): We find it a little ironic that, in decrying the lack of consensus with respect to the inclusion of the responsibility to protect, several delegations are breaking consensus on the inclusion of the item on the agenda. We also find it a little ironic that, in opposing the inclusion of that item on the agenda, many delegations are delving deeply into the substance of the item on the responsibility to protect. We therefore believe that we should continue the discussion of the substance, which has already begun today, at a formal debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. We therefore call on all delegations to vote in favour of the inclusion of the item on the provisional agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

Ms. Borbón Beeche (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica wishes to express its full support for the inclusion of this agenda item on the provisional agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, as we have in previous years. Moreover, this year, together with Qatar, Croatia, Denmark, Guatemala, Nigeria, Romania, Ukraine and Uruguay, we request the President of the General Assembly that the item on the responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity be included on the agenda of the general debate. It is an issue of great importance not only to multilateralism but also in particular to prevent suffering and protect lives.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has exacerbated people's suffering due to not only the disease itself but also the measures taken to prevent it and its impact on economies and societies, rendering them more vulnerable. We, as States, must therefore be mindful of the responsibility to protect entrusted to us as States.

We are witnessing an unprecedented situation at the United Nations with the denial of in-person meetings and debates of the General Assembly. However, that does not prevent us from recalling and renewing our moral, political and legal commitment to the responsibility to protect made 15 years ago at the 2005 World Summit. We must continue working to achieve the full implementation of this principle and its three pillars with a view to increasing the capacity of States and the Organization in the areas of prevention, early warning and effective and rapid response. The fact that atrocity crimes, sexual violence, persecution and the displacement of ethnic groups continue means that we need to continue discussions about protection

and to support the call for action on human rights that the Secretary-General launched this year, in particular when it comes to situations of crisis and conflicts.

These debates have proven their utility insofar as they allow us to broaden and integrate the responsibility to protect agenda within the United Nations system. The debates have also served to link this issue with other equally important global issues, such as women and peace and security, and must also be part of the peacekeeping agenda.

The General Assembly must continue to discuss the principle of the responsibility to protect on an annual basis. We hope that one day it will become a standing agenda item.

Mr. Amorín (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay is one of the countries that has called for the inclusion of the responsibility to protect, the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity on the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. We live in a global context in which the crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is exponentially increasing the risk that these crimes could be committed against millions of innocent human beings, in particular against the most vulnerable among us, including women and children.

The General Assembly, as the most representative organ of the United Nations, is the most appropriate forum to consider actions that States Members can take to implement the responsibility to protect. Moreover, given the lack of unity that often paralyses the Security Council, the General Assembly has the unavoidable responsibility to actively and transparently debate mechanisms that fundamentally prevent atrocity crimes from being committed. Through a fruitful exchange of ideas and experiences and formal debates of the General Assembly, it will be possible to forge consensus and achieve consensus-based action among the membership to avoid the perpetration of those abhorrent crimes, which undermine human life, human security and the most essential elements of human dignity.

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to a recorded vote on the proposal that the agenda item entitled "The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" be included in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Against:

Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Comoros, Djibouti, Gabon, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

By 121 votes to 13, with 32 abstentions, the General Assembly decided to include the agenda item entitled "The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" in the draft agenda of its seventy-fifth session (decision 74/584).

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

Mr. Koba (Indonesia): My delegation abstained in the voting decision 74/584 for the following reasons.

First, despite the fact that this item has been reappearing on the General Assembly's agenda for the past couple of years, there remain divergent views among Member States, either on the procedural or substantive aspect of its utility and deliberation. My delegation therefore believes the end discussion on the subject can be meaningful and truly genuine only if it is done at a level that is convenient to all. In that regard, we recommend that we continue discussing the subject in the format of interactive informal dialogues. As used to be the case, this could take place under the framework of the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations.

Secondly, disagreement over whether this item should be on the agenda at all has consumed us for the past years. It contributed little, if anything, to the advancement of our discussion on the matter. What is pressing at the moment is for Member States to help each other in reinforcing moderation and respect towards toward differences — be they religious or having to do with values and culture. No country is immune from hatred and prejudice. We should come together to address this challenge while refraining from exercises that divide us.

Thirdly, my delegation believes that we should not reformulate or reinterpret the commitment that world leaders made in paragraphs 138 and 139 of resolution 60/1, entitled "World Summit Outcome", for they were crystal clear with regard to how the responsibility to protect can come into play. Let us be guided by their wisdom.

Let me conclude by restating that what we confirmed last year: the deliberations on this very topic should be on the basis of consensus so that any process that we choose to advance is one that garners collective support and ownership and is not the position of a few, rather that of the majority.

Mr. Mohsin (Pakistan): The notion of the responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity speaks to the collective resolve of the international community to prevent those crimes from happening. This is clearly affirmed in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the World Summit Outcome document (resolution 60/1) of 2005.

Unfortunately, progress has been marred by persistent divergences over the definition, scope and application of the responsibility to protect. Meanwhile, well-orchestrated and systematic atrocity crimes continue to be committed in full view of the international community. Innocent and vulnerable populations continue to pay a heavy price for global indifference and inaction. In our view, this situation demands that we not let our existing differences diminish our collective resolve to protect the weak and the vulnerable, but instead bridge those differences and develop a unified and common response.

The international community must act in a consistent and unified manner against all atrocity crimes. While we are not convinced by the overly focused approach by some on the modalities of our discussion, we hope that efforts will remain afoot during the forthcoming session to find common ground on the substantive nature of the differences in our perspectives and viewpoints.

With this in mind, my delegation decided to abstain in the voting on the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

Mr. Naing (Myanmar): My delegation voted against including this item on the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. It is the third time the Assembly has had to vote on this particular item.

Despite the well-intentioned outcome of the 2005 World Summit (resolution 60/1), States Members of the United Nations have not reached agreement on the definition, scope and practical application of the responsibility to protect, especially its third pillar. The legitimate concerns of Member States regarding the possible misuse of the responsibility to protect remain

to be addressed. The General Assembly informal debates on this item in the past few years did not serve to narrow the prevailing political and legal gaps. A confrontational approach and persistent requests to include the item in the formal agenda of the General Assembly only widened the existing divisions among Member States.

In order to seek common ground on the conceptual framework of the responsibility to protect, we are of the view that interactive informal discussions are the most appropriate at this stage. We think that it is premature and counterproductive to push to mainstream the notion of the responsibility to protect into the formal dialogues of the General Assembly. That is why Myanmar voted against decision 74/584.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 130?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 131

Seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War

Letter dated 31 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/74/1002)

The President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session. In connection with the item, a letter dated 31 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Assembly has been issued as document A/74/1002, in which it is requested that the item be included in the agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to include agenda item 131 in the draft agenda of the seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided (decision 74/585).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 131?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 154

Financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor

The President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the seventy-fourth session.

It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of agenda item 154 and to include it in the draft agenda of its seventy-fifth session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I also take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 154?

It was so decided.

Results of the election of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees

The President: Before adjourning, I wish to remind members that as stated in my letter dated 12 June 2020, the following representatives have been elected Chairpersons of the Main Committees of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session in accordance with rules 99 (a) and 103 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, as well as Assembly decisions 74/555 and 74/557, and are accordingly members of the General Committee for that session:

First Committee — His Excellency Agustín Santos Maraver (Spain)

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) — His Excellency Collen Vixen Kelapile (Botswana)

Second Committee — His Excellency Amrit Bahadur Rai (Nepal)

Third Committee — Her Excellency Katalin Annamária Bogyay (Hungary)

Fifth Committee — His Excellency Carlos Amorín (Uruguay)

Sixth Committee — His Excellency Milenko Esteban Skoknic Tapia (Chile)

I congratulate the Chairpersons of these Main Committees at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly on their election.

Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to thank very sincerely all the membership and in particular to pay tribute to the vital work of the Main Committees — the co-facilitators, the co-coordinators and the many others who had to work to get us to where we are today. The fact that a lot of work was undertaken by the Assembly is due not only to the membership's support but also to the really important work of the co-facilitators of all the processes and the co-coordinators. This is absolutely first-rate work that shows a high level of responsibility in the face of very difficult situations.

I should like also to acknowledge the tremendous support that we have received from the Secretariat in making this work look easy. It was never easy, but I am glad that we have come this far. Obviously, we also worked very, very closely with all the other organs, in particular through the various Presidents of the Security Council and especially the President of the Economic and Social Council. So this is just to register my appreciation.

I wish to remind members that it would be helpful if we left row by row, so that when the next round of mitigation measures is in place, we will have the same cooperation from the others we work with.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.