



General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

55th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 23 February 2021, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Bozkir (Turkey)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 65 (continued)

The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): The United Nations is a critical pillar of multilateralism and plays a central role in ensuring that all involved in addressing peace and security concerns uphold the purposes and principles of the Organization. There is no alternative to commonly agreed norms and their universal application.

Support for that role of the United Nations and for safeguarding its collective security, political and humanitarian mechanisms is crucial for the maintenance of peace, stability and sustainable development. Coherent global responses and common efforts coordinated by the United Nations are the most effective ways to address conflicts; fight climate change and global terrorism; manage forced displacement and migratory flows; address the challenges arising from the coronavirus disease pandemic; and achieve the goals of peace, inclusive sustainable development and human rights for all.

Azerbaijan voted in favour of resolution 68/262 of 27 March 2014, entitled “Territorial integrity of Ukraine”, and our position on the support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders remains unchanged.

In situations involving international disputes, armed conflicts or political crises in inter-State relations,

solutions must be consistent with international law, particularly where fundamental norms are concerned, such as those relating to the obligation to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States. Strict compliance with the norms and principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation among States and the fulfilment in good faith of the obligations assumed by States are of the greatest importance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Altarsha (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country has always been committed to respecting the sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. We have supported attempts to impose security and stability on any unstable place in the world given our belief in and the value of dialogue in international relations.

Consequently, the Syrian Arab Republic remains convinced that the inclusion of the item entitled “The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine” on the agenda of the General Assembly constitutes an irresponsible unilateral politicized action that reflects the desire of some Governments to aggravate the situation in that region so as to settle scores with the Russian Federation, even at the expense of regional and international security and stability and to the detriment of the established historical relations between the two countries.

That issue is governed by clear and transparent legal principles based on the Charter of the United Nations and relevant international conventions, as well

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as international law. That is why we should reconsider the issue of including this item on the General Assembly's agenda.

Allow me to elucidate most of those important legal and procedural principles.

First, the consideration of this matter by the General Assembly is at odds with the Security Council's mandate and violates Article 12 of the United Nations Charter, which stipulates in paragraph 1 that,

“[w]hile the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests”.

In that context, we stress that the imposition of the term “temporarily occupied territories” in the title of this agenda item does not change the reality of the matter, which falls within the purview of the Security Council as reflected in resolution 2202 (2015).

Secondly, the situation in that region is governed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements and other agreements supported by the United Nations through resolution 2202 (2015), including annexes I and II to that resolution, as well as presidential statement S/PRST/2018/12.

We reiterate that the implementation of Minsk agreements and resolution 2202 (2015) requires the genuine political will of all the parties. Joint action is needed in order to restore security and stability in Ukraine and normalize the historical relations between the two neighbourly countries, Ukraine and the Russian Federation. That must be achieved without any negative interference by Governments that claim to be committed to the interests of Ukraine even as they escalate tensions in that country, call for a return to the Cold War, establish a hostile environment and create imaginary enemies, while supplying heavy weaponry, including intermediate and long-range missiles, thus undermining security in that region.

We therefore consider agenda item 65 and today's meeting as a new and unfortunate attempt to hinder the implementation of the Minsk agreements and resolution 2202 (2015) and to undermine international efforts to resolve the dispute and implement the measures supported under the Normandy format.

In conclusion, we will always caution against the negative tendency of certain Member States that seek to take advantage of the General Assembly agenda and exhaust the energy and resources of the United Nations so as to undermine the fundamental and noble objectives and purposes of this Organization. They are using it as a means to exercise polarization and deepen divisions, rather than promoting unity, peace, security and sustainable development for all, including Ukraine.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): At the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statement made earlier today by the observer of the European Union (see A/75/PV.54) . I would like to add the following comments in my national capacity.

This month marks seven years since the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine. After seven years, the security, humanitarian and human rights situation on the ground continues to deteriorate on a daily basis. To date, Russia's aggression against its sovereign neighbour Ukraine has claimed the lives of more than 13,000 Ukrainian citizens and injured more than 29,000. Up to 3.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and up to 1.5 million have been displaced — forced to flee their homes and communities in eastern Ukraine.

The Russian Federation continues to supply its occupation forces with heavy weaponry, regular troops and mercenaries. According to the United Nations, the territory has already become one of the most mine-contaminated in the world. In addition to conventional warfare, the hybrid war against Ukraine is in full swing through, inter alia, the use of propaganda, disinformation, economic pressure and cyberattacks.

Against the backdrop of the Secretary-General's appeal for an immediate global ceasefire amid the pandemic, we note with concern the recent spike in violations. We are very concerned about the continuing civilian casualties, which result in large part from mines and other explosive devices. The figures are alarming. Of the 51 cases reported, 38 were caused by mines and unexploded ordnance and regrettably 12 of them were fatalities.

In that regard, we believe that the agreements on security issues, including those on the identification of new demining areas, have to be finalized in the Trilateral Contact Group. Following the Group's first meeting in 2021, we call upon Russia to engage constructively in the Group's work in order to achieve

progress on important issues, particularly the mutual release of detainees and the opening of the Zolote and Schastya entry and exit checkpoints.

We remain very concerned about the humanitarian situation, the human rights violations and the harsh living conditions of the population affected by the ongoing Russian aggression in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, including restrictions on the freedom of movement, the freedom of opinion and expression, the freedom of association, the freedom of thought and the freedom of religion; extrajudicial killings; arbitrary detentions; torture and ill treatment in detention; forced transfers; violations of fair trial rights; violations of property rights; and violations of the right to maintain one's identity, culture and tradition.

We are concerned about the persecution and harassment of civil society activists, human rights advocates, journalists and lawyers, including ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, who are particular targets of the violations I mentioned. Many of them, after being detained on political grounds, remain illegally imprisoned in Russia-occupied Crimea and continue to face inhumane conditions, intimidation, torture and ill-treatment and to receive inadequate medical assistance.

The introduction of the Russian currency, language and legislation in the temporarily occupied territories of eastern Ukraine is unacceptable and must be reversed. Moreover, we condemn the targeted policy of the occupying Power with respect to the forced imposition of Russian citizenship and the illegal conscription of Ukrainian citizens living in Crimea to serve in the armed forces of the Russian Federation, as well as the artificial change in the demographic make-up of the population of the temporarily occupied Crimea.

It is alarming that even amid the pandemic, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been once again denied access to the temporarily occupied territories. The Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has also been systematically denied access to the illegally annexed Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and the area along the Ukraine-Russia State border — in clear violation of the Mission's mandate, which covers the whole territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Unfortunately, Russia's aggression and occupation policy against its neighbours is not new but rather a part of its clear-cut operational pattern, well tested against my own country, Georgia, since we regained independence in 1991. Instigating conflicts, exercising direct military aggression, using a combination of political, economic and military pressure, launching cyberattacks, coordinating disinformation campaigns and derailing the peace process have been systematically used by Russia to thwart the foreign policy aspirations of its neighbouring States, including my own country. The cases of Georgia and Ukraine represent a vivid and unmistakable attestation of Russia's malign strategy in the region.

We once again urge the Russian Federation to comply with its obligation as an occupying Power under international humanitarian law and to fulfil its neglected commitments. I also take this opportunity to once again call on Russia to fulfil its international obligations, inter alia, the European Union-mediated ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008. We also reiterate our call on Russia to grant international and regional human rights monitoring mechanisms unimpeded and immediate access to the occupied territories of Ukraine and Georgia.

In conclusion, Georgia reiterates its firm support for Ukrainian independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters. We do not and will not recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea. We call on all other States to refrain from any action that might be interpreted as a recognition of Crimea.

Mr. Poveda Brito (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela takes the floor to reiterate its desire for a peaceful settlement in Ukraine.

That is why our delegation considers it inappropriate to alter any of the existing settlement formats. In that regard, resolution 2202 (2015), which endorsed the Minsk agreements and makes no reference to "occupied territories", as well as the package of measures for their implementation, provide a solid basis for a peaceful settlement under international law, while allowing for a political and goodwill solution so that stability and peace can prevail in that region. Moreover, addressing that issue here is in itself a violation of the provisions of Article 12 of the United Nations Charter.

It is our delegation's firm conviction that the issue at hand primarily concerns the two States involved. An external solution will not work unless it is supported by both States. We therefore make a call to avoid politicizing the work of the General Assembly and attempting to use this organ to attack another full Member State of our Organization, particularly in these difficult times of the pandemic, when we are on the contrary called upon to work together to strengthen international cooperation and solidarity in order to overcome a human crisis without precedent in the past 100 years.

Finally, we respectfully call on the Ukrainian Government to show concrete signs of its political will to engage in genuine dialogue and work collectively for the restoration of peace and stability in that country, as well as for the normalization of relations between the two neighbouring countries of Ukraine and Russia.

Mr. Nicolenco (Republic of Moldova): The situation in and around Ukraine remains a matter of ongoing and serious concern for the international community.

The Republic of Moldova continues to follow with great concern the situation in Ukraine, a friendly neighbouring country. In that context, my delegation co-sponsored all resolutions on Ukraine adopted by the General Assembly and supported the inclusion of item 65, entitled "The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine", in the agenda of the current session.

There is no alternative to the peaceful settlement of conflicts based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries within their internationally recognized borders. In that connection, we particularly support diplomatic efforts aimed at the political resolution of the crisis in Ukraine.

Moreover, we reaffirm that by considering the matters arising from challenges to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States in a constructive and non-politicized manner, the General Assembly can encourage and promote approaches and solutions based on the strict observance of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the European Union (see A/75/PV.54). I would also like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

First, the Republic of Moldova recalls its steadfast support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. We believe that the bilateral and multilateral agreements reached constitute international law and need to be observed, including in the case of Ukraine.

Furthermore, my country does not recognize the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, which constitutes a violation of the principles and norms of international law, with serious repercussions for the international legal order and international security.

Secondly, the Republic of Moldova supports international efforts to identify a peaceful solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine on the basis of the Minsk agreements and under the auspices of the Normandy format. The current ceasefire shows that the Normandy format, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Trilateral Contact Group are well positioned to promote the de-escalation of the situation in the conflict zone.

In that vein, the Republic of Moldova calls upon all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and deliver on their commitments in strict compliance with, and with full respect for, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Thirdly, in accordance with Ukraine's requests, we consider that the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission on the ground that would act in unison with the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) could give impetus to the political process for a peaceful settlement.

Last but not least, the Republic of Moldova commends the SMM's activities and will continue to contribute to the fulfilment of the Mission's mandate, including through the participation of more than 40 Moldovan citizens.

Against that backdrop, it is worth mentioning that as a neighbouring country, Ukraine has played and continues to play an important role as a mediator in the "5+2" format of the Transnistrian conflict settlement. Likewise, its military observers continue to be a part of the peacekeeping mechanism in the eastern part of our country.

We acknowledge and appreciate Ukraine's invaluable support and reaffirm the interest of the

Republic of Moldova in boosting the excellent bilateral cooperation with Ukraine.

In conclusion, the central reason for today's deliberation is not only the situation in and around Ukraine but also the stability and security of our region, which cannot be achieved if the international community and especially the United Nations continue to tolerate acts that threaten and undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, along with that of other countries in the region.

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

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 65.

Agenda item 9 (continued)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Draft decision (A/75/L.58)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on the draft decision entitled "2021 United Nations Population Award", issued as document A/75/L.58. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision A/75/L.58?

Draft decision A/75/L.58 was adopted (decision 75/557).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 9.

Agenda item 10

Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS

Draft resolution (A/75/L.59)

Draft amendments (A/75/L.60 and A/75/L.61)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution entitled "Organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS", issued as document A/75/L.59, and the draft amendments contained in documents A/75/L.60 and A/75/L.61.

Members are reminded that debate on the item will be held during the high-level meeting.

In June 2016, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 70/266, entitled "Political Declaration on

HIV and AIDS: On the Fast Track to Accelerating the Fight against HIV and to Ending the AIDS Epidemic by 2030". Through that resolution, the Assembly decided to convene a high-level meeting on HIV and AIDS to review progress on the commitments made in the Declaration towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 and how the response, in its social, economic and political dimensions, continues to contribute optimally to progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global health goal.

In accordance with that mandate, the two co-Chairs, His Excellency Ambassador Mitchell Fifield, Permanent Representative of Australia, and His Excellency Mr. Neville Melvin Gertze, Permanent Representative of Namibia, have been working with Member States to determine the modalities of the high-level meeting on HIV and AIDS.

On behalf of all Member States, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Fifield and Ambassador Gertze for their valuable work on this process over the past months. As I have transmitted in my letter dated 18 February 2021, the co-facilitators informed the membership about the steps that they have taken to find a compromise proposal on the draft modalities of the high-level meeting, and they submitted the final version of the draft resolution for adoption during the next plenary of the General Assembly; hence the draft is before members today.

I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/75/L.60.

Mr. Roscoe (United Kingdom): May I begin by joining you, Mr. President, in warmly thanking our co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Australia and Namibia, for their excellent work on this text. We look forward to participating fully in the high-level meeting on HIV and AIDS to be held in June.

We bring draft amendment A/75/L.60 today with support from more than 50 countries, because we have serious concerns about the restrictive language on civil-society participation and access created by the current text.

Our proposed amendment is not controversial. Full civil-society participation in this meeting has a long history. Quite rightly, HIV and AIDS is an issue where civil society has played a critical role over the years. But language in the 2016 text allowed a handful of Member

States to arbitrarily block certain non-governmental organizations. So we propose this draft amendment to return to the practice before 2016 and to ensure that all civil-society voices can be heard.

The amendment seeks to return the Assembly to our consensus approach of 2001, 2006 and 2011. It amends the language from 2016 because that language allowed individual Member States to unilaterally and arbitrarily block 22 civil-society organizations from participating in the meeting. In doing so, they denied the voices of legitimate partners, people with real experience of this issue and people we ought to hear from — people, indeed, who can inform our thinking with their knowledge and experience.

Our draft amendment does not remove all check or control. It simply seeks to give the decision-making power back to the General Assembly as a whole rather than to any single Member State. It empowers us to take a corporate decision on whom we as the Assembly can and cannot hear, and it removes the power of censorship from individual States.

For me, this is also slightly personal. I grew up in South Africa, where I saw first-hand the critical role that civil society had played over the last decades in the fight against HIV and AIDS. They are on the front line fighting stigma, championing facts and working to bring medicine to those who need it, as well as standing up for the poor and the vulnerable. Their voice is invaluable and irreplaceable.

So we call on all Member States to join us in co-sponsoring the draft amendment and to vote in favour. Hearing from all relevant voices in our global fight against HIV depends on their support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/75/L.61.

Mr. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are proposing draft amendment A/75/L.61 to operative paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/75/L.59, with the following content:

“In operative paragraph 8, delete ‘including key populations.’

During the negotiations on the draft, Member States were not able to reach a consensus on that passage, which is on something that is not the subject of the draft resolution — the modalities for the high-level meeting. From the point of view of the content, that is already taken into account in the wording: “people living with, at risk of or affected by HIV”.

The President: The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/75/L.59 and the draft amendments contained in documents A/75/L.60 and A/75/L.61.

In that connection, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): The present statement is made in the context of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of operative paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 13 and 15 of draft resolution A/75/L.59, the General Assembly would, in operative paragraph 1, decide

“to convene a high-level meeting from 8 to 10 June 2021, which will undertake a comprehensive review of the progress on the commitments made in the 2016 Political Declaration towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030, and how the response, in its social, economic and political dimensions, continues to contribute optimally to progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global health goal, including successes, best practices, lessons learned, obstacles and gaps, challenges and opportunities, including with regard to partnership and cooperation, and recommendations to guide and monitor the HIV/AIDS response beyond 2021, including new concrete commitments to accelerate action to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as well as to promote the renewed commitment and engagement of leaders, countries, communities and partners to accelerate and implement a comprehensive universal and integrated response to HIV/AIDS”;

Under operative paragraph 2, it would also decide

“that the organizational arrangements for the high-level meeting should be as follows:

(a) The high-level meeting will consist of:

(i) An opening segment with statements by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-

General, the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, a person openly living with HIV and an eminent person actively engaged in the response to HIV/AIDS;

(ii) A general debate with statements by Member States and observers of the General Assembly; the list of speakers shall be established in accordance with the established practices of the Assembly, and the time limit for the statements will be three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States;

(iii) Up to five thematic panel discussions, which shall be held consecutively with the general debate;

(iv) A closing segment with statements from the chairs of the panel discussions, presenting summaries of the discussions;

(b) The meetings will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m.;

(c) The format of the meeting, in person, virtual or a hybrid, will be decided by April 2021 by the President of the General Assembly on the basis of an assessment of the health conditions and in close consultation with Member States”.

Operative paragraph 8 would request

“the President of the General Assembly to organize, no later than April 2021, and preside over an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing, with the active participation of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV, including key populations, representatives of Member States and observers of the General Assembly, parliamentarians, representatives of local governments, invited civil-society organizations, including non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, philanthropic foundations, academia, medical associations, the private sector and broader communities, as part of the preparatory process for the high-level meeting, and further requests the President to prepare a summary of the hearing prior to the high-level meeting”.

Under operative paragraph 13, the General Assembly would request

“the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to continue to facilitate, to the extent possible, inclusive consultations at the country and

regional levels, with the participation of relevant stakeholders, such as Governments, civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to review the progress made towards the achievement of the time-bound goals set out in the 2016 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS to be met by 2020, as well as opportunities to address gaps, obstacles and challenges”.

Under operative paragraph 15, it would request

“the President of the General Assembly to hold timely, open, transparent and inclusive consultations with all Member States, giving due consideration to the report of the Secretary-General and other inputs to the preparatory process for the high-level meeting, with a view to adopting a concise and action-oriented declaration as an outcome of the high-level meeting, to be agreed upon by Member States, which reaffirms and builds on the Declaration of Commitment and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS to guide and monitor the HIV/AIDS response beyond 2020, towards achieving the commitment of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030”.

With regard to operative paragraphs 2, 8, 13 and 15, the Secretariat understands that the high-level meeting to be held from 8 to 10 June 2021, the multi-stakeholder hearing and consultations would use the meeting entitlements of the General Assembly. If any of the meetings, hearings or consultations is held in a virtual or hybrid format rather than an in-person format, their respective programmes would be adjusted to two hours, taking into consideration the fact that remote simultaneous interpretation is available for only two hours per meeting. Otherwise, additional cost implications would arise that cannot be met within the approved 2021 programme budget.

Moreover, with regard to operative paragraph 2, to stay within the entitlements of the General Assembly, the organizational arrangements for the high-level meeting, comprising an opening segment, a general debate, up to five thematic panel discussions and a closing segment, would be held consecutively from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and not in parallel or consecutively for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon if meetings are held in a virtual or hybrid format. Otherwise additional cost implications would arise that cannot be met within the approved 2021 programme budget.

Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/75/L.59 would not entail any budgetary implications with regard to the programme budget.

The statement that I just read out was distributed through the plenary site of the e-deleGATE portal and will be made available in the *Journal* under the e-statements link for the meeting.

The President: Before we proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.59 and draft amendments A/75/L.60 and A/75/L.61, delegations wishing to make a statement in explanation of vote before the voting on the draft resolution and/or the draft amendments are invited to do so now in one intervention.

Before giving the floor for explanations of vote before 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. Roscoe (United Kingdom): I simply wanted to respond to the amendment proposed by the Russian delegation and to say very clearly that the United Kingdom does not support the removal of the phrase “including key populations” from the text.

To remove the phrase is an attempt to ignore the fact that there are groups disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. As per UNAIDS guidelines, the term “key populations” or “key populations at higher risk of HIV exposure” refers to those most likely to be exposed to HIV or indeed to transmit it. The engagement of those groups is critical to a successful HIV response and to refuse to acknowledge — indeed to delete the fact — that there are groups disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS is discriminatory and ignores the reality of both the work of UNAIDS and the fight against HIV/AIDS globally.

We therefore hope that others will join us in voting against draft amendment A/75/L.61 proposed by the Russian Federation.

Ms. Nemroff (United States of America): I will be brief. The United States also does not support draft amendment A/75/L.61 proposed by the Russian Federation, which would remove the term “key populations” from the text of draft resolution A/75/L.59.

We completely agree with the arguments put forward by our colleague, the representative of the United Kingdom. I would only add that, at a time when the World Health Organization has underscored the

importance of prioritizing those with health concerns and the most vulnerable, the Russian amendment does just the opposite by excluding mention of them in modalities for a United Nations event focused on one of the most significant health crises known in our generation and prior to the coronavirus disease pandemic — and it is still with us today.

We will vote against the amendment and encourage others to do so as well.

Mr. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation does not agree with amendment A/75/L.60. It does not correspond to established practice in the General Assembly and does not take into account the differing positions among Member States. We hereby request that it be put to the vote.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of draft amendment A/75/L.60 and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become co-sponsors of draft amendment A/75/L.60: Andorra, Argentina, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Kiribati, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Switzerland, Timor-Leste and Ukraine.

I should like to announce that since the submission of draft amendment A/75/L.61 and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become co-sponsors of draft amendment A/75/L.61: Libya and Senegal.

The President: Before we proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.59, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on draft amendments A/75/L.60 and A/75/L.61, one by one.

The Assembly will first take a decision on draft amendment A/75/L.60.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Against:

Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia

Draft amendment A/75/L.60 was adopted by 77 votes to 40, with 21 abstentions.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft amendment A/75/L.61.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zambia

Abstaining:

China, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania

Draft amendment A/75/L.61 was rejected by 30 votes to 91, with 14 abstentions.

The President: Since the draft amendment contained in document A/75/L.60 has been adopted, we shall proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.59 as thereby amended.

I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation on a point of order.

Mr. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Since draft amendment A/75/L.60

has already been adopted, we propose the following draft oral amendment to draft resolution A/75/L.59.

We propose that after paragraph 11, a new paragraph be inserted to read:

(spoke in English)

“Decides that the arrangements outlined in paragraph 11 above shall not be considered a precedent for other similar events.”

(spoke in Russian)

The proposed new paragraph reproduces exactly the wording of resolutions 70/228, 65/180 and 60/224 on modalities for the high-level meetings of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS held in 2016, 2011 and 2006, respectively. Similar wording was also contained in resolution 55/242 on the special session on HIV/AIDS held in 2001.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom on a point of order.

Mr. Roscoe (United Kingdom): I take the floor to object to the draft oral amendment proposed by the Russian Federation to insert a new paragraph after paragraph 11 because the Russian Federation, having just resoundingly lost the vote on draft amendment A/75/L.61, is now trying to bind the hands of the General Assembly on future decisions by the back door.

It is not the case that the General Assembly can have future decisions made for it now on a hypothetical basis by adopting that kind of draft amendment. I would therefore encourage all Member States to decide, as we will decide, that the General Assembly will make decisions on those matters as and when the modality resolutions for future meetings arise and not try to tie the hands of the General Assembly in considering its future decisions in that way.

I would also remind Member States that this is not a new decision. This is not a new departure. We are reverting to the previous, established practice in three consecutive modalities resolutions — resolutions 55/242, 60/224 and 65/180 adopted in 2001, 2005 and 2011, respectively. Therefore, I would encourage Member States, as they did a few moments ago, to vote against the draft oral amendment proposed by Russia.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Portugal on a point of order.

Mr. Castelbranco Soares (Portugal): We too would like to encourage the membership to vote against the draft oral amendment proposed by the representative of Russia for the same reasons already given by the representative of the United Kingdom.

The President: A recorded vote has been requested on the draft oral amendment proposed by the representative of the Russian Federation.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Brazil, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Namibia, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia

The draft oral amendment was rejected by 34 votes to 78, with 18 abstentions.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to propose another draft amendment to paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/75/L.59. We would like to request that, for the wording “key populations”, we include the following footnote:

(*spoke in English*)

“Each country should define the specific populations that are key to its HIV/AIDS response based on the national epidemiological and social context.”

(*spoke in Russian*)

That footnote is based on the provisions and strategies of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS from 2011 to 2015 and from 2016 to 2020.

Ms. Nemroff (United States of America): I do not know where to begin with this particular draft oral amendment. There is a footnote. There is so much to unpack from the substantive, political and technical perspective in it. We believe that it is inappropriate to try and introduce that kind of amendment on the floor given the importance of our collective action on HIV/AIDS over many years, during which we have never had to confront something like that in a modalities draft resolution. It is clearly politicizing the language of the modalities draft resolution. Therefore, we oppose the draft oral amendment, and we encourage other delegations to vote against it as well.

Mr. Castelbranco Soares (Portugal): I believe that it is not appropriate to weaken the United Nations language with regard to HIV/AIDS. Unfortunately, it is also not the right time to introduce, at the last minute, wording that, as we are not experts, most of us are probably not able to confirm exactly with respect to the terms of the draft footnote and its implications. I therefore encourage all the membership to vote against this draft oral amendment.

Mr. Roscoe (United Kingdom): Again, I will speak very briefly. Setting aside the fact that this is an unfortunate attempt to ambush the General Assembly with such language after the modalities draft resolution, contained in document A/75/L.59, was negotiated over several months and where those of us who put forward

amendments gave the usual 48 hours’ notice for those amendments to be considered, it strikes me as a slightly bizarre footnote, because, of course, nothing that the General Assembly does in any way impedes the ability of any Member State to independently determine what it is that it wants to do in terms of its own ways of addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic. All that we are trying to do, as we always do in this Hall, is to offer advice, guidance and best practice to Member States. At best, this draft footnote is therefore redundant, but I think what is behind it is something that is slightly more sinister. I therefore hope others will join me in voting against it.

Mr. Alfayez (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I believe that if the co-facilitators made concessions and listened to all the views during the discussions, we would not have resorted to doing what is currently taking place. My country’s delegation consequently regrets the fact that we could not include the draft amendments introduced during the negotiations by some Member States and that those draft amendments were not taken into account, particularly given that the issue under consideration is the topic of a high-level meeting that must enjoy consensus. I therefore align myself with the Russian Federation.

The President: A recorded vote has been requested on the draft oral amendment proposed by the Russian Federation.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, China, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland,

Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Abstaining:

Bangladesh, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eswatini, Fiji, Ghana, Iraq, Kiribati, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Singapore, South Africa, Zambia

The draft oral amendment was rejected by 30 votes to 81, with 18 abstentions.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.59, entitled "Organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS", as amended.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are forced to note that draft resolution A/75/L.59 does not take into account most of the proposals made by our delegation, despite the fact that a number of States supported them during the negotiations. We are therefore forced to ask that the draft resolution be put to a vote.

The President: A recorded vote has been requested on draft resolution A/75/L.59, as amended.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa

Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Algeria, Egypt, Madagascar, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic

Draft resolution A/75/L.59, as amended, was adopted by 139 votes to 0, with 5 abstentions (resolution 75/260).

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

Ms. Nemroff (United States of America): We would like to thank the facilitator for his leadership on resolution 75/260. The United States of America was pleased to vote in favour of the resolution, although we would have preferred that it would have been adopted by consensus today. We would like to make several points on the final text.

The United States is proud of its strong and long-standing support for the fight against HIV/AIDS and the mandate of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). We are also proud of the Programme's work to protect the most vulnerable and the strong commitment to data, science and data-driven and science-based decisions, with a platform of comprehensive epidemiological data.

The United States is pleased about the outcome regarding the draft amendment A/75/L.60, on paragraph 11. Civil society participation is critical to the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS. Without those who lead efforts on the fight against HIV/AIDS on the ground, we would not have a high-level meeting. Today's vote is an important step towards ensuring civil society participation in that critical meeting and a broader victory for civil society participation at the United Nations.

Civil society is our eyes and ears on the ground and gives us critical information and perspectives on a number of issues. It should be at the table in all United Nations meetings, including the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS. We saw first-hand the negative impacts of restrictive language during the 2016 meeting, where more than 20 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were blocked from participating without transparency, and often without the knowledge of the countries in which they work. My own delegation had one NGO blocked by others at that meeting in 2016. We cannot allow critical civil society voices to be excluded again as we plan this year's meeting.

We are also disappointed to see that some delegations put forward a draft amendment to delete "key populations". Those clearly identified by UNAIDS as key populations are individuals who are particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and frequently lack adequate access to services. They are central to the fight against HIV/AIDS and must be present at the high-level meeting.

The United States looks forward to the next steps ahead of the meeting, including negotiations on the political declaration.

Ms. Shmat (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus voted in favour of resolution 75/260, entitled "Organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS".

We attach great importance to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS. The system for combating the spread of HIV/AIDS in Belarus and the organization of medical care, treatment and support is based on principles consistent with the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Through sustained and dynamic partnerships with international organizations such as the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Belarus has succeeded in significantly reducing the spread of HIV.

We view the upcoming high-level meeting as an important element in strengthening the fight against HIV/AIDS worldwide and as an important platform for the exchange of best practices, views and experience.

In addition to substantive issues, we believe the resolution to be an important element in establishing specific procedures and modalities for the upcoming meeting. In that regard, we are concerned about the nature of the negotiations and the inclusion of deliberately controversial language in the final text, as well as the departure from past practice for similar events.

First, Belarus co-sponsored the draft amendment to paragraph 8, contained in document A/75/L.61, and voted in favour of deleting the term "key populations" from that paragraph. That is based on existing practice whereby interactive consultations and discussions as part of upcoming meetings on HIV/AIDS are informal in nature. We believe that the lack of a definition of the nature of the consultations, together with the inclusion of the term "key populations", which did not receive universal support, significantly hinders the achievement of universal consensus on the resolution.

Secondly, Belarus supported the draft oral amendment proposed by the Russian Federation.

Thirdly, Belarus voted against draft amendment A/75/L.60, on the procedure for participation by NGOs. We believe that the draft amendment is inconsistent with past practice and substantially limits the sovereign prerogatives of States Members of the United Nations to determine the parameters for NGO participation in that kind of meeting. Previously adopted resolutions already mentioned on this subject stipulated, as proposed by

the Russian Federation, that such procedures for NGO participants would not constitute a precedent for other similar events.

Mr. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation abstained in the voting on resolution 75/260. We note with regret that the consultation process on the resolution was not balanced or transparent and it was concluded ahead of time. I would therefore like to say to the representative of Portugal that it is for that reason that we were not able to submit the draft footnote during the negotiations, in which experts who would have been able to assess from an expert point of view were present. In addition, despite the fact that I participated in all stages of the negotiations, I am hearing for the first time that the negotiations dragged on for months.

Our delegation fully agrees with the very important goal of combating HIV/AIDS and comprehensively supports the relevance of resolution 75/260 as well as the importance of holding this high-level meeting of the General Assembly. A confirmation of this is our specialized work at the national level and the resource support for a joint project with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to support those countries that need assistance in combating HIV/AIDS and encouraging international cooperation in this area.

Therefore, using this sort of resolution to force through provisions that are known to be contentious — with certain delegations knowingly undermining the unity of the General Assembly, particularly in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) restrictions — is simply disappointing. It is not a question of recognizing the contribution of civil society organizations in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Nobody doubts the importance and necessity of that work. Rather, the problem is in the consistent desire of a number of countries to erode the intergovernmental nature of decision-making in the General Assembly and ignoring the rules of work in this organ.

In these conditions, we are forced to dissociate ourselves from the wording in paragraph 8 on key populations and paragraph 11 concerning the procedure for selecting non-governmental organizations for participating at the high-level meeting. Our delegation will not be guided by those non-consensual provisions.

Mr. Jisheng Xing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks Namibia and Australia for their efforts as facilitators of the preparatory process for the high-level

meeting on HIV/AIDS. We commend the facilitators for engaging in extensive consultations with Member States to ensure that resolution 75/260 would focus on the organization of the high-level meeting and the modalities for making it achieve expected results.

China participated in the consultations on the resolution in a constructive manner. We support the convening of a high-level meeting to promote greater international attention for the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS, further strengthen international cooperation and provide support and assistance to countries facing severe challenges in terms of prevention and control.

With regard to the participation of non-governmental organizations at the high-level meeting, China believes that, as the most representative and authoritative international organization, the United Nations must embody the membership-driven principle and its intergovernmental nature. The participation of non-governmental organizations should strictly comply with the no-objection principle, which is important for upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in ensuring the orderly participation of non-governmental organizations in United Nations activities.

China opposes some countries' actions of searching far and wide instead of using what is readily available or at hand. Those countries deviate from the consensus reached by Member States at the 2016 high-level meeting on the participation of non-governmental organizations by making reference to language in the 2011 resolution (resolution 65/277, annex.). Such backtracking runs counter to the United Nations mission and goal of staying relevant as times change. It is also contrary to the customary good practices of the Organization, as it undermines the spirit of cooperation among Member States and will not help the facilitators make progress on the preparatory process for the high-level meeting.

China attaches great importance to the participation of many stakeholders in United Nations activities, including members of civil society. The latter's participation should be conducive to helping relevant countries strengthen their capacities in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, mobilize greater resources in that regard and tackle the prevention and treatment challenges related thereto.

At the same time, we believe that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of these countries should be respected. We believe that it is important to respect

and follow well-established rules and practices in this context in order to ensure that those organizations' participation be orderly and rules-based, because doing so is in line with the long-term interests of the United Nations and with the common interests of Member States. In the spirit of mutually beneficial cooperation, China stands ready to work with all parties to achieve positive outcomes at the high-level meeting.

Mr. Mulachela (Indonesia): Indonesia would like to thank Australia and Namibia for their efforts as facilitators in drafting resolution 75/260.

My delegation voted in favour of the resolution on the organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS under agenda item 10 because Indonesia sees the resolution in its entirety as a package on the important and relevant topic of halting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Nevertheless, Indonesia has reservations on paragraph 8 of the resolution. We reiterate that Indonesia acknowledges and supports the broader community's role in the efforts aimed at implementing an HIV/AIDS response without necessarily specifying a segment of the population. Our reservation is based solely on our national regulations and the context and culture that apply in Indonesia. Our position today therefore cannot be understood as accepting those references as agreed language for the future outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly.

Mr. Alfayez (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I agree with what my colleague from the Russian Federation said about the negotiations in his last statement.

My country's delegation voted in favour of resolution 75/260 so as not to undermine consensus, in particular because this topic is important and will be discussed in a high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, at which there must be a consensus among all States Members.

Nevertheless, my delegation wishes to lodge our reservation on the inclusion of the phrase "including key populations", in paragraph 8 of the resolution, as well as our reservation on paragraph 11 as a whole. We hope that our reservation will be included in the meeting's record.

Mr. Almansouri (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the State of Qatar would like to express its thanks and appreciation to Australia and Namibia, the two facilitators of the negotiations on resolution 75/260,

entitled "Organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS". They made constructive efforts that led to this text.

The State of Qatar voted in favour of the resolution because we are sure and convinced of its importance and timing with a view to implementing the objectives set forth in the 2016 Political Declaration towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. That is all the more so because we are suffering more setbacks as a result of the coronavirus disease pandemic.

However, regarding paragraph 8, we stress that my country would consider this paragraph within the context of respecting its national laws and legislations, particularly pertaining to the phrase "key populations". My country's delegation emphasizes that this phrase must take into account our national legislation as well as the religious and cultural values of our society. Every State has the responsibility to determine the key populations within its national and social context,

In conclusion, we request that this statement be included in the meeting's record.

Mrs. Ndaw Dieng (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to correct an error with respect to the draft amendment contained in document A/75/L.61, which my delegation did not co-sponsor. It was just a technical error, for which I apologize.

I take the floor to state that my delegation welcomes the initiative of holding the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, which is a major health issue. We would also like to congratulate the facilitators of resolution 75/260, who throughout the negotiations spared no effort to reach a consensus thereon.

Nevertheless, while joining the consensus, Senegal dissociates itself from the reference in paragraph 8 of the text to "key populations". The definition of this ambiguous term includes references to notions that contradict our national position on the issue. It is also for this reason that we supported the draft amendment.

Mr. Kita (Japan): On behalf of Japan, we welcome resolution 75/260, on the organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS. We are grateful to the two facilitators, Namibia and Australia, for their leadership and dedicated work.

First of all, while we value the resolution on the preparation of the high-level meeting to be held in June, we would like to reiterate the importance of placing

a range of health issues, including HIV/AIDS, in the context of universal health coverage and health systems with a view to raising the profile of the health agenda as a whole within the United Nations system.

We should call for universal health coverage to take HIV/AIDS out of isolation and integrate it into a comprehensive approach to a range of health issues beyond individual disease control, including tuberculosis, non-communicable diseases and emerging maladies. We should now aim to integrate the efforts on individual items on the health agenda into a comprehensive approach ahead of the 2023 high-level meeting on universal health coverage.

Secondly, we would like to reiterate the importance of the participation of civil society. In particular, we should look back at the important role that civil society has played in the history of HIV/AIDS treatment and control. In Japan, too, there is a tragic history of HIV infection from blood products for haemophilia patients, but there is no doubt that institutional progress, disease-control measures and awareness-raising have made forward strides as a result of the collaborative efforts of patient groups, professional groups, Governments and others. The initiatives of those civil society groups remind us of the importance of a bottom-up approach to human security.

In the context of the fight against HIV/AIDS, civil society organizations have contributed greatly to the protection and empowerment of every vulnerable individual. For this reason, Japan supported the proposed draft amendment to paragraph 11, submitted by the United Kingdom and other Member States (A/75/L.60).

We look forward to a meaningful discussion at the upcoming high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS with the participation of a wide range of civil society organizations.

Mr. Al-khalidi (Iraq): Iraq welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution A/75/260, entitled “Organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS”, and would like to thank the facilitators for enabling that process. Iraq attaches great importance to the fight against HIV/AIDS and recognizes that the syndrome remains an urgent health and development challenge. Based on this, Iraq voted in favour of the resolution.

However, Iraq does not consider this resolution as a precedent for other modality resolutions. In that regard, Iraq would like to dissociate itself from the term “key populations”, set forth in paragraph 8. Furthermore, Iraq recognizes the major contributions that civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations provide in this context.

Yet Iraq believes that the amendment contained in document A/75/L.60 to paragraph 11 creates a new precedent and paves the way for different interpretations, which is an approach that does not lead to constructive results. Iraq therefore voted against the amendment and does not consider it consensual or precedent for other modality resolutions. Accordingly, Iraq dissociates itself from paragraph 11, as amended.

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of my fellow facilitator, the representative of Australia, Ambassador Fifield, and, of course, on my own behalf and on behalf of Namibia. It was an honour for us to co-facilitate the modalities resolution for the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS (resolution 75/260). We thank the President of the General Assembly for entrusting us with that important task.

Since the HIV/AIDS epidemic first emerged, in the early 1980s, approximately 76 million people have become infected with the human immunodeficiency virus, and 33 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses. However, there have been many gains in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In 2016, HIV/AIDS was dropped from the list of the top 10 leading causes of death identified by the World Health Organization. By the end of 2019, approximately 25.4 million people were getting antiretroviral therapy.

Nevertheless, significant challenges remain. The world has not met the 2020 targets that we set for ourselves in the political declaration following the 2016 high-level meeting (resolution 70/266, annex). The coronavirus disease has further threatened current progress as health services, resources and investment are diverted.

The HIV/AIDS movement has a strong history of mobilizing political engagement. This year’s meeting is an important opportunity to take stock of our achievements and the gains that must be protected if we are to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

The adoption of resolution 75/260 today, although regrettably by means of a vote, is an important first step towards the holding of the high-level meeting. It provides the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Office of the President of the General Assembly with a mandate to begin preparations.

As co-facilitators, we had a number of objectives that we sought to achieve in this process. First, we sought to ensure that the modalities resolution would be adopted in a timely manner that would allow sufficient time for the Office of the President of the General Assembly and UNAIDS to prepare for the high-level meeting. We also sought to present a text that addressed some of the challenges encountered the last time the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS was convened and equally showed our commitment to the global HIV/AIDS response. Finally, we sought to present a text that could find common ground and ensure the broadest possible support.

Throughout the process, we have not lost sight of our common goal, which is the convening of the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS later this year to review progress on the commitments made in the 2016 political declaration. Therefore, while we recognize that resolution 75/260 is not a perfect text for some delegations, we strongly believe that it presents the best balance and helps us to move forward to prepare for the meeting.

We commend all delegations for their active and constructive participation in the negotiations and their willingness to engage with us and our teams. We are conscious that this year's meeting will look different from what we are used to, but we are committed to working creatively to ensure that there are opportunities for the meaningful engagement and participation of all stakeholders.

As we turn our minds towards the political declaration, we would like to reaffirm our commitment to working with representatives to deliver an ambitious text that reflects the progress and new challenges we face in our global response.

You, Mr. President, can count on our support and dedication on the road ahead. I wish to thank all the delegations for their kind words expressed to the co-facilitators.

Mr. Black (Canada): The delegation of Canada had not planned to take the floor today, having shared its

strong views during the course of the negotiations on resolution 75/260. However, I have grown increasingly concerned by the implicit criticism I heard over the course of the past half an hour with respect to the nature of the negotiations for the resolution.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our strong support for the Permanent Representatives of Australia and Namibia and their teams. As one of the delegations that participated actively throughout the negotiations, I can assure the Assembly that they were respectful and afforded ample time to all participants and their various proposals. In fact, as the letter from the co-facilitators makes clear, they worked until the eleventh hour to try to find balance in the text and we are appreciative of their efforts to seek consensus.

Canada was proud to vote in favour of this important resolution adopted today and to have co-sponsored draft amendment A/75/L.60 with the United Kingdom, the European Union and the United States. We remain focused on ensuring the meaningful participation of people most affected by HIV/AIDS. We look forward to the negotiation of an ambitious outcome document and achieving our shared goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Mr. Izourar (Algeria): I take the floor to explain the vote of my delegation on resolution 75/260, entitled "Organization of the 2021 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS".

We would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Namibia and Australia for their valuable efforts in facilitating this important resolution.

With regard to the reference to "key populations" in paragraph 8 relating to the interactive multi-stakeholder hearing, we believe that a broad reference to representatives of people living with HIV would have provided a better consensual term and one in line with our national legislation and regulations.

As stated in the previous modalities resolution (resolution 70/228), the multi-stakeholder hearing remains informal, including its outcome document. The deletion of the text taken from paragraph 12 of resolution 70/228 concerning the arrangement outlined in paragraph 11 of resolution 75/260 as adopted was unfortunate. As we recognize the specificity of each process, we believe that paragraph 11 of resolution 75/260 should not set a precedent for other similar events.

Mr. Mohamed Salih (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the Sudan would like to thank the moderators of resolution 75/260, the Permanent Representatives of Namibia and Australia, for their efforts.

The Sudan voted in favour of the resolution because it was convinced of its importance in the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, we wish to record our reservations about the use of the term “key populations” in paragraph 8.

Mr. Al Khalil (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, we would like to thank the facilitators for their efforts.

I take the floor to state that, with respect to resolution 75/260, we disassociate ourselves from the term “key populations” in paragraph 8 and from paragraph 11.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, who wishes to make a statement following the adoption of resolution 75/260.

Ms. Ludwig (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 member States. The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We welcome today’s meeting and would like to thank the President of the General Assembly and the co-facilitators, Namibia and Australia, for their tireless efforts.

Agreeing on the modalities for the high-level meeting is an important milestone for the meeting and therefore in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In that connection, we welcome the adoption of resolution 75/260.

The fight against HIV/AIDS is not over; it is a long-term fight. HIV/AIDS claims lives on a daily basis and shatters families and communities. Every case that can be prevented saves lives and spares cases, grievances and life-long treatment, as well as economic resources. Every case that receives treatment gives

new hope not only to an individual but also to families and communities. Still, about 2 million people became newly infected with HIV in 2019, about 40 million are living with it and an estimated 7 million do not even know their status and might spread the disease further. So there is much work to do.

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, as the key United Nations body for HIV/AIDS, has identified five main key population groups that are particularly vulnerable to HIV and frequently lack adequate access to services — key populations and their sexual partners account for up to 80 per cent of new HIV infections. We therefore welcome the retention of the reference to “key populations” in paragraph 8 of resolution 75/260.

Let me turn to the importance of civil society participation in the high-level meeting. It is a priority for the European Union and that is why — together with others in a broad cross-regional initiative — we submitted an amendment, which we are glad to see gathered broad support and which will not only provide more transparency but also bring back to the Assembly the power of decision-making on the participation of civil service organizations.

The fight against HIV/AIDS was — right from the beginning — one in which all stakeholders joined forces and in which experience clearly shows that we need to look at and work through specifically adapted approaches in order to reach communities and individuals everywhere and target high-risk groups.

The activities of civil society organizations have been crucial for decades and deserve huge recognition for the success and progress achieved to date. They work to promote knowledge about prevention and treatment and also work against stigmatization. Their valuable outreach and mobilization capabilities have been acknowledged and taken into consideration since the beginning of this fight.

As the high-level meeting will discuss progress made towards the elimination of HIV/AIDS as an epidemic to date and pave the way for achieving our ambitious but achievable goal in the coming years, we need to be informed by hearing from all those involved about their experiences. We cannot afford to have experiences unheard. We cannot afford to lack the support of any stakeholder in the fight against this disease.

The text of paragraph 11 now prevents the abuse of the non-objection clause. Rejections will not be exercised in an arbitrary manner, as we have seen in the past, and the final decision on the list of civil society organizations will be taken by the General Assembly as a whole and not by a single Member State. That brings the power of decision-making back to the Assembly.

Let me be clear on two issues — this is not about decision-making with respect to any civil society organization. It is only about ensuring that all voices are heard and enabling broad experience-sharing. We have no reason to be afraid of hearing all voices in reaching our decisions. I would like to underline that we would have favoured an even more open clause on the participation of civil society organizations — as

we saw in the zero draft of resolution 75/260. But we listened carefully to delegations to whom a right of objection is important. In that spirit of compromise, we are very happy to see that adopted amendment A/75/L.60, which was drafted together with a broad cross-regional coalition, gained huge support.

We are looking forward to an inclusive and successful high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS.

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

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 10.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.